

WEEKLY STUDENT CONTACT HOURS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT

1. What is WSCH/FTE?

WSCH is an abbreviation for Weekly Student Contact Hours, and FTE stands for Full-Time Equivalent (faculty member). If an instructor teaches a class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 to 9:50 a.m., that means the instructor has three hours of contact per week with each student. If the class has 40 students then the WSCH for that class would be three hours per week multiplied by 40 students to equal 120 Weekly Student Contact Hours (3 hours/week X 40 students = 120 WSCH). One FTE is equivalent to one faculty member teaching 15 hours of lecture per week or 20 hours of lab per week.

2. How is WSCH/FTE calculated?

To calculate the WSCH/FTE for the above class, we would divide the WSCH calculated above (120 WSCH) by the faculty load the instructor would receive for teaching the class. For the example above, this would be 20% (or 0.2). Forty students in a three hour lecture class = 120 WSCH. Dividing 120 WSCH by 0.2 FTE = 600 WSCH/FTE.

3. Why is WSCH/FTE important?

The WSCH/FTE is a productivity ratio. The AFT contract states that the institutional average WSCH/FTE should be 530. In the above example, the instructor has a productivity ratio of 600 which exceeds the goal of 580. The greater the number representing the WSCH/FTE ratio, the lower the per student cost to the college for instruction. The lower the WSCH/FTE ratio, the more costly it is to teach a student.

Source: El Camino College:

<http://www.elcamino.edu/academics/ccs/WSCH-FTE.asp>