

The A,B,Cs of Credits Follow the Instructor (CFI)

This is an overview of the components of the Credits Follow the Instructor (CFI for short) data system, an important tool for instructional analytics at UW-Madison coordinated by Academic Planning and Institutional Research. In CFI, key academic output metrics such as number of credits and courses are tied to a funding academic unit. CFI can be used to produce analytics such as credits and sections per instructor and department. These metrics can be used to inform funding decisions, budget adjustments or to assess instructional productivity. Credits Follow the Instructor is a complicated data system with several components, explained in the following sections.

A. Identify Courses and Section Instructors



CFI includes all courses taught in either the Fall or Spring semester of a given year if at least one student is enrolled on the 10th day of class (the official census date). The named instructor(s) of each course section are identified from the official listing of courses maintained by the Registrar based on information provided by departmental curricular representatives when the schedule of classes is prepared.



B. Identify Instructor Instructional Appointments

The October (for fall courses) and March (for spring courses) payrolls are used to identify the departments that are paying the instructor of each course section. CFI identifies all departments that are paying course instructors with instructional funds (program 2) because this is where instructional activity is expected. Credits do not “follow” instructors to departments that are paying instructors to perform other functions such as research, public service, or administration.



C. Convert Course Credits to Section Credits

Normally, course credits are only attributed to the graded (primary) course section. In a course with multiple sections (i.e. lecture and discussion and/or lab), the total course credits need to be divided among sections so that the credits can “follow” the instructor of each section. The total instructional time in each section (in minutes) and a weighting factor (used for all course sections) for the type of section (a lecture carries more weight than a discussion) both combine to determine how the credits are divided. The example below uses Chemistry 103 as an example. Chemistry 103 has three 50 minute lectures (150 minutes), two 50 minute discussions (100 minutes), and one 180 minute lab per week.

	Chemistry 103 Course Sections			
	Lecture	Disc	Lab	Total
A. Starting Credits	4	0	0	4
B. Class Minutes	150	100	180	430
C. Section Weighting	1.00	0.67	0.40	
D. B x C	150	67	72	289
E. Ending Credits (D/D Total x A Total)	2.076	0.927	0.997	4.000

In this example, 2.076 credits per student enrolled would “follow” the lecture instructor, 0.927 credits per student enrolled would follow the laboratory instructor, and 0.997 credits per enrolled student would follow the discussion instructor.

D. Identify Instructional Department Homes



Instructional departments are the homes to tenure-track faculty or the curricular home of a curricular subject listing. Credits can only “follow” instructors to instructional departments.



E. Allocate Section Credits to Instructional Departments

Once all the semester courses and sections, instructors and instructional appointments, and instructional departments have been identified and the course credits have been converted to section credits, these variables are used to allocate credits to departments based on the funding of the section instructor.

Because of the complexity of departmental appointments and funding, CFI has “rules” that determine how credits are allocated. The ultimate goal is to identify which department keeps the “following” credits. When multiple options exist then these rules help determine the most likely department funding the instructor. Following are the most common examples of credit allocation rules.

If the section instructor has an instructional appointment and is paid by...	Then the section credits “follow” to...
1. One and only one instructional department	That instructional department
2. Multiple instructional departments AND one of them is the departmental home of the course	The instructional department that is the departmental home of the course
3. Multiple instructional departments AND more than one of them is the departmental home of the course (a cross-listed course)	Each instructional department home, prorated by the FTE of the instructor’s appointments in those departments
4. Multiple instructional departments AND none of them is the departmental home of the course	Each instructional department, prorated by the FTE of the instructor’s appointments in those departments
5. One instructional department that is not the departmental home of the course	The instructional department paying the instructor
6. Multiple instructional departments and none is the departmental home of the course	The instructional departments paying the instructor, prorated by the FTE of the instructor’s appointments

If an instructor lacks an instructional appointment in an instructional department then the instructor’s credits stay with the departmental home of the course. If the course is listed under multiple curricular subjects, the course department homes share the credits in equal shares. When sections have multiple instructors, the section credits are divided evenly between them and then allocated using the methodology above.

Although CFI is primarily used to allocate section credits to instructors and their instructional department funding, CFI can also be used to allocate section counts. To allocate sections to instructors and instructional departments we divide sections into parts (if necessary) based on the proportion of total course credits “following” the instructor to instructional departments. For example, if two professors co-teach a course and 60% of the credits “follow” one instructor and 40% of the credits “follow” the other, then one instructor would get credit for .6 sections and the other instructor would get credit for .4 sections.

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