

Background: There is a SACS requirement that:

“At least 25 percent of the credit hours required for the degree are earned through instruction offered by the institution awarding the degree.” (3.5.2)

Currently, the University Senate Rules do not expressly state this policy. In addition, SACS does permit waivers of this residence credit hour requirement in special circumstances as long as it is the University faculty that has responsibility for the waivers. While the current Senate Rule delegates to the college dean to authority to waive residence credit hour requirements, no parameters are provided on the extent to which the requirements can be waived by a dean, nor are reports being provided to the University Senate of the frequency and extent of such waivers. Hence, new language is also included that provides for annual reporting to the University Senate Council, by college, on the number and extent of waivers of residence credit requirements for undergraduate degrees.

Recommendation: the Senate Rules and Elections Committee recommends that the University Senate approve the proposed changes to Senate Rules 5.4.1.

5.4.1 RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

For an undergraduate degree,

- (1) at least 25% of the credits presented for a degree,
- (2) not less than 30 credit hours, and
- (3) a minimum of thirty (30) of the last thirty-six (36) credits

presented for the degree must be taken from the University.

Any request for waiver by veterans of any of the above requirements, or a request by other students for a waiver of requirement (2) or (3), must be presented for approval to the dean of the student's college. Students who wish to satisfy the above requirement with credit earned through such methods as independent study by correspondence, special examination, CLEP, and other methods which limit the opportunity for active exchange between students and instructors must have the prior approval of their department chair and college dean. At the end of each academic year the dean of each college shall report to the Senate Council, through the University Registrar, the number of waivers granted in the categories of (1), (2) and (3) above, and for each waiver granted the extent of departure that was approved from the given credit hour requirement in (1), (2) or (3).