

Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE)
Negotiated Rulemaking - Session 2, November 3 through 7, 2025
#4 Proposed Draft Regulations
Section 685.102 Definitions

Amend § 685.102 by revising paragraph (b) to read as follows:

§ 685.102 Definitions.

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(b) * * *

Expected time to credential: From July 1, 2026, the expected time for a student to complete a program that is equal to or the lesser of—

(1) three academic years, as defined in 34 CFR 668.3; or

(2) the period determined by calculating the difference between—

(i) the program length for the program of study in which the individual is enrolled; and

(ii) the period of such program of study that such individual has completed as of the date of the determination under paragraph (2) of this definition.

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Graduate student: A student enrolled in a program of study that is above the baccalaureate level and awards a graduate credential (other than a professional degree) upon completion of the program.

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Professional student: A student enrolled in a program of study that awards a professional degree upon completion of the program;

- (1) A professional degree is a degree that:
 - (i) Signifies both completion of the academic requirements for beginning practice in a given profession, and a level of professional skill beyond that normally required for a bachelor's degree;
 - (ii) Is generally at the doctoral level, and that requires at least six academic years of postsecondary education coursework for completion, including at least two years of post-baccalaureate level coursework;
 - (iii) Generally requires professional licensure to begin practice; and
 - (iv) Includes a four-digit program CIP code, as assigned by the institution or determined by the Secretary, in the same intermediate group as the fields listed in paragraph (2) (i) of this definition.
- (2) A professional degree may be awarded in the following fields:
 - (i) Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Law (L.L.B. or J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), Theology (M.Div., or M.H.L.), and Clinical Psychology (Psy.D. or Ph.D.).
- (3) A professional student under this definition:
 - (i) May not receive title IV aid as an undergraduate student for the same period of enrollment; and
 - (ii) Must be enrolled in a program leading to a professional degree under paragraph (2) of this definition.

Program length: The minimum amount of time in weeks, months, or years that is specified in the catalog, marketing materials, or other official publications of an institution for a full-time

student to complete the requirements for a specific program of study.

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