



INDIANA COMMISSION for
HIGHER EDUCATION

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Streamlined college degrees save Hoosiers \$35 million annually

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education revealed today that a state policy aimed at streamlining college degree requirements and increasing on-time graduation is saving Hoosier students an estimated \$35 million per year in tuition expenses. The student-friendly policy has produced a net savings of nearly \$200 million since the Indiana General Assembly passed “credit creep” legislation in 2012.

“We know that the most affordable degree is an on-time degree,” said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Teresa Lubbers. “In partnership with our colleges and state policymakers, Indiana has reversed the credit creep trend and removed another barrier to college completion for Hoosier students.”

“Credit creep” refers to the national trend toward gradually increasing college credit requirements beyond the historical standard of 120 credits for a bachelor’s degree and 60 credit for an associate degree. At the time Indiana’s credit creep legislation was passed following a statewide audit by the Commission, 85 percent of college degree programs exceeded the standard. Today, 90 percent of programs meet the standard and the vast majority of Indiana students are enrolled in these programs.

The legislation does permit exceptions to the credit-hour standard based on accreditation, licensure or employment requirements that merit additional credits. Based on these criteria, most of the programs that have been approved to exceed the standard are in the engineering and health fields.

In the coming months, the Commission will be working with Indiana colleges to see if any other existing programs can be removed from the list of those exceeding the standard credit-hour expectation.

“It’s worth noting that the Commission has only approved seven new degree programs in the past six years that exceed the credit-hour standard,” said Lubbers. “This shows that if we’re intentional, there doesn’t have to be a trade-off between academic quality and timely degree completion.”

Increasing college completion and affordability while ensuring quality are key components of the Commission’s *Reaching Higher, Delivering Value* strategic plan. Learn more at www.che.in.gov.