

**Office of the Chancellor
Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education
Procedures and Standards for University Operations**

**Procedure/Standard Number 2016-24-A
Graduation Residency Requirements**

Approved by  _____ Date. 7-2-2024
Chancellor

History: Academic and Financial Procedures and Data Collection Definitions

Revised: July 2, 2024

Additional History: Approved per Council of Presidents 12/11/2008, Revised per Chief Academic Officers 06/19/2010, and Revised 1/19/2012 per revision to Board of Governors' Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees

Related Policies, Procedures or Standards:

Board of Governors' Policy 1990-06-A: Academic Degrees

Board of Governor's Policy 1999-01-A: The Student Transfer Policy

Procedure/Standard 2012-13, Academic Degrees

Additional References: N/A

I. Introduction

The purpose of this procedure and standard is to ensure the integrity of degrees awarded by institutions within Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. This codifies the practice initially endorsed by the Council of Presidents in 2008 with its subsequent revisions.

II. Definitions

- A. Active-Duty Service Members: Full-time duty in the active Military Service of the United States. This includes members of the Reserve Components serving on active duty or full-time training duty but does not include full-time National Guard duty.
- B. Collaborative Programs: Collaborative programs are ones where two or more institutions offer courses in a degree program. They have been approved by the Office of the Chancellor and typically have a written agreement between a state system university and another academic partner(s).

III. Procedure/Standard

- A. Undergraduates

The following requirements apply to undergraduate students:

1. All first baccalaureate degree students will take at least 30 of their last 60 credits from the State System university granting their degree; the university may not require a student to take more than 30 credits.
2. All first associate degree students will take at least 15 of their last 30 credits from a State System university; a State System university may not require a student to take more than 15 credits.
3. All first baccalaureate and associate students will take at least 50% of credits required for the major (including required cognate courses) from a State System university.
4. The State System University may not require more than 50% of the major credits (including required cognate courses).
5. All students completing their first undergraduate certificate must take at least 50% of the credits required for the certificate from a State System University.
6. All students completing their first graduate certificate must take at least 50% of the credits required for the certificate from a State System University.
7. All students completing their first undergraduate minor must take at least 50% of the credits required for the minor from a State System University.

The following requirement is for students enrolled in undergraduate degree completion programs (students who have completed a minimum of 60 credits elsewhere and enroll in a State System institution with the intent of completing a bachelor's degree):

- All first baccalaureate degree completion students will take at least 30 of their last 60 credits from the State System university granting their degree; the university may not require a student to take more than 30 credits.

Exceptions to the undergraduate requirements:

1. Junior/Senior year Study Abroad semesters or other formal Articulation agreements in which State System students may reverse-transfer credits back to their State System University are exceptions to this policy.
2. A student who has met graduation residency requirements for an associate degree at a State System university that does not offer associate degrees (sending university) may apply to have their credits evaluated by a State System university that does offer associate degrees (receiving university) and, further, to have an associate degree conferred by the receiving university if all requirements are met, without meeting the graduation residency requirement at the receiving university. The student must meet admissions requirements and be admitted to the receiving university in order to be awarded the associate degree.

3. Additional exceptions are to be approved by the Office of the Chancellor's Division of Academic and Student Affairs.

B. Undergraduate Active-Duty Service Members

As a military friendly system, the following apply:

1. For active-duty service members, the academic residency requirements will not exceed 25 percent of the undergraduate degree program. If the undergraduate degree is available 100 percent online, the academic residency requirements will not exceed 30 percent of the undergraduate degree program.
2. For active-duty service members, the academic residency requirements may not include a "final year" or "final semester" requirement. The residency requirement of 30 of the last 60 credits will be waived. This waiver may remain in effect for 1 year following discharge from active duty. For example, a senior Commonwealth University student-soldier is deployed to Kuwait or has required training in Texas. He/She will be away for a significant period of time. If he/she were able to complete the last credits and courses through PennWest University distance education, transfer them back to Commonwealth University, the program and 120 credit requirements would have been met but not the residency. Waiving the residency requirement ensures the student is not disadvantaged due to their service. In addition, each program is expected to confirm with their respective accrediting agencies the allowable flexibility, in order to meet the needs of active-duty service members.

C. Graduate Students

1. For master's students, at least 2/3 of the credits meeting program requirements must be taken from the University offering the degree.
2. Doctoral residency requirements are determined at the program level.

Note that these set the minimum number of credits that must be taken "in residence" and that universities can limit the number of hours that will be allowed to transfer into a graduate program.

Active-duty service members who are graduate students will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Exceptions are to be approved by the Office of the Chancellor's Division of Academic and Student Affairs.

D. Collaborative Programs

1. For collaborative programs approved by the Office of the Chancellor, residency requirements will be consistent with the collaborative agreement.

Note also that collaborative programs will be identified such that residency can be met consistent with the collaborative agreement.

Note: In addition to the Academic Residency Requirement students must also meet requirements related to Advance Standings and other related degree requirements. System Procedure/Standard Number 2012-13, *Academic Degrees*; "Credit for Major" is defined as courses required for the major including required cognate courses in related discipline. The major program should not exceed 42 credit hours in the Bachelor of Arts degree while the major program should be comprised of at least 40 credits but not exceed 60 credit hours in the Bachelor of Science degree.

IV. **Implementation:** Immediately