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January 25, 2013

MEMORANDUM

CODE: AA-2013-02

Send Campus Reports to 120units@calstate.edu

TO: Presidents
Provosts and Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith 
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Implementation of Trustees Title 5 Changes to Baccalaureate Degrees

Update

The California State University Board of Trustees at this week's meeting approved amendments to Title 5, instituting a 120-unit maximum units for most baccalaureate degrees. A forthcoming executive order will stipulate the processes for reporting programs over the allowed limits, as well as for requesting and granting exceptions to the newly established limits.

All CSU bachelor's degree programs retain the 120-unit minimum requirement, and campuses remain obligated to report and justify all baccalaureate programs that exceed the minimum requirement (Title 5 section 40508). The following programs remain defined separately in Title 5, retain the 120-unit minimum requirement, and are subject to the unit maxima specified below:

Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)	150 semester units
Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA)	150 semester units
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)	132 semester units
Bachelor of Music (BM)	132 semester units

Background

The issue of baccalaureate unit counts has been discussed for many years, and in 1998 the *Cornerstones Report* strategic plan specified that the trustees would amend Title 5 to reduce the minimum number of units from 124 to 120. That change was approved in 2000. The percentage of programs at 120 rose from 67 percent in 2000 to 77 percent in 2007. For the next five years, the proportion 120 fluctuated between 78 and 81 percent. As of fall 2012, campus data indicated that 504 bachelor's programs and concentrations exceeded the 120 minimum. In discussions about how to improve the plateaued rates, a proposal to eliminate the nine units of upper-division general education was brought forward. The statewide academic senate voiced its objection, and an alternative proposal to limit all bachelor's programs to 120 units emerged from the San José State University academic senate, in conversation with their president.

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Discussions with the Academic Senate CSU between September 2012 and January 2013 achieved the following changes in proposed policy: (1) removal of the agenda item to eliminate the nine-unit upper-division general education requirement; (2) maintenance of separate definitions and maximum unit counts for the BArch, BLA, BFA, and BM degrees; (3) the implementation deadline for programs requiring more than 130 units extended from fall 2013 to fall 2014; (4) the addition of a faculty consultation requirement prior to the chancellor's action to adjust degree requirements; and (5) creation and modifications to documents to be used for reviewing programs, reporting excess units, and requesting exceptions for higher-unit degree requirements.

A collection of related approved Title 5 regulations is attached. Section 40508 relates to minimum and maximum units for CSU bachelor's degrees and appears below, for your convenience.

Title 5 § 40508. The Bachelor's Degree: Total Units.

Each campus shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to ensure that justification is provided for all program requirements that extend the baccalaureate unit requirement beyond 120 semester units. As of the fall term of the 2014-15 academic year, no baccalaureate degree programs shall extend the unit requirement beyond 120 semester units, with the exception of the Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees. The Chancellor may authorize exceptions to system or campus requirements for degree programs. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120 semester unit maximum. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor after consultation with discipline faculty and other appropriate individuals may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120-unit maximum.

Implementation Timeline

Campuses already have begun reporting that degree programs are under review and that unit reductions have been approved. Any changes to unit requirement totals may be submitted to the CSU Degrees Database at any time. Program unit requirements now appear on the [CSU Search Degrees website](#) and will be updated at the beginning of each month. In response to campus and Academic Senate CSU requests, the following documents are provided with this memorandum (1) a "toolkit" or guidance for the review and possible revision process and (2) a form to report excess units and request exceptions to the proposed baccalaureate unit totals.

April 30, 2013 Campuses shall submit program-by-program confirmations that each combination of degree and concentration shall be reduced from 121-129 (181-192) to no more than 120/180 by fall 2014. Reports are due April 2013, ideally, and reductions are to be in place by no later than fall 2014.

Campuses shall report to the chancellor a listing of each degree program and concentration that requires from 121 to 129 (181 to 192) units, that for demonstrated academic, licensure, or accreditation reasons cannot be reduced to 120/180. The program's unit requirements, both before and after campus review, shall be specified, and the specific reasons for exceeding the maximum unit count shall be explained.

Campuses with programs requiring from 121 to 129 units (181 to 192) and unable to reduce counts to the maximum number of units shall submit requests for the chancellor's exception to each program's the established unit maximum.

Programs that have not been reduced to 120/180 units and have not been granted the chancellor's exception allowing higher unit counts shall be subject to chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements, including:

1. double counting requirements;
2. adjusting the number of required major courses and units to achieve consistency with comparable CSU programs;
3. adjusting campus-specific degree requirements (such as languages other than English, among others); and
4. adjusting course and unit requirements for upper-division GE courses.

Fall 2014

Programs reduced from 121-129 (181-192) units and adjusted to approved new limits shall be published in the 2014-2015 campus catalogs.

Degrees and Concentrations Requiring 130 Units or More (220 programs)

January 2014

Campuses shall submit program-by-program confirmations that the remaining high-unit combinations of degrees and concentrations have been approved on campus to be reduced to the required number of units by fall 2014.

Programs that have not been campus-approved for reduction to 120/180 units and that have not been granted the chancellor's exception (allowing higher unit counts) shall be subject to the chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements, including:

1. double counting requirements;
2. adjusting the number of required major courses and units to achieve consistency with comparable CSU programs;
3. adjusting campus-specific degree requirements (such as languages other than English, among others); and
4. adjusting course and unit requirements for upper-division GE courses.

Fall 2014

All programs that are subject to the new unit-maxima shall have been reduced to approved limits and shall appear in 2014-2015 campus catalogs.

Please use the enclosed review toolkit and reporting documents for the process of complying with the new Title 5 amendments. Completed forms should be sent to 120units@calstate.edu. The executive order governing implementation will be issued soon.

Presidents
Provosts
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Please direct any questions to Dr. Christine Mallon, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs and Faculty Development. Chris may be reached at cmallon@calstate.edu or (562) 951-4672.

ES/clm

Attachments

c: Mr. Bob Linscheid, Chair, Board of Trustees
Dr. Debra S. Farar, Chair, Trustees Educational Policy Committee
Dr. Timothy P. White, Chancellor
Dr. Diana Guerin, Chair, Academic Senate, CSU
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