Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology
Coursework Calculator

As required by the United States Department of Education, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), SHSST expects students to spend two-three hours per week completing course assignments for every course credit hour. This standard does not include scheduled classroom instruction periods. Given the significant time demands place upon the seminarian by the M.Div. degree's human, spiritual, and pastoral formation requirements that must be completed in addition to academic courses, SHSST instructors are strongly encouraged to construct academic courses that correspond to a weekly two-hours-per-credit-hour workload standard.

The amount of time actually spent on competing assignments will obviously depend upon the individual student's aptitudes and abilities. The setting of the two-hours-per-credit-hour standard does not represent a "cap" which allows the individual student to cease efforts on completing assignments. Rather, the purpose of the two-hours-per-credit-hour standard is to assist instructors with determining reasonable coursework expectations. Since SHSST semesters are 15 weeks in length, students are expected to dedicate the following amounts of time completing course assignments:

	One Credit Courses	Two-Credit Courses	Three-Credit Courses
Weekly	Two hours	Four hours	Six hours
Semester	30 hours	60 hours	90 hours

The time dedicate to completing assignments will undoubtedly vary each week based upon the demands of a particular assignment, but instructors are to schedule coursework in a manner that avoids assigning an exorbitant amount in any one week or concentrated period.

The following workload calculator, which is based upon the norms in ATS institutions and surveys of SHSST students, is provided to instructors to assist in determining appropriate coursework expectations. This chart is to function only as a guide to the instructor, as each assignment will need to be calibrated based upon the particular expectations and requirements, as well as text font size, etc.

	TYPE	TIME	NOTES
Reading	Light	30 pages per hour	• U.S. national adult average reading speed for light reading: 250-350 words per minute. • SHSST student average reading speed for dense reading: 100-150 words per minute.
	Medium	25 pages per hour	
	Dense	20 pages per hour	
	Very Dense	15 pages per hour	
Writing	Reflection Paper	1 page per hour	• Page = double spaced; 300 words. • U.S. national college student average typing rate: 19 words per minute • Times do not include reading/research time, but do include editing into final version.
	Written Sermon	¾ page per hour	
	Book Review	¾ page per hour	
	Research Paper	½ page per hour	
Projects	Paper Research	2-3 hours per page	• Instructor discretion plays a significant role in determining time requirements for projects, since the specific assignment expectations can greatly vary.
	Class Presentation	3-10 hours	
Testing	Quiz	1-2 hours of study	• Students synthesize covered material (class notes, reading assignments, etc.) in take-home exams, so no additional preparation time is factored in their completion.
	Take-home Exam	½ page per hour	
	Midterm/Final	5-10 hours of study	