

**Hines-Cobb, Carol**

---

**Subject:** FW: Question concerning BOG Regulation 8.011

---

**From:** Stevens, Richard [<mailto:Richard.Stevens@fbog.edu>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 06, 2015 9:00 AM

**To:** Smith, Dwayne (Academic Affairs)

**Cc:** Richarde, R. Stephen; Ignash, Jan

**Subject:** Re: Question concerning BOG Regulation 8.011

Dr. Smith

When we drafted Regulation 8.011 the intent was to provide universities with as much program flexibility as possible without opening the door for complete degree programs to be implemented under an existing CIP code without going through the approval process. Although the number of "common core courses" were not specified, as a rule of thumb we would expect a major to share a third to half of the courses as other majors in the same CIP. A concentration as defined under (7) (a) could not rise to the level of a major (see excerpt below) and typically would be accomplished using differentiated electives as you suggest.

(7) Authorization of Other Academic Curricular Offerings - Each university board of trustees shall ensure that the university has policies consistent with this regulation and applicable accreditation standards for the approval, implementation, and review of other types of academic curricular offerings as defined in sections (7) (a)-(c) of this regulation. Copies of each university's policies for approving other academic curricular offerings shall be provided to the Board of Governors Office.

(a) Program Minor, Concentration, Area of Emphasis, Track, or a similar curricular offering. - Any organized curriculum that is offered as part of a degree program and enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner which leads to specific educational or occupational goals. Such a curricular offering shall be as defined by the university with the credit-hour length set in accordance with university policy, except that the number of credits hours shall not equal or exceed the number of credits established for a program major at the same degree level.

So the proposed curriculum must first meet the definitions of a major which requires a common core, before it can be broken into concentrations. Technically the BOG regulation allows concentrations to have very different courses that make up each track, as long as the overall curriculum adheres to the definition of the major. But please note that Regulation 8.011 also requires the Board of Trustees to ensure policies are in place to implement program offerings under (7) (a-c), so the expectation is that policies set by the university administration under the guidance of the university board would be followed. If USF requires 9 credit hours of similar courses for concentrations under a major, then I think you are on solid ground for rejecting a 6 credit hour version.

Hope this helps. I am home sick today, so I am copying Vice Chancellor Ignash so that she can correct any misstatements I may have made.

Richard

**From:** Smith, Dwayne (Academic Affairs) <[mdsmith8@usf.edu](mailto:mdsmith8@usf.edu)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 5, 2015 4:38 PM

**To:** Stevens, Richard

**Cc:** Richarde, R. Stephen

**Subject:** Question concerning BOG Regulation 8.011

Mr. Stevens –

Steve Richarde has suggested that I contact you with a question that's recently arisen here at USF. We're in a bit of an internal dust-up over interpretation of a clause in BOG Regulation 8.011, the relevant section of one is shown below. The issue is that we have a College proposing a major that has "concentrations" (aka tracks). We've held that all the concentrations need to have a common core of courses, then can be developed further by differentiated electives. Our interpretation of the section shown below underlies our insistence. The College has challenged this interpretation, suggesting instead that there has to be some common courses offered, but all do not have to be the same. To be more specific, all but one of the concentrations have a 9 hour (3 course) common set of courses, except one, which has six of the hours (2 courses) shared by the others. We're insisting on the need for the outlier concentration to have a 9-hour core that matches the others, citing the section below. As indicated, the College is challenging that interpretation so that they may retain the one concentration that has only 6 hours of common courses.

Admittedly, this is a minor issue in the larger scheme of things. But we strive for consistency in our offerings, and while not insisting that all cores must have a set number of hours, we have required that the core courses be the same within a major. If we have misinterpreted the intent of the regulation, we'll stop citing the BOG as the reason for our requirement and decide where to take it from there. Any clarification you can provide would be greatly appreciated.

With appreciation in advance,

*Dwayne Smith*

Senior Vice Provost & Dean, Office of Graduate Studies

---

URL:

[http://www.flbog.edu/documents\\_regulations/regulations/8\\_011New%20Program%20Auth\\_reg%20final%20clean.pdf](http://www.flbog.edu/documents_regulations/regulations/8_011New%20Program%20Auth_reg%20final%20clean.pdf)

Page 1:

(b) Program Major – An organized curriculum offered as part or all of an existing or proposed degree program. A program major shall be reasonably associated with the degree program under which it is offered and **shall share common core courses** with any other majors within the same degree program. Although in some cases the major and the degree program names are synonymous, only the degree program shall be assigned a CIP Code and shall be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory as a stand-alone program. The number of credit hours for a program major for each degree level shall be established by the university within the parameters of paragraph (3) (a) 6c.