

STATEMENT ON REDUCED CREDIT-HOUR DEGREE PROGRAMS

21 November 2024

The Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) recently issued guidance on offering reduced-credit (90 credit-hour) bachelor's programs. In response to this guidance, the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CDHE) are considering future revisions to Colorado Revised Statutes section 23-1-125(1)(a) and/or section 23-1-125(2) that might allow for reduced credit-hour degree programs (i.e., "bachelor's" degree programs with fewer than 120 credit hours) at four-year institutions of higher education in Colorado.

With this context in mind, the Colorado State University (CSU) Faculty Council Executive Committee does not support the use of the 'bachelor's' label for reduced credit-hour degrees, as it would cause confusion for both students and employers, and advocates for a broader conversation around naming of these degrees.

While the CSU Faculty Council Executive Committee supports expanding options for students and broadening access to higher education in general, we believe such an impactful change should be implemented thoughtfully and in collaboration with the institutions that will be asked to deliver these programs.