



Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Ian D. MacFarlane
Chairperson

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 22, 2020

TO: Maryland Higher Education Commissioners

FROM: Emily A. A. Dow, Ph.D., Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Proposed COMAR Changes to Add New Definition: First-time with Advanced Standing

A new definition is needed for high school students who have earned college credit while in high school. The proposed regulatory changes provide a new definition, “first-time student with advanced standing,” and includes edits that are inclusive of this burgeoning population.

Dual enrollment opportunities (i.e., the opportunity to take college coursework while enrolled in high school) have increased significantly over the past several years. Subsequently, many students are graduating high school with college credit. Under current Maryland regulations, these recent high school graduates with college credit are technically considered “transfer students” when they enroll for the first time after graduating high school. By considering these recent high school graduates as transfer students, they are often awarded the benefits of transfer students, such as the ability to transfer their college credits earned while in high school. However, the benefits of being a “first-time student” may not be provided when a student is considered a transfer student, and advantages such as specific freshman scholarships, access to specific freshman housing, orientation, and other opportunities to ensure student success may be denied.

For these reasons, a new definition is needed to characterize “first-time” students who transfer college credit earned while in high school. Institutions will be able to use this new definition to maximize all opportunities, both as a first-time student and as a student who is transferring college credit that was earned while in high school.

In addition to the proposed new definitions, the proposed changes include revisions that are inclusive to students with advanced standing.

The proposed changes have been discussed at length with the Student Transfer Advisory Council and circulated to various stakeholders. There has been general endorsement of the proposed changes.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Commission approve for publication in the Maryland Register the enclosed regulations regarding the addition of new definitions and relevant changes, and authorize MHEC's attorneys to approve non-substantive revisions as necessary to conform the proposed regulations to the stylistic and formatting requirements of AELR and of the Division of State Documents.