

Issue Paper 5

Program Integrity and Improvement Issues

Issue: Retaking Coursework

Statutory Cite: None

Regulatory Cite: §668.2

Summary of Change: The October 29, 2010, final regulations (75 FR 66832) amended the definition of “full-time student” in §668.2 to allow repeated coursework to count towards a student’s enrollment status in term-based programs, limited to one repetition of a previously passed course. The amended regulations do not allow repetitions of a previously passed course due to the student failing other coursework. This existing regulatory limitation poses a particular problem for students enrolled in programs using an integrated curriculum under which a student with one failed course is required to retake both the failed course and all previously passed coursework to academically progress in the program. The proposed change would eliminate this regulatory limitation. The revised regulation would apply to both undergraduate and graduate and professional students.

Change:

668.2 General definitions.

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Full-time student: An enrolled student who is carrying a full-time academic workload, as determined by the institution, under a standard applicable to all students enrolled in a particular educational program. The student’s workload may include any combination of courses, work, research, or special studies that the institution considers sufficient to classify the student as a full-time student, ~~including f. For a term-based program, the student’s workload may include repeating any coursework previously taken in the program but may not include~~ ing either more than one repetition of a previously passed course, ~~or any repetition of a previously passed course due to the student failing other coursework.~~ However, for an undergraduate student, an institution’s minimum standard must equal or exceed one of the following minimum requirements:

- (1) For a program that measures progress in credit hours and uses standard terms (semesters, trimesters, or quarters), 12 semester hours or 12 quarter hours per academic term.
- (2) For a program that measures progress in credit hours and does not use terms, 24 semester hours or 36 quarter hours over the weeks of instructional time in the academic year, or the prorated equivalent if the program is less than one academic year.

(3) For a program that measures progress in credit hours and uses nonstandard terms (terms other than semesters, trimesters or quarters) the number of credits determined by--

(i) Dividing the number of weeks of instructional time in the term by the number of weeks of instructional time in the program's academic year; and

(ii) Multiplying the fraction determined under paragraph (3)(i) of this definition by the number of credit hours in the program's academic year.

(4) For a program that measures progress in clock hours, 24 clock hours per week.

(5) A series of courses or seminars that equals 12 semester hours or 12 quarter hours in a maximum of 18 weeks.

(6) The work portion of a cooperative education program in which the amount of work performed is equivalent to the academic workload of a full-time student.

(7) For correspondence coursework, a full-time courseload must be--

(i) Commensurate with the full-time definitions listed in paragraphs (1) through (6) of this definition; and

(ii) At least one-half of the coursework must be made up of non-correspondence coursework that meets one-half of the institution's requirement for full-time students.