

Background

At its May 2017 meeting, the Board reviewed its policy on credit hour requirements for baccalaureate degree programs to determine if it met best practices for on-time completion and found 33% of system baccalaureate programs require 120 credit hours; 50% require 124 credit hours; and 17% exceed 124 credit hours. The Board decided to implement a process to evaluate which programs should exceed 120 credit hours and directed staff to develop such a process for discussion at the August 2017 retreat.

Staff developed the process below for discussion and recommend the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents and the Council of Chief Academic Officers review it and provide input.

For Discussion: Process to Evaluate Baccalaureate Degree Programs in Excess of 120 Credit Hours

The Board of Regents may approve a request for a bachelor's degree program to exceed 120 credit hours.

(1) Programs may be approved for the following reasons:

- (a) Additional credit hours are required to meet specialized accreditation standards for program content, and such accreditation is expected or required for program graduates to become employed in the profession for which they are being prepared; or
- (b) Additional credit hours are required to meet state or federal mandated criteria for professional licensing; or
- (c) Other compelling academic reasons.

(2) Requests for approval for a degree program to exceed 120 credit hours must be received by the second Friday in March¹. In the request, the university must:

- (a) identify all majors by program title and CIP code within the degree program and the number of credit hours required for each major;
- (b) provide the full program of study for each major;
- (c) identify which criterion selected as the basis for approval (1a, 1b, or 1c above), and provide documentation to support the justification. Such justification could also include the credit hour limits of similar programs regulated by state/federal agencies or accredited by the same accrediting body.

(3) The Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee reviews all requests and makes recommendations to the full Board.

¹Input on due date needed from state universities.