CAAD Subcommittee

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History of the Residence Requirement Taken from FSU University Catalogs and Bulletins

Definitions for the historical review.

> Residency: courses taken at FSU.
>
> Recency: courses taken within a specified time frame after the start of a degree program or before a degree is awarded.

1922: First appearance of university residency requirement beyond the total hours needed for a degree.

> Candidates for a degree or certificate must spend the senior year in residence at the college. This requirement cannot be waived and is effective in all schools and departments of the institution. P. 37

1938: First mention of a residency requirement specifying a certain number of credits earned at Florida State College for Women. Combines residency and recency requirements.

> A minimum of thirty hours of academic work must be taken in residence. To be valid towards fulfilling this requirement, the minimum thirty hours must have been taken within the last five calendar years immediately preceding

the date on which the degree is granted.....In all cases, a minimum of fifteen hours of academic work of the senior year must be taken in residence. p. 43

1945: Changes the number of hours taken within a specified time frame prior to awarding the degree. Indicates that the student must be in residence to earn the degree; does not specify the number of hours. Requires presence of the student to receive the degree.

> A minimum of forty-five hours of academic work must be taken in residence within the five calendar years preceding the date of the degrees granted. In all cases a minimum of twenty-three of the last forty-five hours of academic work must be taken in residence.... A student is required to be in residence when she completes requirements for a degree unless there is an emergency. p. 58

1950: Changes the amount of work taken within a recency requirement and the number of FSU hours required within the last 30 hours. This is the first time a number of hours taken within the last 30 hours is specified.

> A minimum of thirty semester hours must be taken at this institution, sixteen of which must be taken within the seven calendar years preceding the date the degree is granted. In all cases a minimum of fifteen of the last thirty hours of the academic work must be taken in this institution.... except in cases of internship, a student is required to be in residence when he completes requirements for the degree unless there is an emergency.... A student must be present to receive a baccalaureate degree, unless *in absentia* privileges have been granted to him by his academic Dean at least two weeks prior to the date set for graduation. p.79-80

1957: The first instance of requiring that the entire last 30 hours be earned in residence at FSU.

> The last 30 semester hours leading towards the bachelor's degree must be earned in residence at this university. This requirement is waived only in those cases where an approved internship demands absences from the campus during part of the senior year. P. 29

1959: Establishes an exemption limit for the academic dean to approve out-of-residency coursework.

> The last 30 semester hours leading to the bachelor's degree must be earned in residence at this university. This requirement is waived only in cases where approved internship demands absence from the campus during part of the senior year. In cases of emergency a student may complete, with permission

of his academic Dean, a maximum of three semester hours of the final thirty required for graduation…p. 28

2026\Current Policy: Current policy and procedures, a student may request permission from their academic dean to take up to six hours out of residence (during the last 30). Appeals to take more than six hours may be considered, first by reviewed of the academic dean for six hours and then forwarded to Faculty Development and Advancement for review and possible approval of additional hours.

The chart below shows an increasing trend in students taking courses at other institutions during their last 30 hours. The reasons vary but often fall into one or more of the following thematic clusters.

Course availability and time to degree completion. The student needs a specific course, such as a prerequisite for a graduate program, an elective for the current degree, or a course that fits a specific schedule to remain on target for degree completion.

Family support/illness/medical. The student or a family member is ill and needs additional support. The family has other issues that require the student to move home to provide support.

Job/relocation/money issues. The student has a job offer that requires relocation, cannot afford to extend a year-long lease for one extra term, or has an internship in another city and cannot return to campus for the final term.

Delivery. The student needs a course delivered online because of life events.

The chart below illustrates the growing trend of students needing a break in residence during the final 30 hours. These numbers are distributed across the colleges and are generally proportional to the size of each college. Fall 2026 data is not currently available.

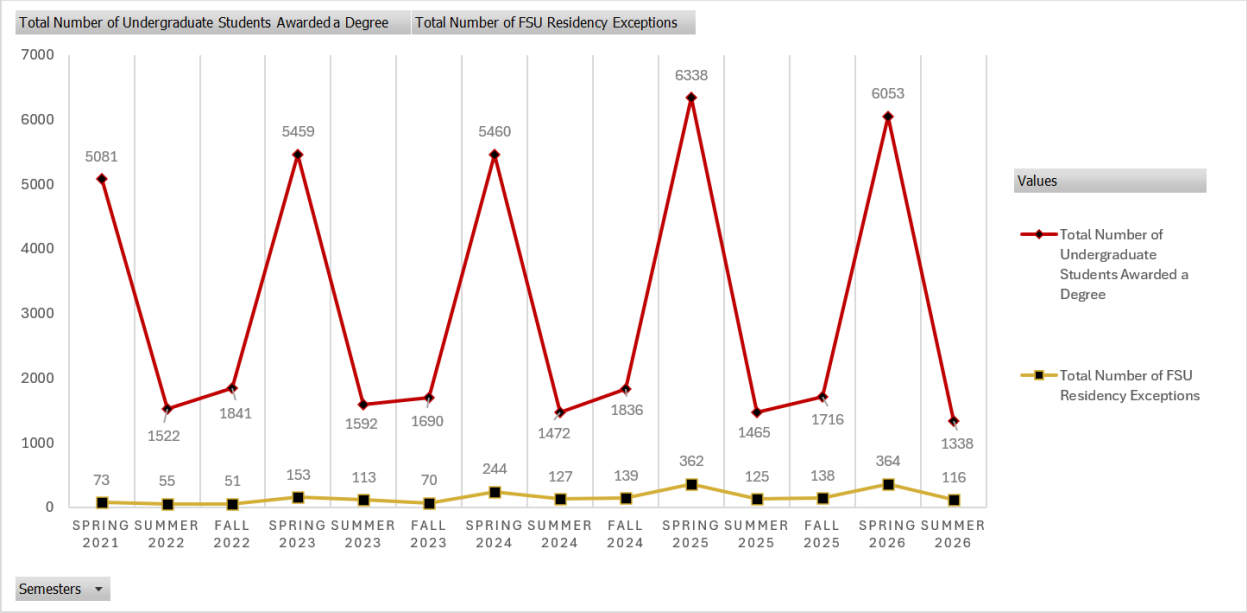


Figure 1: Residency Exceptions 2021-2026

Changes and Rationale

The proposed revision focuses on adjusting the policy to remove a "temporal" residency degree requirement, namely that the *last* 30 credit hours must be earned at FSU. A number of different factors were considered by the CAAD subcommittee when discussing the proposed changes.

- Under the current policy, students must be enrolled in FSU courses during their last 30 credit hours. The general idea over the last forty years was to attributed to different reasons, including ensuring that a concentration in FSU major courses was taken, satisfy discipline-specific accreditation requirements, etc. In fact, the last 30 hours can consist of any courses, including 1000- and 2000-level courses, random electives, major classes, prerequisites for graduate school, or personal enrichment courses. The proposed change acknowledges application of the last thirty hours has evolved and does not always preserve the intended concentration of FSU, discipline-specific coursework in the previous manner.

- State and federal regulations with respect to the mobility of students and acceptance of transfer credit are changing. The State of Florida has a statutory articulation agreement and a common course numbering system that guarantees acceptance of credit earned at other public state institutions. New federal regulations that go into effect on July 1, 2027, will mirror this to a certain degree. These changes will increase the likelihood of more exceptions to the last 30-hour requirement. The proposed changes are structured to

allow for the state and federal changes while allowing faculty to retaining control over of the degree requirements, ensuring that students complete a majority of their FSU courses in the major with FSU instructors.

- For transfer students, the "Upper-Division Degree Credit Minimum" is calculated by determining the total number of credit hours at the 3000 level or above required for a specific major and applying a residency percentage (proposed at 60%) to that total. The calculation is specifically designed to ensure that transfer students and native students are treated on the "same base floor" by focusing only on specialized coursework taken at FSU after admission to the major.

- Students face an ever-increasing set of demands that compete with their degree-completion goals. Rising costs of living in general, local apartments shifting to year-long leases, and increased job and family demands all pull students in different directions during the last year as they try to complete their degrees. The proposed changes attempt to balance students' circumstances against the needs of degree integrity, programmatic accreditation, and institutional accreditation.

Key Strategic Updates

- Eliminating the "temporal" requirement removes the need for deans to file "emergency" waivers of a student's degree requirement, waivers that typically come in the final term, as chronological timing no longer dictates residency compliance.

- Creates a safeguard for faculty control of the curriculum given the changing state and federal regulations with respect to the acceptance of transfer credit.

- Institutional accreditation (SACS-COC and HLC) requires that at least 30 hours be earned at FSU. Accreditation does not specify which portion of the degree meets this requirement. Current policy, and the proposed policy, preserve that concentration explicitly within the 3XXX\4XXX courses taken at FSU.

- Introduces language that begins to make a clear distinction between the credits needed for a degree and the credits that apply to the major (or majors) completed as part of the overall degree.

- Ensures that a majority of major courses are taken at FSU, with FSU faculty, by increasing the required percentage of major course credits taken at FSU

from 50% to 60%. The curriculum control currently exercised by the faculty would remain the same.

- Clarifies that students pursuing double majors and dual degrees must satisfy the 60% major credit hour requirement for both programs independently.
- Acknowledges the changing accreditation landscape for different programs by creating new, specific acknowledgment that certain programs, and the associated courses, must meet additional external requirements related to discipline-specific accreditation, licensure, or certification. The 60% upper-division floor acts as a "buffer" for accredited programs, ensuring that core learning outcomes are met under FSU supervision without requiring a specific "capstone" course for every major. Programs that choose to develop capstone courses may still do so.