



**NUMBER                      DEGREE APPLICABLE HOURS**

**Responsible Executive:**            Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**Approving Official:**                Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**Effective Date:**                      Example Text – 3-27-2014  
**Revision History:**                    New Policy

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Federal Financial Aid regulations related to student eligibility focuses on the determination of student and parent eligibility for financial aid that a student might qualify for under different circumstances. Most of these determining factors are dependent upon the classification of credits taken and earned as “degree applicable”. Federal Regulations allow for the institution to define what constitutes “degree applicable hours” within certain parameters.

Florida State University’s mission is one that preserves, expands, and disseminates knowledge in the sciences, technology, arts, humanities, and professions, while embracing a philosophy of learning strongly rooted in the traditions of the liberal arts. The University is also invested in student success and degree attainment. For this reason, the institution has the institution defines degree applicable hours in a broad context or category rather than defining it narrowly. In this context, the University creates a broad framework of advising requirements, monitoring check points, and academic policies to ensure that students stay on course to timely graduation while simultaneously engaging in the liberal arts learning philosophy of the University.

**II. POLICY (Including any Forms and Attachments)**

**A. Degree applicable courses**

The University maintains a formal degree and major approval process that originates and is controlled by the faculty and is consistent with applicable Florida Board of Governors regulations. All of the courses taught by Florida State University must go through a formal review process by the academic unit’s curriculum committee and the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) prior to being offered. Courses approved by the faculty must be clearly identified as being associated with one or more degree programs or a formal, structured degree-progression initiative. Degree-seeking students, regardless of academic career, will be provided a multitude of advising resources, ranging from in-person advising, online program of study guides, academic maps, and/or graduate committee review. Qualitative and quantitative metrics, backed by specific policies, will be maintained to ensure student enrollment in courses relevant to their academic degree programs and majors.



## **B. Academic Support to Ensure Degree Progression.**

### 1) Qualitative reviews and resources

The following resources and support functions represent the major qualitative reviews conducted by the University to ensure students are enrolled in appropriate degree-applicable coursework as required by the Federal regulations.

#### *Undergraduate degree-seeking students.*

All undergraduate degree-seeking students must select an academic major at point of admission. Each major will maintain a detailed academic advising report that is available to the student online 24/7. The academic advising report will include: all University degree requirements, college requirements, general education requirements and major/minor requirements set forth by the academic unit. The academic advising report will be maintained and will reflect University course credit, transfer credit, and test credit, indicating which degree, major, or overall degree requirements have been satisfied and which remain outstanding. In addition, undergraduate students will be provided additional resources such as, but not limited to, the *General Bulletin*, academic department websites, and college/department advising materials, individually tailored for to each major.

Each major offered by the University will have an academic map that sets forth recommended course schedules for Fall/Spring enrollments. These recommended schedules will outline proper course sequencing for the most efficient path to graduation, taking into account general education requirements, limited access application requirements, mandated program pre-/co-requisites, minimum GPA, or course grade requirements. Each academic map will clearly identify select “milestone” courses that a student must satisfy in order to progress. Student academic progress toward degree-completion must be monitored each semester and holds placed upon students who fail to achieve the milestones set forth in the academic maps. Academic advisors will meet in-person or electronically with students who have deviated from the academic map. These advising meetings will include an individual review of the student’s academic plan(s), degree and career goals before the hold may be removed to allow continued enrollment. This ensures that student enrollment each semester remains focused on taking courses that are degree applicable and ensuring smooth progress to the degree.

#### *Graduate degree-seeking students*

All graduate degree-seeking students admitted to a specific graduate will follow the guidelines set forth in University policy and published in the *Graduate Bulletin*. In cases where an advisory committee is required, an individualized program of study will be established by the graduate committee and the student. The program of study will be tailored to meet the needs of the student’s specific academic degree, career goals, and research interests. At the doctoral level, the program of study will be accompanied by an annual review by the major professor. These reviews and constant contact with the major professor ensures that graduate student enrollment remains in degree-applicable coursework. Appropriate adjustments related to changes in research focus and career goals will be made at that time.

In the case of clinical and allied health programs such as medical doctor, nursing, physician assistant, communication disorder, social work, public health, etc., faculty guidance will be provided through the structured curriculum offerings, allowing sufficient adjustment to provide flexibility in coursework to support career goal in specific clinical settings. The structured



curriculum, progress to degree reviews, and faculty monitoring will ensure that students remain enrolled in degree-applicable coursework.

### **Awarding degree upon completion.**

Academic policy provides a mechanism for the University to award degrees to students who, regardless of academic career, have completed all degree requirements. Students may be placed on the mandatory graduation list if they have been identified as completing all degree requirements. Students may either choose not to appeal or their appeal is denied.

## **2) Quantitative reviews**

### **Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) to continue academic progress**

Each semester, the Office of the University Registrar will monitor student enrollment for all career levels and University grade point average (GPA) to ensure that the student remains in good academic standing. Failure to meet the required University retention GPA each term may result in academic dismissal from the University. In the event that a student is academically dismissed and is not reinstated by the academic dean, all future enrollment will be discontinued and future class schedules cancelled.

### **Required Graduation list**

Undergraduate students who have attempted 160 hours and have no degree will be placed on the mandatory graduation list and referred to academic advisors for individual review. This review includes the creation of an Individualize Education Plan (IEP) that lists remaining specific coursework needed to complete the degree in question. All such courses, by default, are considered degree-applicable by the University. The academic advisors working with students on the required graduation list will monitor academic progress on a continuous basis until the student graduates or leaves the University.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP or Sat Prog)**

The Office of Financial Aid will audit the academic performance and progress of every student in accordance with the requirement of the Federal eligibility regulations. The University SAP formula will establish the maximum number of hours allowable to achieve the degree program sought and minimum progress requirements for continued financial aid eligibility. Students who are determined to be in jeopardy of losing federal financial aid will have any future aid distribution placed on hold until the student meets with an academic advisor. During this meeting, an individualize plan for future enrollment will be developed. This plan will be presented with an appeal to the Office of Financial Aid, and if approved, reviewed each semester as part of the aid eligibility determination before additional funds will be released to the student. Changes or adjustments to the individualized academic plan must be approved by the academic advisor.

## **3) Structured degree progression initiatives**

The University may establish specific structured programs at the undergraduate or graduate level that focus on select populations of students who meet certain criteria. These students are often, but not always, deemed “at-risk” in some capacity and have the potential to fall behind or not graduate in a timely fashion. As a result, these students may be invited participate in, or be assigned to, a structured initiative targeted at supporting the student’s enrollment effort, degree attainment and



career or research goals. Inclusion in a degree progression initiative may require students to enroll in specific classes. These classes are considered degree-applicable by the University. Students not actively assigned to a structured degree progression initiative may self-identify as needing additional support and may enroll in the same classes, where allowed. In these cases, the courses are considered elective hours and are considered degree-applicable by the University.

### **III. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY**

[Click here to enter Support Information for Policy](#)

/s/ Name of Approving Official

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[Proof of approval retained in file]