FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS
NOTICE OF PROPOSED AMENDED REGULATION

DATE: September 20, 2023

REGULATION NUMBER AND TITLE: 8.014, Bachelors' Degree Exceptions to 120 Credit Hours Requirement

SUMMARY:

Board of Governors Regulation 8.014, Bachelors' Degree Exceptions to 120 Credit Hours Requirement, authorizes the Board of Governors to approve a request by a university board of trustees for a bachelor's degree program to exceed 120 credit hours to complete a degree, which aligns with section 1007.25, Florida Statutes. Once a degree program has been approved to exceed 120 credit hours, the regulation authorizes universities to make incremental adjustments to the credit hour length of the degree program without seeking additional Board approval, which does not align with section 1007.25, Florida Statutes. Additionally, for baccalaureate programs approved to exceed 120 credit hours, Regulation 8.014 requires Board of Governors approval for degree programs to reduce the number of credit hours or revert to 120 credit hours.

Board staff propose amending Regulation 8.014 to require Board approval not only for a bachelor's degree to exceed 120 credit hours but also for any incremental adjustments to the credit hour length of a degree program increase in credit hours beyond what the Board has approved.

The proposed amendment also delegates the authority to the university board of trustees for any bachelor's degree programs approved to exceed 120 credit hours to reduce the credit hours to a degree or revert to 120 credit hours.

FULL TEXT OF THE REGULATION IS INCLUDED WITH THIS NOTICE.

AUTHORITY TO PROPOSE REGULATION(S): Section 7(d), Art. IX, Fla. Const.; BOG Regulation Development Procedure dated March 23, 2006.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS' OFFICIAL INITIATING THE PROPOSED REGULATION:
Dr. Christy England, Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs

COMMENTS REGARDING THE PROPOSED REGULATION SHOULD BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 14 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE TO THE CONTACT PERSON IDENTIFIED BELOW.
The comments must identify the regulation on which you are commenting:

General Counsel, Board of Governors, State University System, 325 W. Gaines St., Suite 1614, Tallahassee, Florida 32399, (850) 245-0466 (phone), (850) 245-9685 (fax), or
generalcounsel@flbog.edu.

8.014   Bachelors' Degree Exceptions to 120 Credit Hours Requirement.

(1) The Board of Governors may approve a ~~request by a~~ university board of trustees <u>request</u> for a bachelor's degree program to exceed 120 credit hours to degree.   Programs may be approved for <u>one or more of</u> the following reasons~~:~~<u>.</u>
  (a) Additional courses are required to meet specialized accreditation standards for program content<u>,</u> and such accreditation is expected or required for program graduates to become employed in the profession for which they are being prepared<u>.</u> ~~(e.g. Engineering, Architecture); or~~
  (b) Additional courses are required to meet state or federal<u>-</u>mandated criteria for professional licensing<u>.</u> ~~(e.g., Teacher Education); or~~
  (c) The degree program offers a unique and innovative learning experience, such as honors programs, individualized study, and other non-traditional <u>educational</u> approaches ~~to education~~.

(2)   Approval to exceed 120 credit hours to degree applies to the degree program and ~~each of~~ its majors as defined in Board of Governors Regulation 8.011 ~~New Academic Program Authorization~~ <u>Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings</u>.   In the request for approval, the university must identify all majors within the degree program and the number of credit hours required for each major.   The highest number of credit hours will be recorded in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory and used for state-level accountability calculations.   Universities shall not implement majors within a degree program that exceed the recorded maximum number of credit hours for the degree program without following the processes described herein, as appropriate.

~~(3)   The Board of Governors recognizes that degree program curricula are dynamic and often require revision to meet new accreditation standards, state or federal mandates, or the incorporation of emerging knowledge within the discipline.   For this reason, each university is authorized to make incremental adjustments when necessary to the credit hour length of bachelor's programs previously approved to exceed 120 credit hours without seeking additional board approval.   To ensure state-level data accuracy, each university shall report any such changes in the credit hour length to the Board of Governors Office prior to implementation of the change.~~

~~(4)   The Chancellor is authorized to establish an administrative process to review university requests for incremental adjustments to the recorded maximum number of credit hours for bachelor's degree programs previously approved to exceed 120 credit hours to degree.~~
~~(a) The process shall set thresholds for incremental adjustments that do not require Board of Governors approval, and adjustments that do require Board of Governors approval.   Any adjustment that will extend the number of semesters required to complete a degree program must be approved by the Board of Governors in advanced implementation.~~

(b) ~~Degree programs that revert to 120 credit hours to degree at any time must follow the appropriate process herein to exceed 120 credit hours.~~

(3) Each university board of trustees has the authority to approve a reduction in credit hours for degree programs approved by the Board of Governors to exceed 120 credit hours to degree. The university board of trustees approved reduction in credit hours will be the new total hours to degree. Upon a decrease in credit hours, the university will submit to the Board of Governors' office a notification of reduced credit hours and include the university board of trustees approved credit hours to degree before the start of the effective term.