

PURPOSE, DEFINITION, and LIST OF “APPROVED FIVE-YEAR BACHELOR’S DEGREE PROGRAMS”

Purpose

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) has approved a small group of undergraduate programs as “five-year bachelor’s degree programs.” This designation serves two important purposes:

1. To permit appropriate academic distinctions between programs which are properly and essentially “five-year” in their duration from those which might merely take individual students five-years to complete
2. To allow the Commission to award students appropriate state scholarship funding for such programs

Definition

Regulation for the LIFE Scholarship and South Carolina Code of Laws (Section 59-149-60) state that a student “may receive a LIFE Scholarship *for not more than ten semesters for a five-year degree program, eight semesters for a four-year degree program, four semesters for a two-year program, or two semesters for a one-year certificate or diploma program.*” (Italics added.)

Regulation for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and South Carolina Code of Laws (Section 59-104-20) state that the award “may be renewed annually for no more than a total of eight terms (based on the date of initial college enrollment) toward the first bachelor’s degree or a program of study that is structured so as not to require a bachelor’s degree and leads to a graduate degree *or for no more than a total of ten terms (based on the date of initial college enrollment) toward the first approved five-year bachelor’s degree.*” (Italics added.)

The Commission on Higher Education recognizes a bachelor’s degree program as “five-year” when the following two attributes are present:

1. Upon completion, the program leads to the awarding of a bachelor’s degree.
2. The program is structured around sufficient academic credit hours (approximately 150) so as to require ten semesters to complete.

List of Five-Year Bachelor’s Degree Programs Approved by CHE

The following degree programs were identified by the institutions when the programs were approved. Students enrolled in these programs are eligible for ten terms

of funding through the legislatively-mandated LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarships. Any new programs qualifying as five-year bachelor's degree programs will be added to this list upon approval and implementation.

Public Institutions

Clemson University:

- Bachelor of Landscape Architecture

Independent Institutions

Charleston Southern University:

- Bachelor of Music Therapy

Limestone College:

- Bachelor of Arts, Music Education

“3+2” Programs Not Eligible

Eligibility for ten terms of scholarship funding through the LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarships does not include inter-institutional, cooperative “3+2” programs (normally in a science degree field and an engineering program). The model followed by these programs is for a student to complete three academic years at the “home” institution and two additional years at the second or “receiving” institution, at the end of which time the student will be awarded two undergraduate degrees (one from each institution). In some cases, the degree from the “home” institution may have been completed at the end of the first year at the “receiving” institution, but the two degrees normally are both conferred only at the conclusion of the second year at the “receiving” institution. In some cases of “3+2” programs, the first degree is an undergraduate degree and the second degree is a graduate degree. In none of these cases is the student eligible for more than eight terms of scholarship funding under either the LIFE Scholarship or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship regulations.

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