

Governors State University
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Governors State University is in compliance with federal regulations. The documents supporting this claim are available in the evidence room and are summarized below.

Credits, Program Length and Tuition

Governors State University's policies and practices regarding credits, program length and tuition can be found in the *Governors State University 2009-2011 Catalog* and online in various locations. The current *Catalog*, as well as previous ones, is online at: <http://www.govst.edu/catalog/>. GSU's courses are offered in credit hour units. The vast majority of courses offered equate to three (3) credit hours (74.5% in FA09). In fall 2009, 18.3% were shorter (FA09: 14.1% = 1 credit hour and 4.2% = 2 credit hours) and 7.1% were worth 4 or more credit hours. For clinical, practicum, or independent study courses the ratio of clock hours to credit hours is specified by the program and is communicated to students through the catalog and program handbooks. The practice hours are set to meet requirements for licensure or certification.

All undergraduate degree programs require a minimum of 120 credit hours for graduation. All masters-level degree programs require a minimum of 32 credit hours. The maximum number of credit hours required for a masters degree is 98 (Master of Occupational Therapy). The length of each of the 25 masters programs can be found in the aforementioned *Catalog*. The doctorate in Nursing requires 44-47 credit hours if the student enters with a masters and 86-89 credit hours if the student enters with a baccalaureate degree. Similarly, the doctorate in occupational therapy requires 42 hours if the student enters with a masters and 82 hours without. The doctorate in physical therapy requires 120 hours. The transitional doctorate in physical therapy is designed for practicing physical therapists and requires 33 credit hours for a student who enters with a masters in physical therapy or 42 hours for a student who enters with bachelors in physical therapy.

There is no differentiated tuition at the undergraduate level except between in-state and out-of-state residents. One caveat, GSU does not charge out-of-state tuition to students who take courses through the School of Extended Learning (which offers online, correspondence, telecourses and off-site courses). GSU participates in Illinois's tuition guarantee (which states that a student's tuition will not increase during the first four years after he/she first enrolls). For undergraduate Illinois residents beginning at GSU in fall 2009, tuition is \$224/credit hour and will not increase unless they continue to enroll past fall 2013. For an undergraduate who is a non-Illinois resident starting at GSU in fall 2009 taking on-ground courses, tuition is \$560/credit hour for AY0910.

With the exception of the masters in occupational therapy degree (MOT), tuition for all masters degrees is also differentiated only along in-state/out-of-state lines (except that, again, out-of-state residents do not pay out-of-state tuition for Extended Learning courses nor do Indiana residents, employed in Illinois as teachers, pay out-of-state tuition). For Illinois residents completing a masters degree, tuition in AY0910 is \$245/credit hour. It is \$675/credit hour for non-Illinois residents. The respective tuition costs for the MOT students are \$343 and \$981/credit hour.

Tuition for the doctorates in nursing practice and occupational therapy is \$578/credit hour for in-state and \$900/credit hour for out-of-state residents. Tuition for both the doctorate in physical therapy and the transitional doctorate is \$431/credit hour for Illinois residents and \$900/credit hour for non-Illinois residents (with the exception once again of Extended Learning courses which are priced the same as for the in-state residents).

Differential tuition for the masters degrees in occupational therapy and physical therapy and for the doctorate in physical therapy was approved by the Board of Trustees (BoT) at their regular

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meeting on March 17, 2006. Discussion of this matter is also found in the BoT's Finance and Budget Committee's minutes from February 24, 2006. Both sets of minutes as well as early drafts of the proposal from the dean are in the evidence room. The decision to create differential tuition was made only after a thorough study conducted by the then College of the Health Professions to explore comparable pricing options, and after numerous discussions between the dean of that college and the director of Budget, Financial Planning and Institutional Research (now Deputy VP of Administration and Finance). The justifications for the differential tuition for the College of Health and Human Services' additional doctoral programs are contained in the Requests for a New Unit of Instruction (RNUI) that were submitted to both the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the HLC at the time the new programs were proposed. These RNUIs are available in the evidence room.

Student Complaints

As stated in the *Governors State University Student Handbook & Daily Planner, 2009-2010*, pages 28-29, the academic grievance process allows students "to request an explanation, reconsideration, and review of a faculty member's and/or administrator's professional judgment related to the issuance of grades, academic advising, and other academic related issues." Academic grievances are submitted initially to the division/department chair of the collegial unit in which the course(s) is offered. The *Student Handbook & Planner, 2009-2010*, describes the college processes for responding to students' grievances. The non-academic grievance process (page 31) allows students the right "to request an explanation, reconsideration, and review of a faculty member's and/or administrator's professional judgment related to non-academic issues." The non-academic grievance policy is "applicable to student complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, or other unfair treatment related to non-academic issues." The *Handbook* also includes a list of specific non-academic grievances that students should file with the director of Human Resources.

Student complaints are directed to one of two places (Provost's Office or Student Affairs and Services Office) depending on the content of the complaint. Each office has provided the description below of its process for dealing with the complaints and a table summarizing the distribution of complaints over the last three years. The Provost's Office has placed documents supporting their summary in the Evidence Room (this includes their log of complaints and the files pertaining to them) while the Student Affairs and Services Office will make their log and files available to the HLC team upon request.

Provost's Office

There are two primary situations that lead students to expressing complaints and/or concerns to the Provost's Office. One is that they have talked with or followed procedures for trying to resolve an issue with faculty, division/department chairs, and/or deans and feel the issue has not been resolved; and secondly, even though policies and procedures are in place for students to file complaints or express concerns, they often start with the Provost or President's Office. Students who file a complaint with the President's Office are immediately referred to the Provost's Office. Those students who have not attempted to resolve an issue in the college are usually referred back to the faculty member, chair, and/or dean depending on the issue. If the issue is not resolved in the college, the Provost's Office staff, usually the Associate Provost, will meet with the student and attempt to resolve the issue. For those students who have attempted to resolve an issue in the college and come to the Provost's Office for assistance, the Associate Provost meets with them and attempts to resolve the issue. These resolution attempts most frequently involve speaking with all concerned parties and trying to figure out wherein lays the truth of the matter and then finding, if possible, a solution that satisfies all parties.

Complaint Categories	AY2006-07	AY2007-08	AY2008-09
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Admission When Not Meeting Requirements and/or Re-Admission to GSU Following a Second Suspension	8	10	5
Complaint Regarding Behavior of Professor, i.e. office hours, returning papers, following syllabi, etc., Misinformation Regarding Advising	6	2	2
Grade Appeals	9	9	3
Financial Aid/Financial Need	1	1	0
Graduation and/or Certification Issues	3	6	2
TOTAL	27	28	12

Student Affairs and Services

For non-academic matters that do not fall into the categories of discrimination, harassment, or other unfair treatment, students “may file a written complaint with the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students (AVPSA/DOS) or his/her designee.” The AVPSA/DOS contacts the student to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and to solicit more information if necessary. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the AVPSA/DOS contacts the appropriate person/unit/department to gather information to confirm/verify the facts as stated in the written complaint. After reviewing the data included in the complaint and gathering appropriate information, the AVPSA/DOS will make a decision about the complaint based on the information gathered and the University’s policies and procedures. The AVPSA/DOS notifies the student of her decision.

Complaints Regarding Department/Unit	AY2006-07	AY2007-08	AY2008-09
Admissions	2	0	3
Business Office	2	0	6
Career Services	0	0	2
Colleges	2	1	4
Financial Aid	0	0	8
Registrar	0	4	16
Student Life/Recreation Center	0	1	4
Misc.	0	4	5
TOTAL	6	10	48

Transfer Policies

GSU’s transfer policies are readily available to all who might be interested. They are described in the *2009-2011 Catalog* on pp. 11, 13, 14, 16, 34, 47, 49-51 (this is the general overview for undergraduates), 53, 56-57 (this is the general overview for masters-level students) and 59. As mentioned earlier, the catalog is also online.

GSU participates in the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) which is a statewide mechanism designed to allow students to transfer readily from one Illinois institution to another. The IAI has established a General Education Core Curriculum (GECC) that is common to all IAI member institutions. GSU accepts all courses in the GECC toward its general education requirements, although it does not require that a student complete his/her general education coursework before matriculating at GSU. For more information regarding IAI, please see the IAI website at: www.itransfer.org. In addition, GSU has two policies related to transfer credit. They are policies 31 (Transfer Credit for Undergraduates) and 30 (Transfer Credit for Graduate Students). Both of these policies are found online in the University Policy Manual at www.govst.edu/provost/t_provost.aspx?id=2225.

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The university is also just beginning to use new degree audit software (the first students it is being applied to are undergraduates applying for admission to GSU for winter 2010) that formalizes every degree program's individual course transfer rules. By fall 2010, we expect that students will be able to view their degree audits without advisor assistance via Student View. Currently, the students have to sit down with an advisor to see their degree audits. Because all undergraduates at GSU are transfer students, the new degree audit program will greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to determine exactly what credits a student will/won't be granted and will facilitate the students' receiving timely advising about what they have left to complete.

Verification of Student Identity

The current practice for verification of student identity for students enrolled in distance learning courses that prohibit them from coming to the campus is coordinated through the School of Extended Learning. The process is documented through the use of a proctor request form that can be completed online at www.govst.edu/sxl/test. Students can also call 800.478.8478 (extension 3973) to request a test proctor and they will be sent a form to complete and return. The process is coordinated by a test coordinator in the School of Extended Learning. The faculty member teaching the course provides written instructions to the test coordinator. If the course tests are online, the faculty member assigns a password. The test coordinator contacts the test proctor assigned to proctor the exam and provides information about accessing the exam online, the exam password, the student(s) name and ID number. If the exam is proctored in a classroom, the proctor is provided with the exam and instructions which include time allowed and whether the exam is open book or closed. The student is required upon arrival to provide a photo ID, the name of the course and the exam they will be taking, and their GSU ID number. Upon completion of the exam, the proctor has the student sign the exam form and the information is returned to the test coordinator at GSU.

GSU's has plans to improve its procedures for verification of student identity within the Blackboard system we use for online instruction. Currently, students have to use their student ID to log in to the Blackboard system, but we can't guarantee that the student who logged in is the student who registered for the course. In 2009, GSU entered into an agreement with Acxiom which will, among other things, provide an online authentication system which will ask students questions about themselves (drawn from public records) that only the correct individual should know the answers to. The document describing this new procedure is in the evidence room.

Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities

General Program Responsibilities and Financial Responsibility Requirements

Governors State University has placed ten years of financial and compliance audit reports in the evidence room for review by the Higher Learning Commission's Site Review Team. Compliance audits are conducted in accordance with the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133. In addition to placing electronic copies of those reports in the vault, we offer below a more detailed discussion of the audit findings received and recorded in the compliance reports for FY08, 07 and 06, and of the university's responses to each.

Fiscal Year 2008: In Fiscal Year 2008, Governors State University received two audit findings related to Title IV Student Financial Aid funds. Since receiving these findings, the university has assembled cross-functional teams to address them by improving internal processes by which Title IV funds are administered, so as to ensure future compliance and non-repetition of these findings.

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The first finding, No. 08-01, *Financial Aid Awarded to Students in Unapproved Locations*, was for providing financial aid to students in one unapproved location. The steps taken to rectify this finding from FY07 (see below) were completed too late to preclude the repeat of this finding in FY08, but will result in no further continuation of this finding in FY09.

The second finding, No. 08-02, *Reconciliation of Student Assistance Programs*, resulted in excess cash being draw-down from the Department of Education for the Pell, Smart and Federal Direct Loan Programs. In response to this, the university implemented a cross-departmental reconciliation procedure to preclude future excess draw-downs against Title IV programs.

Fiscal Year 2007: In Fiscal year 2007, Governors State University received two audit findings related to Title IV Funds and as a result was required to repay the Department of Education \$14,688.87.

The first finding No. 07-01, *Financial Aid Awarded to Students in Unapproved Locations* was for providing financial aid to students in three unapproved locations. Two of the locations were approved on January 31, 2008. In attempting to get approval for the third location, Oswego, it was discovered that this location was not in the university's regular service region; therefore, it required IBHE approval as well as HLC approval to be recorded as an appropriate site for the awarding of Title IV financial aid. After an extensive review period, Governors State received IBHE approval for the Oswego Location in April 2008.

The second finding, No. 07-02, *Return of Title IV Funds* was for incorrectly calculating the amount needed to be reimbursed to the Department of Education for students who withdrew from courses and as a result reduced their eligibility for Title IV funds. The Financial Aid office corrected this error in October 2007.

Fiscal Year 2006: In Fiscal Year 2006, Governors State University received two audit findings related to Title IV Funds.

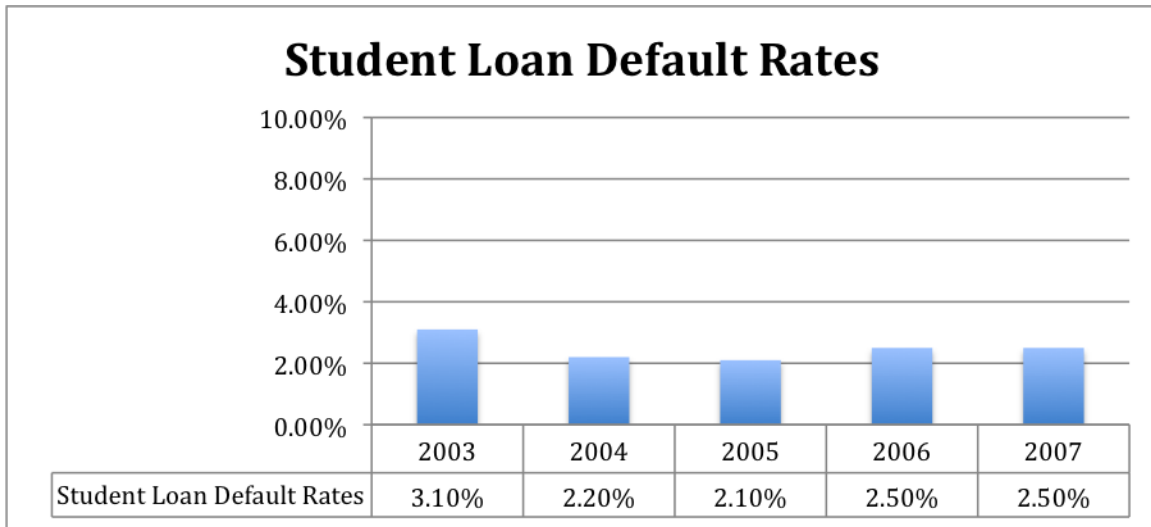
The first finding, No. 06-02, *Over-Award of Federal Pell Grants* was for over-awarding Pell grants to two students for a total of \$1,263.00. The awards to both students were the result of human error. The university corrected these errors and more thoroughly trained the staff members involved, and the finding was not repeated in subsequent years.

The second finding, No. 06-03, *Exit Counseling Not Performed* was for not providing exit counseling to 14 students who dropped below at least half-time status as a result of withdrawing from some of the courses for which they were registered. The university corrected this error and the finding was not repeated in subsequent years.

Student Loan Default Rates

As can be seen in the figure below, GSU has had a very low student loan default rate over the last 5 years.

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Campus Crime and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information

The Department of Public Safety posts the *Campus Right-to-Know Crime Report* online every year (www.govst.edu/cleryact/). As a review of our crime statistics will reveal, GSU has a particularly low crime rate. The university has not been subject to any findings and has been determined to be in compliance with the federal directives.

Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies

Policy 14 (Academic Standing Policy) describes GSU's policy with regard to satisfactory academic progress. It is posted on the web at www.govst.edu/policy/list.aspx?sort=n and, thus, is readily available for anyone who might want to find it. The only university-level policy with regard to student attendance is Policy 38 (Reasonable Accommodation for Students' Religious Observances). This policy is available at the same website as Policy 14.

Contractual Relationships

GSU does not have any contractual relationships whereby third parties provide 25%-50% of the academic content of degree programs.

Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruiting Materials

Governors State University's Office of Public Affairs produces three documents that refer to the university's accreditation status – the *University Catalog*, *Viewbook*, and *Fact Card*. All three documents are produced on an annual basis and available to the general public including, but not limited to, students, community members, faculty, and staff. The *University Catalog* and recruitment *Viewbook* are available in both print and electronic form (the catalog URL has already been provided, the *Viewbook* is located at www.govst.edu/empoweryourself/t_recruitment.aspx?id=3685. The *Fact Card* is available only as a hard copy document.

Public Affairs produced materials contain the following text as an indication of accreditation status:

1. University Catalog: "Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The university is also a member of the Illinois Council of

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Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs. Each program is accredited by a professional accrediting agency in each case where there is a national accreditation body. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60602-2504; 312.263.0456; 800.621.7440 FAX: 312.263.7462; E-mail: Info@ncacihe.org.”

2. Viewbook: “GSU is fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.”
3. Fact Card: “Governors State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.”

The Office of Institutional Research publishes an online Fact Book annually (www.govst.edu/Institutional_Research/default.aspx?id=21066). The text in 2008-2009 Fact Book regarding accreditation reads “Governors State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The university is also a member of the Illinois Council of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs. Each program, where appropriate, is accredited by a professional accrediting agency in each case where there is a national accreditation body.” The 2009-2010 Fact Book, which will be published before the team arrives, will also include the HLC address and phone number as required by the HLC. This year was the first in which the IR Office also created an online “dashboard” to monitor the strategic plan (www.govst.edu/Institutional_Research/dashboard.aspx?id=27452). The dashboard contains accrediting information under goal 1 of the strategic plan and the mention of HLC accreditation is linked to the HLC homepage.

Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Bodies

GSU is in good standing with all of its accrediting bodies and regulatory agencies. These are:

- American Chemical Society (ACS) Committee on Professional Training
- Assoc. for Childhood Education International (ACEI)
- Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP)
- Association of Schools of Journalism & Mass Communication
- Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA)
- Commission on Accreditation Council on Social Work Education
- Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME)
- Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

(CACREP)

- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- Council on Academic Accreditation in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

(CAA) of ASHA

- Council on Social Work Education
- Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC)
- Illinois Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Professional Certification Association Inc.
- Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)
- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- International Reading Association (IRA)
- National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA)
- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)
- National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)
- National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)
- Natl. Assoc. for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)

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Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment

Governors State University used a multi-faceted approach to inform its constituencies about the solicitation of third-party comments. Notice of the third-party comment procedure was distributed using the following methods/mediums:

- President's Letter – GSU's President, Dr. Elaine Maimon, mailed a personal letter to a comprehensive external distribution list containing approximately 3,000 community contacts (i.e. business leaders, elected officials, educators, healthcare administrators, etc)
- GSU Website – A notice was placed on the GSU website homepage with a link to a PDF version of Dr. Maimon's letter
- GSU View – Third party comments were solicited via the university's internal newsletter, the GSU View.
- Legal Notice – A public legal notice was published in the primary regional newspapers: Southtown Star, Northwest Indiana Times, and Kankakee Daily Journal.
- Press Release – A press release was sent to all local media outlets per a press distribution list provided by the Office of Public Affairs. The release was picked up as a news story in several local papers including the largest regional paper, the Southtown Star.