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### System Policy 3.36 Academic Programs

#### Part 1. Purpose

To direct decision-making regarding the development, approval and management of credit-based academic programs.

#### Part 2. Academic Program Goals

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities provide learning opportunities to develop graduates who are:

- a. prepared for work, life, and citizenship;
- b. creative, innovative, and able to respond with agility to new ideas, new technologies, and new global relationships;
- c. able to lead their professions and adapt to the multiple careers they will have over their lifetimes;
- d. able to think independently and critically and resourcefully apply knowledge to new problems;
- e. able to embrace change and be comfortable with ambiguity; and,
- f. able to communicate and work effectively across cultural and geographic boundaries.

#### Part 3. Definitions

##### **Academic award**

A certificate, diploma or degree.

##### **Academic program**

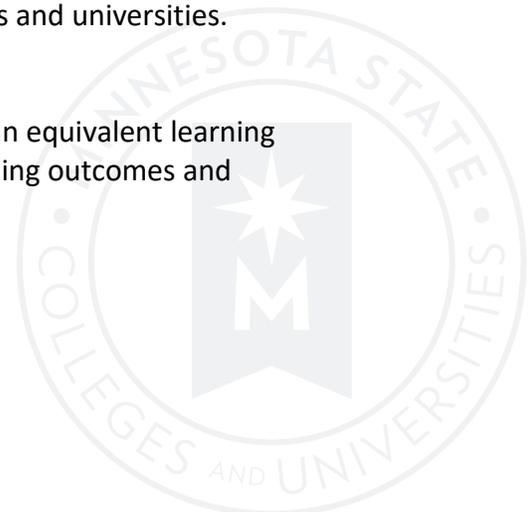
A cohesive arrangement of college-level curricular requirements leading to an academic award.

##### **Academic program inventory**

The official list of academic programs offered by system colleges and universities.

##### **Credit**

A unit of measure assigned to a college or university course or an equivalent learning experience that takes into consideration achieved student learning outcomes and instructional time.



## **Part 4. Authorized Academic Awards**

### **Subpart A. College and university award authority**

System colleges and universities have authority to confer academic awards only as specified below.

1. **Community colleges.** Community colleges have the authority to confer undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and the following degrees: associate of arts, associate of fine arts, associate of science, and associate of applied science.
2. **Consolidated colleges.** Consolidated colleges have the authority to confer undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and the following degrees: associate of arts, associate of fine arts, associate of science, and associate of applied science.
3. **Technical colleges.** Technical colleges have the authority to confer undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and the following degrees: associate of science, and associate of applied science.
4. **Universities.** Universities have the authority to confer undergraduate and graduate certificates and associate of arts, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees.

Approval by the Board of Trustees is required for a college or university to confer an academic award type for which specific authority is not granted in this policy.

### **Subpart B. Academic award characteristics**

The chancellor shall specify the characteristics of academic awards.

### **Subpart C. Academic program credit length limits**

Academic programs that lead to an associate degree must be limited to 60 credits and academic programs that lead to a baccalaureate degree must be limited to 120 credits unless the chancellor grants a waiver based on industry or professional accreditation standards that require a greater number of credits.

The chancellor shall set program credit length requirements and waiver criteria for undergraduate certificates, diplomas, and graduate-level awards.

## **Part 5. Authority to Establish Academic Program Locations**

Approval of the chancellor is required for establishment of a location at which an academic program may be offered.

## **Part 6. Academic Program Approval**

Approval of the chancellor is required for new academic programs, changes to existing academic programs, suspension of academic programs, and closure of academic programs at colleges and universities. Colleges and universities shall only offer academic programs that are approved by the chancellor and recorded in the academic program inventory.

The chancellor shall maintain the academic program inventory and annually report to the board on the status of the inventory.

**Part 7. Student Options When Academic Programs Are Suspended, Closed, or Changed**

A college or university shall provide a student admitted to an academic program an opportunity, consistent with college or university policy, to complete the academic program when it is suspended or closed or when the requirements have changed.

**Part 8. Academic Review**

Each college and university shall regularly review its academic programs for the purpose of academic planning and improvement.

The chancellor may conduct statewide or regional reviews of academic programs or program clusters, report findings to the board and, when necessary, impose conditions on academic programs.

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Date of Adoption: 06/20/07

Date of Implementation: 08/01/07

Date of Last Review: 06/19/19

Date and Subject of Amendments:

06/19/19 – In Part 2, updated the academic program goals, In part 6, added “Colleges and universities shall only offer academic programs that are approved by the chancellor and recorded in the academic program inventory.”, and applied the new writing and formatting styles.

Additional HISTORY.