FAQ’s for Excess Hour Surcharges
Answers to how they may affect you in pursuit of your degree

Q. If I pay out-of-state, non-Florida resident tuition rates, will the surcharge be assessed at that same rate?
A. The surcharge is assessed only at in-state tuition rate for all students and only on the tuition portion of the semester hour cost, not on the fees.

Q. Do graduate courses count?
A. Yes, graduate courses are included in your Excess Credit Hour Counter if they are being used towards your baccalaureate degree. Credit that is only used for the graduate degree will be excluded.

Q. What if I take a course as a transient student at another institution? Will that count toward excess hours?
A. Yes. All courses taken as part of your degree program will count unless they are among the list of exemptions approved by law.

Q. What happens to my Excess Credit Hour Counter when I change majors?
A. 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.

Q. How does the State of Florida define dual enrollment credit for purposes of the Excess Credit Hour Surcharge?
A. Dual enrollment credit is credit earned prior to the student’s recorded date of high school graduation. Dual enrollment credits taken in a term will be exempted; however, the Dual Enrollment Term cannot be used as a student’s entry term to exclude the student from the surcharge or statute.

Q. How does this work with an undecided/undeclared major?
A. 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.

Q. Are second bachelor’s degrees included?
A. 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. You would not be assessed the excess credit hour surcharge until you had exceeded 120% of the hours required for the first degree program (based on an entry date of 2009). In most cases this would be 144 hours. Then, if you add an additional 30 for the second bachelor’s degree, you would have a total of 174 credits for both degrees before you would pay an excess credit hour surcharge. Neither institutional or transfer hours attempted, that are not applicable to the second degree, are subject to the surcharge. NOTE: If your entry date falls between Fall 2011 and Summer 2012, the percentage allowed decreases to 115% of total hours for the first degree, and if your entry date falls in Fall 2012 or later, the percentage allowed decreases to 110% of the total hours for the first degree.

Q. What about Internships?
A. Internships, whether optional or required, are excluded from your counter. The University will exclude these hours automatically from your excess credit counter whenever possible. However, it is not always possible to identify internships on the academic record of a student, especially when taken at another institution. If you feel that your excess credit hour counter includes internship hours, please contact the Registrar’s Office at registrar@usf.edu. Cooperative educational experiences, independent studies, and other one-on-one instructional courses are not considered internships under this law.

Q. What about credit for Certification?
A. Certain courses that have as part of the class instruction preparation for a professional certification exam may be excluded from your excess credit counter. 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 counter, but not all courses in the degree program.

Q. What about credit I earned while on active duty military?
A. 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 requires and you should include a copy of your DD214 as part of the appeal.