Technique courses
The formula used to calculate the meaning of a credit hour for a dance course includes contact hours, plus required writing assignments (weekly reflective papers, concert reviews, contextual research), pre-class preparation and out of class review/individual practice/juried assessment preparation of course material. At USM, Department of Dance studio technique classes are coded SF, (Studio, face to face) as per the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning Method of Instruction codes, and are 3 credit hours. Federal regulations require for a three credit hour course a minimum of 150 contact minutes and 300 minutes of out of class work, for a total of 450 minutes per week. In our Department of Dance, studio technique classes meet for 270 contact minutes (3 course meetings of 90 minutes each per week). To meet minimum total minute requirements for the week, students are required to work out of class for an additional 180 minutes per week. These minutes are met through the above listed activities. Specifically, the 180 minutes include 45 minutes of class preparation, 60 minutes of writing, 75 minutes of review of course material/individual practice/juried assessment preparation, with some of the latter utilized more at midterm/end of the semester as students prepare for assessments and juries.

Ensemble courses
Other SF courses in the dance unit include one credit hour ensemble courses Freshman Repertory, Dance Production, and Repertory Dance Company (DAN 220, DAN 320, DAN 420). These courses meet for a minimum of 150, 50 and 150 minutes per week respectively, exceeding federal regulations requiring for a one credit hour course a minimum of 50 minutes of class time and 100 minutes of out of class work per week. Any remaining required minutes are acquired through the production and performance process.

Choreography/Practicum courses
Two credit hour SF courses include junior and senior choreographic projects (DAN 312, DAN 410). Similarly, Practicum in Dance Education (DED 361) is a two credit hour course that is coded PF (Practicum, face-to-face). Federal regulations require a total of 300 minutes per week, with a minimum 100 contact minutes and 200 minutes of outside work. In our Dance Department, these courses all meet for 150 minutes per week. All remaining required minutes (150 per week) are acquired through the rehearsal and performance process and in the case of DED 361 through off-campus practicum/teaching experience and class preparation. These courses are applied and practical in nature.

Student Teaching
Our student teaching credit hours (DED 460, DED 461) are determined by the Office of Educational Field Experiences and are consistent with student teaching hours across the university.

Independent Study
DAN 492 is reserved for independent study by individual students. DAN 492 is a variable credit hour course and students enroll in DAN 492 for the amount of credit equivalent to the amount of work they will do. Amount of credit is decided with the faculty member instructing the course and includes consideration of meeting times, outside work, scope and scale of final project, etc.
Lecture courses
All our CF (lecture, face-to-face) courses comply with USM credit hour policies.

Credit hour policies can be found on the USM dance website www.usm.edu/dance/time-and-credit-hour-policy and in the Student Handbook. They can be found in the Academic Council minutes from March, 2012 at https://info.usm.edu/sites/default/files/richard-maliden/ac201203.pdf.
The Office of Institutional Research lists institutional policies and guidelines at: http://www.usm.edu/institutional-policies/current-policies. This site houses policies approved by university governing bodies; when credit hour policies are approved at the larger level they will be listed here.

Procedures used by the institution to make credit hour assignments for courses and programs include the following:
1. All new courses and course modifications are reviewed by college curriculum committees and the Academic Council (AC). AC is an elected faculty governing body charged with oversight of the undergraduate curriculum that reports to the Provost. Review of new courses and course modifications involves defining credit hours and is a required portion of the submission.
2. Dance licensure courses are also reviewed by the Professional Education Council (PEC). The PEC has oversight of all licensure coursework.
3. The Registrar’s Office inputs into SOAR (the university’s online database) any new or modified courses as part of the implementation procedure.
4. The USM Faculty Handbook requires that departments have a copy of all current syllabi on record. In addition to providing for review by department heads, these syllabi serve as documents utilized in the annual evaluation process of all instruction at the institution.

Means by which the institution ensures accurate and reliable application of its existing credit hour policies include:
1. Internal and external program reviews where curricular plans are periodically evaluated and credit hours granted reaffirmed.
2. General Education Curriculum Assessment Committee (GECAC) Periodic reviews of GEC courses. The dance department has six courses that undergo such review.
3. The dance licensure program, including all coursework, is rigorously reviewed as part of the university’s NCATE/CAEP accreditation. In addition, the Mississippi Department of Education reviews USM’s licensure programs on an annual basis.

Institutional policies and procedures listed above are on the USM website at: https://info.usm.edu/group/849/page/proposals-guidelines
Guidelines for developing courses and modifying existing courses can be found at: https://info.usm.edu/sites/default/files/richard-maliden/guidelines2012-2013.pdf
Guidelines for the GECAC Periodic Review can be found at: https://info.usm.edu/group/849/page/gec
The Office of Institutional Effectiveness webpage discusses internal program review at: http://www.usm.edu/institutional-effectiveness/program-reviews
The department adheres to established institutional procedures in assigning credit hours. Additional procedures used by the department regarding the assignment of credit hours include periodic curriculum reviews and revisions, including that necessitated by reaccreditation Self Study preparation and follow through, strategic planning and recently a university-wide degree plan template review process. All procedures initiate with the department faculty.

In addition to the resources above, additional resources can be found on the College of Arts and Letters website about Strategic Planning: http://www.usm.edu/arts-letters/setting-course-our-future. Copies of dance department faculty meeting minutes are kept in hard copy in the department office.