

AGENDA ITEM V A

Statewide Minimum Standards for Admission

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education: 2001 defined a comprehensive, statewide system of postsecondary education with Selective I, II, III (later called Flagship, Statewide, Regional) and Open Admissions institutions. It also established, for the first time, a policy of minimum standards for admission to the three levels of universities, effective in 2005 (except for HBCUs, which were still under the settlement agreement, and LSUA which was still in transition as a 4-year university). Publications about the standards have been careful to advise students and assure institutions that the minimum standards do not presume to guarantee admission to any university; rather, they establish the minimum standards for regular admission, i.e., any institution may adopt additional, more specific or rigorous requirements for admission.

Since 2005, with implementation of the minimum standards and the growth of the community college system, there has been an increase in statewide graduation rates as students are better prepared for university work: from 37% (2004 cohort) to 42% (2007 cohort), all campuses; and from 42% to 50% for university cohorts. The standards have been adjusted several times through board action, e.g., to reflect changes in the High School Core courses, to strengthen the GPA requirement, and to require that students be ready for basic college-level coursework, as determined by the BoR's policy on placement in entry level, college-level courses in mathematics and English.

The current minimum admission criteria, passed by the BoR in 2010, require that students admitted to a university demonstrate readiness for college-level coursework in English and mathematics via a series of measurement options. Implementation was staggered by level of institution: effective for statewide universities in 2012, and for regionals in 2014. Through 2013, regional institutions could admit students who needed one developmental course, but many made arrangements with area 2-year/community colleges to teach the developmental course – on either campus. During that time, retention and graduation rates continued to rise as both universities and applicants focused on preparation and performance. Through 2014, partnerships between universities and colleges have been strengthened as both actively collaborated to help support individual students' success.

LCTCS has worked to standardize developmental course sequences and content, and the BoR recognizes 2-year colleges as the most appropriate providers of developmental education classes to prepare students for degree-credit coursework, regardless of which institution the students call 'home.' At the same time, in recognition of the historical mission of the HBCUs, it is reasonable to allow HBCUs to also provide at least one developmental course to their entering students who need it.

In light of the growth of college-university bridge programs for the freshman year, recognition that students may be well-qualified for university admission while also slightly deficient in math or English, and Louisiana's need to address educational attainment among adults, the BoR was asked to review the minimum standards and propose revisions that would allow more flexibility in addressing these realities. BoR staff has incorporated many suggestions made by the system presidents, provosts, chief academic officers, and enrollment managers across the state, as well as with several legislators who were interested in the process and the recommendations.

STAFF SUMMARY of REVISIONS/ADJUSTMENTS

Until as recently as Fall 2014, the minimum standards had allowed regional institutions to admit students needing one developmental course. With this change, students admitted to a regional university would still have to meet the admission standards [Regents' HS Core + (Core GPA or ACT)], and if they are somewhat weak in mathematics or writing but strong enough to only need one developmental course, they could begin directly in their chosen program of study as a university student. Reinstating admission with a need for one developmental course returns to the 2013 allowance for regional institutions but is not meant to imply a restoration of developmental education at universities. Rather, the intention is for all developmental education, except at HBCUs, to be provided by the 2-year colleges. Cross-enrollment agreements and other arrangements are highly encouraged, as are summer developmental programs that concentrate on subject areas essential to success in first-year college courses.

Community College/University (CC-U) bridge programs provide a two-step pathway for admission through both institutions. Through these CC-U bridge programs agreements, both parties may set eligibility and performance requirements for participation, but 2-year/community colleges maintain open admission for freshmen and often offer courses on the university campus to CC bridge students. This gives bridge students access to university facilities and programming. Because of the prospective transfer students' ongoing relationships with the university campus and administrative procedures, the proposed standard gives institutions the option of 12 or more bridge credit-hours with the same GPA requirements for transfer. (Again, universities may establish their own transfer requirements above the credit hour minimum, and reverse transfer processes will be strongly encouraged so that students may earn a credential from the college, even after transfer to the university.)

Attached to this summary are recommended changes to minimum statewide admission standards. The proposed changes are highlighted in yellow. As always, the red advisory on the top of the two admission tables is a reminder that the BoR's admission policies set the minimum (floor) requirements but do not guarantee admission; universities may always establish additional, more rigorous or specific criteria or specifications for admission based on student success, course availability, and/or resources for academic support services.

The recommendations include the following:

1- First-Time Freshmen (age <25)

- Reinstates allowance for admission of students, at regional institutions, needing up to 1 developmental course.

[Notes in Admissions Supplement for campus use: developmental courses will be taught at/by 2-Year colleges, except at HBCUs, whose mission specifically addresses serving the underprepared minority student.]

2- Transfer Students

- Requires a grade of "≥C" in English & Math.

3- Transfer Students

- Permits a minimum of 12 college credits for transfer from a University/CC (CC-U) bridge program agreement wherein freshmen begin at the CC and participate in University life.

[Notes in Admissions Supplement for campus use: statewide minimum standards for admission to a bridge program are silent. Bridge program details are left up to the CC-U parties for admission, performance, and transfer; minimum college credit hours for transfer is 12, including an English & Math course, but bridge agreements may require more credits and/or higher GPA.]

4- Adult Students (age ≥25)

- Provides for admission of adults who may need 1 developmental/refresher course.

[Notes in Admissions Supplement for campus use: statewide minimum standards have been silent on admission standards for adults, except regarding developmental requirements. Standards for adult admission are established by the institution, and may include allowance for up to one developmental/refresher course.]

BoR staff recommends that adjustments to the exception allowances be investigated, but in the absence of any evidence of how students who are admitted by exception perform, the staff is hesitant to adjust them at this time. (Currently exceptions are not identified or differentiated in student data submitted by the campuses.) Data will be collected during the 2015-17 academic years to evaluate the impact on student enrollment, persistence, and success of (1) students admitted to regional institutions while needing a developmental course; and (2) students admitted by exception to the minimum standards. In two years (2017) the admission policy will be evaluated and exception allowances will be revisited based on the findings of that effort.

The attachments reflect the minimum admission policies, with recommended changes highlighted.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends approval of the revised Minimum Admission Standards for First-Time Freshmen, Transfer Students, and Adult Students, as follows:

- 1. First-Time Freshman (age <25): allow regional universities to admit freshmen who meet all other requirements for admission but need one developmental course (to be provided by a 2-year/community college or HBCU).*
- 2. Transfer Students: require that students complete the required number of credit hours, including a college-level English and mathematics course designed to fulfill general education requirements, with a grade of at least "C" in both to be eligible for consideration for regular transfer admission to a university.*
- 3. Transfer Students: allow universities participating in a Community College/University Freshman Bridge Program to admit transfer students in accordance with the Bridge agreement, which will require completing 12 or more college-level credit hours prior to transfer, including English and math, with the corresponding minimum grade and GPA.*
- 4. Adult Students (age ≥25): allow universities to admit adult applicants (as freshmen or transfer students) who need one developmental/refresher course.*

LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS

MINIMUM ADMISSION STANDARDS for FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN

The Board of Regents establishes **minimum** admission standards for regular freshman admission at a Louisiana public university – flagship, statewide, or regional.* **Universities may adopt additional, more specific or rigorous requirements for admission: students should check with the specific institution for additional information.**

(1) <i>High School Curriculum</i>	Regents' Core: 19 units (from Core 4 Curriculum) Those courses in the English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, and Arts Categories as defined in the Core 4 Curriculum** listed in Louisiana Department of Education Bulletins 741 <i>(Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators; and Louisiana Handbook for Nonpublic School Administrators)</i>
<u>AND</u>	
(2) <i>HS GPA</i>	Minimum overall HS GPA — 2.0
<u>AND</u>	
(3) <i>Developmental Courses</i>	Developmental courses needed, per BoR AA Policy 2.18: 0 at Flagship and Statewide universities, ≤ 1 at Regional universities [Example: ACT English score ≥ 18; ACT Math score ≥ 19; and other measures in AA 2.18]
<u>AND ONE of the FOLLOWING</u>	
(4) <i>HS Core GPA</i>	GPA on the <i>Core</i> — 3.0 – Flagship GPA on the <i>Core</i> — 2.5 – Statewide GPA on the <i>Core</i> — 2.0 – Regional
-or-	<u>OR</u>
ACT	ACT Composite— 25 – Flagship ACT Composite— 23 – Statewide ACT Composite— 20 – Regional

Allowable Exceptions to Minimum Stds, at Institution's Discretion (% of previous year's entering freshman or transfer class enrolled at EoS).

4% – Flagship 6% – Statewide 8% – Regional	BoR is willing to revisit exception allowances, but currently has no evidence of exceptions' performance. If during AY 2015-16, institutions submitted data comparing 1 st year performance (retention, semester GPA) of students admitted by exception under the current policy to those admitted under minimum standards, discussion of adjusting exceptions would be meaningful.
--	--

* **Flagship:** LSU. **Statewide:** LA Tech, ULL, UNO. **Regional:** Grambling, LSU-A, LSU-S, McNeese, Nicholls, NSU, SLU, SU, SUNO, ULM.
 Two-Year institutions are open admission for freshmen students; contact the institution for information.

LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS MINIMUM ADMISSION STANDARDS for TRANSFER STUDENTS and ADULT STUDENTS

The Board of Regents establishes **minimum** admission standards for regular admission of transfer students and for adult students at a Louisiana public university – flagship, statewide, or regional.* **Universities may adopt additional, more specific requirements for admission: students should check with the institution for additional information.**

TRANSFER Students	
Associate Degree	Transferrable Associate Degree (AA or AS) or higher
-or-	<u>OR</u>
Minimum College-Level Academic Hours Earned and GPA	Minimum college-level academic hours earned, with Minimum GPA on college-level academic courses: 30 credit hours + 2.5 GPA <i>Flagship</i> 24 credit hours + 2.25 GPA <i>Statewide</i> 18 credit hours + 2.0 GPA <i>Regional</i>
-or-	And, student must have completed a college-level English <u>and</u> a college-level Mathematics course designed to fulfill general education requirements, with a grade ≥ "C" in both.
Bridge Program	<u>OR</u>
-or-	From a Community College/University Freshman Bridge Program, minimum 12 college-level credit hours, including English and mathematics, with the corresponding minimum grade and GPA as listed above.
Freshman Std + Transfer GPA	<u>OR</u>
	Meet Freshman admission requirements + the corresponding minimum GPA on postsecondary transcript.
ADULT Students	
Age < 25	First time in college freshman: Meet Board of Regents Minimum Admission Standards for First Time Freshmen, with Board of Regents' Core in place at time of graduation from high school. Transfer student: Meet Board of Regents Minimum Admission Standards for Transfer Students.
Age ≥ 25	Freshman (first time in college) or Transfer Students: Meet the University's Admission Requirements for Adults (≥25); may need no more than one developmental/refresher course.

* Flagship: LSU. Statewide: LA Tech, ULL, UNO. Regional: Grambling, LSU-A, LSU-S, McNeese, Nicholls, NSU, SLU, SU, SUNO, ULM.