Supplemental Item

Agenda Item 5-I (4)

- **ITEM 5-I (4)** is Consideration of adopting the Commissioner's recommendation to the Committee relating to amendments to Chapter 9, Subchapter A, Section 9.1 and Subchapter E, Sections 9.92 and 9.93 of Board rules, concerning the number of semester credit hours required to earn an associate degree at public institutions of higher education.

These proposed rules incorporate legislation passed in Senate Bill 215, which requires that students not be required to complete more than the minimum number of hours required by SAC-COC, which is 60 semester credit hours. However, there is allowance for a compelling academic reason.

Staff drafted the proposed rule to mirror the 120-rule for bachelor's degrees. The language related to "compelling academic reason" includes allowances for a justification for an associate's degree program consisting of more than 60 semester credit hours. As it is currently proposed, it reads, "Acceptable justifications are programmatic accreditation requirements, statutory requirements, and requirements for licensure/certification of graduates." However, many comments have been received that this is perhaps too restrictive.

Therefore, staff propose an amendment to the language,

"Acceptable justifications **may include, but are not limited to** programmatic accreditation requirements, statutory requirements and requirements for licensure/certification of graduates.

The specific language used will be incorporated into the proposed rules for academic associate degrees, which will come to the Board in Dec/January and the 120 hour bachelor's rule, which will also come to the Board in Dec/January.