

Sample Documentation

- Publications that show curricular differentiation between undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs.
- Comparative course syllabi describing the advanced body of learning to be accomplished through the graduate/post-baccalaureate coursework.
- Graduate or post-baccalaureate studies policies and procedures used to ensure minimum course requirements.
- Examples of independent research projects, portfolios, case studies, theses, dissertations, or other examples of graduate research/professional practice.
- Assessment findings from graduate and post-baccalaureate programs related to research or professional practice with identified expected student learning outcomes beyond the undergraduate level [see Standard 8.2.a (*Student outcomes: educational programs*)].

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

None noted.

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

Standard 8.2.a (*Student outcomes: educational programs*)

9.7 The institution publishes requirements for its undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate professional programs, as applicable. The requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (*Program requirements*)

Rationale and Notes

Each program of study at the institution has clearly defined requirements regarding what is necessary to complete the program so that potential students are aware of expectations prior to enrollment. These requirements are published so they are accessible to constituencies including faculty, students, and prospective students. Degree requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices found at institutions of higher education. When degree requirements are highly unusual, the expectations are explained and an academic justification is provided.

Commonly accepted practices for the requirements of an undergraduate program address an appropriate number of semester hours, or its equivalent, and a coherent course of study appropriate to that level of higher education. Each undergraduate program of study identifies courses that are program requirements and any prerequisite courses. Specific program requirements are also published, including an appropriate college-level general education component, and if present, cross-curricular and co-curricular requirements (e.g., chapel attendance, service learning, performance

on external examinations). All requirements for the degree should be clearly specified. Similarly, prospective students should have access to specific grade requirements, especially when they represent deviations from broader institutional policies.

Commonly accepted practices for the requirements of a graduate program address an appropriate number of semester hours, or its equivalent, and a coherent course of study appropriate to higher education. Each graduate and post-baccalaureate professional program of study identifies courses that are program requirements and any prerequisite courses. Graduate program requirements allow for an integrated understanding of the discipline. Such programs display a clear rationale and design and include clearly stated and measurable outcomes consistent with the mission of the institution. General requirements for written and oral comprehensive examinations, theses and dissertations, professional practice, and so on, are published as well.

Questions to Consider

- Does the institution have clearly defined program requirements for each program?
- Could a prospective student understand all of the requirements for successful program completion prior to making an enrollment decision?
- What is the process for establishing how the program curriculum conforms to commonly accepted standards and practices?
- Are there specific requirements for what constitutes a major or concentration? Do these adhere to commonly accepted practices? Are they consistently followed at the institution?
- Where and how are program requirements published?
- Do published requirements provide clear, complete, and consistent information about each program?
- If there are requirements beyond a prescribed curriculum, how are these additional requirements determined and published?
- When program requirements change, how is this information made available?

Sample Documentation

- For all educational programs, published documents that contain program completion requirements.
- For undergraduate programs, published documents that also address general education requirements.
- If some programs deviate from general institutional requirements, specific information about how this information is published.
- If program requirements are atypical, additional evidence related to adherence to “commonly accepted standards and practices” (e.g., peer comparisons, reference to programmatic/specialized accreditation requirements, external program reviews, appropriate mission-specific expectations).

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

None noted.

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

- CR 9.1 (*Program content*)
- CR 9.2 (*Program length*)
- CR 9.3 (*General education requirements*)
- Standard 10.3 (*Archived information*)