

CHAPTER I

ACADEMICS

SECTION I. INSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENTS

Authorization. The Board authorizes institutions to enter into cooperative endeavor agreements with other public agencies within the state of Louisiana with respect to academic cooperative enterprises and undertakings relating to or associated with college or university purposes and programs in accordance with applicable laws.

SECTION II. COURSE CLASSIFICATION

System of Numbers. All developmental courses offered at institutions under the Board shall begin with 0; freshman courses shall begin with 1; sophomore courses shall begin with 2; junior courses shall begin with 3; and senior courses shall begin with 4. Graduate level courses shall begin with 5 or above. Institutions may award graduate credit in certain upper level undergraduate courses.

SECTION III. QUALITY POINT SYSTEM

Institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board shall adopt the quality point allotment of four points for an "A", three points for a "B", two points for a "C", one point for a "D", and zero points for an "F". Therefore, a 2.0 grade-point average means a "C" average, a 3.0 GPA means a "B" average, etc.

SECTION IV. INTERNATIONAL STUDY

- A. Program Location. The Board of Supervisors encourages activities that enhance global understanding and cooperation and allows each institution to offer at sites outside the United States any credit course that is in the institution catalog, provided:
1. the course is taught by regular faculty of the institution or specially-employed faculty who qualify under the same criteria as regular faculty; and
 2. the University of Louisiana System institution employs the faculty.
- B. Encouragement of Exchange. Institutions are encouraged to attract to Louisiana students from other countries, and are encouraged to expose Louisiana students to cultures outside of the United States.

- C. Transfer Credit. Each institution may enter into agreements to transfer academic credit from institutions outside the United States, provided the System institution is prepared to demonstrate academic equivalencies.
- D. Non-Credit Courses. Each institution may offer at sites outside the United States any non-credit course or other learning experience, provided the program:
 - 1. is financially self-sufficient; and
 - 2. is within the institutional mission and reflects well upon the institution, the Board of Supervisors, and the State of Louisiana.
- E. Contract Approval. Contracts for physical facilities, and professional services, or any other major contract at sites outside the United States shall be submitted to the System President for approval.

SECTION V. NEW DEGREE PROGRAM REQUESTS

Letters of Intent and Proposals. All Letters of Intent and Proposals for new degree programs are to be sent to the System President for staff study and recommendation, and for forwarding to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee before submission to the Board.

SECTION VI. SPECIAL DEGREES

- A. Honorary Degrees. Subject to Board of Supervisors approval of written proposals, four-year institutions are authorized to grant honorary degrees to persons who have made substantial achievements in literary, artistic, scientific, or technical fields of endeavor. Recommendations for such degree(s) must come from the president of the System, president of the university and the faculty of the appropriate college, school or division of the university (from R.S. 17:3352). *(Revised 4/26/96)*
 - 1. No honorary degree shall be awarded that could be confused with an earned degree granted by an accredited institution.
 - 2. Two categories of individuals are excluded from receiving honorary degrees: faculty or staff members currently employed at the granting institution, and Louisiana elected officials in office at the time of selection and conferral.
 - 3. To emphasize and preserve the value of honorary degrees, each institution is limited to a maximum of two per academic year. *(Revised 2/25/2005)*
 - 4. Honorary degrees awarded at the baccalaureate and masters level are more uncommon, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. *(Revised 2/25/2005)*

- B. Awarding of Posthumous Degrees. As approved by the Board, a posthumous degree may be awarded by the institution provided all coursework has been completed up to the last semester with the appropriate cumulative GPA. Such degrees will be reported to the System office as they occur. *(Revised 1/5/01)*

SECTION VII. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- A. Minimum Length for Academic Courses. For each semester hour of credit, a traditional lecture or laboratory course shall strive to meet a minimum of 750 minutes. Final exam periods may be counted as class time when computing required minutes.

With the growth in distance learning technologies, and increases in the number of readings/special topic courses, independent study courses, and other more flexible course presentations, the customary method of determining course length for such non-traditional courses has been reexamined. Consistent with Board of Regents policy (Seat-Time Policy for Academic Credit) all classes must be of reasonable length and include both content and contact sufficient to maintain high academic quality and standards commensurate with credit hours awarded. The basis for such certification of learning is a valid, credible assessment system that reliably determines whether a student possesses clearly identified, standards-based knowledge, skills and abilities.

- B. Summer Sessions. The Board authorizes each institution under its jurisdiction to carry out summer programs of varying length.

SECTION VIII. ASSESSMENT

- A. Students. Assessment of the academic progress of continuing students is encouraged through appropriate measurements of assessment at all institutions.
- B. Programs. A continuous study on assessing the academic quality of the institutions is encouraged. Such studies include but are not limited to the evaluation of level of preparedness of first-time entering freshmen, academic assessment of continuing students through competency tests, evaluation of graduates, retention/attrition studies, program/course evaluations, evaluation of probation/suspension and reinstatement policy, admission standards for specific programs, and grading policies.

SECTION IX. ACCREDITATION VISITS

Each institution shall inform and invite Board members and System staff to observe in accreditation team visits (such as Southern Association for Colleges and Schools and others as

appropriate). Copies of all reports shall be sent to the System office immediately upon receipt by the institution. The System office shall also be sent copies of institutional responses. The System office will respect the confidentiality of such reports to the extent provided by law.

SECTION X. ACADEMIC RENEWAL

- A. Policy. Each institution in the System may have a policy to provide for undergraduate students who, after dropping out or being suspended because of academic deficiencies, have demonstrated sufficient maturation to be afforded an opportunity to begin college study again. If adopted, that policy will include the following minimum standards:
1. At least three years must elapse between the end of the semester in which the student was last registered for credit at any college or university and being enrolled under academic renewal.
 2. The student must submit an application for academic renewal to the desired institution in accord with deadlines established by that institution. The application shall include evidence that conditions have changed and that there is reasonable expectation of satisfactory performance.
 3. The institution shall have a procedure to evaluate the merits of each application and approve only those that convincingly demonstrate potential for success. Applying does not ensure approval.
 4. No prior academic credit carries forward as part of a degree program. However, the prior record remains a part of the student's overall academic record.
 5. If granted, the date of academic renewal is entered upon the transcript along with a statement prohibiting use of previously earned credits and quality points to (a) meet degree requirements, (b) compute the GPA leading toward undergraduate certificates or degrees, (c) or determine graduation status.
 6. Upon being granted academic renewal, the student has the status of an entering freshman and will begin a new record showing no credits attempted, no quality points earned, and no prior suspensions.
 7. A student demonstrating competency in a given area may be allowed advanced standing (without credit) or a waiver of requirements just as any entering freshman. Credit examinations may be taken for courses in which grades of "C" or higher were earned.
 8. A System institution may choose to accept or not accept, in transfer, academic renewal granted at another institution. However, academic renewal may be granted to a person only once, regardless of the institutions attended.
 9. Students are cautioned that many undergraduate professional curricula, graduate, and professional schools compute the undergraduate GPA on all hours attempted when considering applications for admission.

- B. Graduate and Professional Schools and Academic Renewal. Each graduate or professional school may make its own regulations on whether to use credits earned prior to academic renewal in computing the GPA for admission purposes. Graduate and professional school regulations will be consistent in the treatment of academic renewal at any institution within the System.
- C. Board Approval. Each institution will submit its proposed academic renewal policy to the System office for approval.

SECTION XI. CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Advanced Placement. The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System believes that it is important to encourage students at all educational levels to aspire to higher intellectual achievements. High school students can master college subject matter and document their intellectual achievements through the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) program. Scores of 3, 4, and 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement examinations will be accepted for degree credit by all University of Louisiana System institutions. Each institution will determine whether course equivalent credit or credit in the major should be granted and the AP score required to grant credit for those purposes. System institutions will publish this information in appropriate publications. This policy will be in place no later than June 2000. *(Revised 4/28/00)*.

SECTION XII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Each institution shall submit the following reports to the System office on a timely basis:

1. schedule(s) of accreditation visits;
2. accreditation reports (Confidentiality will be respected to the extent provided by law.);
3. reports of outside reviews of academic programs;
4. American College Test (ACT) profile reports;
5. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) academic reports;
6. enrollment data;
7. Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System (IPEDS) reports;
8. institutional catalogs or bulletins;
9. faculty handbooks;
10. assessment reports;
11. reports on any other pertinent information related to academic affairs; and
12. all internal reports or activities which may effect program quality or direction.