

# Excess Credit Hour Surcharge

## Frequently Asked Questions

- [What is Excess Credit Hour Surcharge?](#)

In 2009, the Florida Legislature implemented [Section 1009.286, Florida Statutes](#) to encourage students to complete their baccalaureate degree as quickly and efficiently as possible. It established what is commonly referred to as an "Excess Credit Hour Surcharge." The bill requires universities to add a surcharge to each credit hour taken in excess of the total number of credit hours required to complete the degree being pursued. The amount in excess of the total hours is calculated based on a percentage defined in law and is referred to by Florida State University as the threshold percentage. The amount charged per credit hour is a calculated amount referred to as the surcharge.

If you entered college as an undergraduate for the first time at a State University between and including Fall 2009 and Summer 2011, you are subject to a threshold percentage of 120%. For example, if you are in a degree program that requires 120 semester hours to graduate, you will be subject to the excess credit hour surcharge for any credits taken after you reach 144 semester hours (120% of 120 semester hours). The excess hours surcharge equal to 50% of the tuition rate for each credit hour in excess of 144 for students in a 120-hour degree program.

If you entered college as an undergraduate for the first time at a State University between and including Fall 2011 and Summer 2012, you are subject to a threshold percentage of 115%. For example, if you are in a degree program that requires 120 semester hours to graduate, you will be subject to the excess credit hour surcharge for any credits taken after you reach 138 semester hours (115% of 120 semester hours). The excess hours surcharge equal to 100% of the tuition rate for each credit hour in excess of 138 for students in a 120-hour degree program.

In 2012 the Legislature modified the statute and changed the threshold to 110% for students entering in Fall 2012 or later. For example, if you are in a degree program that requires 120 semester hours to graduate, you will be subject to the excess credit hour surcharge for any credits taken after you reach 132 semester hours (110% of 120 semester hours). Furthermore, the Legislature added language that states that students who break enrollment, as defined by FIU, are subject to the current thresholds and surcharges in effect for the semester they return to the University. Depending on future legislative changes, this could be lower thresholds or higher surcharge costs for students that break enrollment.

### [How much extra will I have to pay?](#)

The surcharge percentage is determined by your start date.

If you started between and including Fall 2009 and Summer 2011, the surcharge is 50% of the normal tuition rate. For example, one semester hour of credit may cost \$173.26; however, if it is subject to the excess credit hour surcharge, the same one semester hour of credit will cost \$221.10. (Note: The cost is not \$259.89 because the 50% surcharge is assessed only on the tuition portion of the semester hour cost, not on the fees.)

If you started in Fall 2011 or later, the surcharge is 100% of the normal tuition rate. For example, one semester hour of credit may cost \$173.26; however, if it is subject to the excess credit hour surcharge, the same one semester hour of credit will cost \$273.26.

**Note:** Tuition rates above are for example purposes only. Visit <http://finance.fiu.edu/controller/index.html> for the most current tuition rates.

- [Can FIU waive the Excess Credit Hours fee?](#)

No, an institution cannot waive the fee. The language of the statute is mandatory.

- [Can I appeal to review the number of credit hours in my Excess Credit hour counter?](#)

Florida law is very specific about what courses are included in your excess credit counter. The law is also very specific about what can be excluded and what can be removed. However, if you think that you have courses that should be excluded or removed from your Excess Credit Counter, you must complete and submit a written appeal by the appropriate deadline with any supporting documentation that you might have to the Office of the University Registrar. The University Excess Credit Hour Appeal Committee will review your documentation against the statutory requirements and respond back to you with a final decision.

**Deadline for appealing the number of credit hours in your initial Excess Credit Hour counter:** Appeals of the initial counter determination must be received during your first 12 months at FIU, no exceptions. Under Florida law, appeals to the initial counter total that are received after the first 12 months of enrollment cannot be considered.

**Deadline for appealing credit earned while in attendance at FIU:** Appeals of credit hours added to your counter after enrollment must be submitted within one year of the course being taken, or the credit being posted to your FIU transcript and added to your Excess Credit Hour counter.

**Only the following circumstances are considered acceptable basis for appeals under Florida law:**

- College credit earned through articulated accelerated mechanisms such as AP, IB, CLEP, dual enrollment, national standardized tests (ACT or SAT), etc. as defined in [Section 1007.27, Florida Statutes](#)
- Credit hours earned through internship
- Credit hours required for certification, recertification, or certificate programs
- Courses from which the student withdraws for reasons of medical or personal hardship
- Credit taken by active-duty military personnel
- Credit hours taken to achieve a dual major while pursuing a baccalaureate degree
- Remedial and English-as-a-second-language credit hours
- Credit hours earned while participating in a Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program.
- [What credit hours count towards Excess Credit Hours?](#)
  - Failed courses.
  - Hours dropped after the University's drop/add period
  - Courses from which a student withdraws
  - Repeated courses. Exception: repeated courses for which the student has paid the repeat course surcharge
  - All credit earned at another institution and accepted for transfer and applied toward the baccalaureate degree program
- [What credit hours do not count towards Excess Credit Hours?](#)
  - College credit earned through articulated accelerated mechanisms such as AP, IB, CLEP, AICE, or dual enrollment
  - Credit hours earned through internship
  - Credit hours required for certification, recertification, or certificate programs
  - Courses from which the student withdraws for reasons of medical or personal hardship
  - Credit taken by active-duty military personnel

- Credit hours taken to achieve a dual major while pursuing a baccalaureate degree
- Remedial and English-as-a-second-language credit hours
- Credit hours earned while participating in a Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program

- [What if I am pursuing a dual majors/degree?](#)

For the purpose of calculating your excess credit counter, the credits earned toward either a dual degree or a dual major are all included in the total. It might be possible to separate your credit, but only in cases where documentation exists that the credit in question counts only to the second major or dual degree and cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements for the primary program. If you have added a dual major or degree and think you may be in this situation, you are encouraged to talk with your academic advisor about your Excess Credit Hour situation.

- [Are second bachelor's degrees included?](#)

Second bachelor's degrees are not excluded from the Excess Credit Hour law. However, since most second bachelor's degrees only require that you complete an extra 30-40 hours, you most likely will not end up in an excess credit hour situation.

- [What about internships?](#)

The University will exclude internship hours automatically from your excess credit total whenever possible. However, it is not always possible to identify internship on the academic record of a student, especially when taken at another institution. If you feel that your excess credit hour total includes internship hours, you should submit an appeal for an adjustment to your Excess Credit Hour total. Cooperative educational experiences, directed individual studies, and other one-on-one instructional course are not considered internship under this law.

- [What about credit for Certification?](#)

Courses that are part of the class instruction preparation for a professional certification exam may be excluded from your excess credit total. Examples of these might be a computer science class that prepares you for a Microsoft certification exam, or a foundational education class that prepares you for a teacher certification exam. In these cases, the one specific course that prepares you for the exam may be excluded from your total, but not all courses in the degree program.

- [What about credit I earned while on active duty military?](#)

All credit earned while on active duty is exempt from the Excess Credit Hour law. Documenting active duty military service is something that we do not currently track, so it is critical that you let us know of any credit that you have earned while on active duty. You will need to submit a written request and you should include a copy of your DD214 as part of the appeal.

- [Do graduate courses count?](#)

Graduate courses are included in your Excess Credit Hour count if they are being used toward your baccalaureate degree. Credit that is only used for the graduate degree will be excluded.

- [What if I take a course as a transient student at another institution? Will that count toward excess hours?](#)

Yes. All courses taken as part of your degree program will count unless they are among the list of exemptions approved by law.

- [What happens to my Excess Credit Hour Counter when I change majors?](#)

When you elect to change your major, it is possible that your new major selection will change which courses are degree applicable. Note: Once the original Excess Hours review has been completed, the courses that are determined to be degree applicable will always be included in the Excess Hour Counter even if you change to a major in which they are no longer degree applicable. In most cases like this, everything that was used in the initial review will remain in your counter. Those new courses that are NOW degree applicable will be added to your counter.

- [How does this work with an undecided/undeclared major?](#)

Your Excess Credit Hour counter is determined after completion of a review of your incoming transfer credit and a determination of what is applicable to your declared major or degree program. Since you do not have a declared major, almost everything will count. Once you declare a major, any additional credits that can apply towards the major will be determined and added to your Excess Credit Hour Counter.

**Florida Statute 1009.286.Excess Credit Hours -**

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.html?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=1000-1099/1009/Sections/1009.286.htm](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.html?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=1000-1099/1009/Sections/1009.286.htm)