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Regents Approve Changes to Tuition Policy

Excess credit hour policy modified to encourage completions.

SALT LAKE CITY, UT - At its meeting Friday, the Utah State Board of Regents approved a change to its tuition policy with the intent of increasing the number of students who complete their college education in a timely manner. Current policy allows for a tuition surcharge of double the current year's tuition rate when students accumulate credit hours in excess of 135% of the number needed to graduate. The change reduces the threshold to 125%. The purpose of the excess credit hours policy is to discourage students from accumulating credit hours beyond those needed to graduate without completing a course of study leading to a degree. The policy change is in response to a legislative audit completed in 2011, which found that the existing excess credit hour policy is vague and seldom applied. The proposed revision is intended to accomplish the following:

- Require institutions to develop a process for notifying students that the surcharge may be implemented when they exceed 125% of the credits needed to graduate.
- Encourage students to efficiently complete their program of study.
- Clarify how the number of credit hours needed for graduation is determined.

“Excess credit hours is not a problem for the vast majority of students,” noted Commissioner of Higher Education Dave Buhler. “However, the Board does want to encourage students to focus their efforts and decide on a major as soon as is practical and then move toward that goal.”

This policy change has been undertaken with the goal of increasing the number of students who complete their degrees and certificates in a timely manner. This increase is essential in order for Utah to reach its goal of having 66% of adults hold a higher education credential by the year 2020.

The policy allows for the potential of increased credit hours without the application of the surcharge, if required by a particular course of study, for double majors, dual degrees, additional minors, and second bachelor's degrees, concurrent enrollment, advanced placement, credit by examination, and employment required credits.

About The Utah System of Higher Education: USHE includes all of Utah's eight public colleges and universities: The University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State College, Utah Valley University and Salt Lake Community College. For more information on the Utah System of Higher Education, visit our website at www.higheredutah.org