Academic Affairs (AA) Committee
End of Year Report
2013-14

Below is a summary of the activities of the ASCSU Academic Affairs Committee for AY 2013-14, as well as issues that deserve further consideration. As is typical of the Committee, discussions and actions were far-ranging, owing to the responsibilities articulated in the ASCSU Bylaws: http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/About_the_Senate/documents/Bylaws_11-2013_Revision.pdf

This report will outline the actors, actions, discussions, and future directions of the Academic Affairs Committee for this year and next.

1. Actors
   a. Members (liaison responsibilities noted after each name)
      i. Christine Miller (Chair)—Executive Committee
      ii. Patricia Kalayjian (Vice Chair)
      iii. Simone Aloisio—Libraries of the Future
      iv. Julie Chisholm
      v. Bill Eadie—Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program, Summer Arts Advisory Council
      vi. Kimberly King—Early Start Implementation, Student Mental Health Services Advisory Committee
      vii. Judith Lessow-Hurley—Institute for Teaching and Learning Board
      viii. James LoCascio—Student Health Services Advisory Committee, Student Mental Health Services Advisory Committee

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ix. Catherine Nelson—Commission on Extended Education

x. Jodie Ullman

xi. Mark Van Selst—General Education Advisory Committee (Chair), SB 1440 Implementation Committee, Smarter Balanced Assessment Advisory Committee

b. Liaisons

i. Darlene Yee-Melichar, ASCSU Executive Committee Member-At-Large

ii. Christine Mallon, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs and Faculty Development

iii. Ken O’Donnell, Senior Director of Student Engagement and Academic Initiatives and Partnerships

c. Guests

i. Gerry Hanley, Senior Director of Academic Technology Services

ii. Russ Mills, faculty member in Engineering from CSU Chico

iii. Robert Keith Collins, ASCSU Senator

iv. Michelle Pilatti, CCC Academic Senate

v. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Research

2. Actions

a. Resolutions

i. By committee

1. **Baccalaureate Degrees Offered by Public Institutions of Higher Education in the State of California**
   
   \textit{AS-3143-13/AA}
   
   Approved Unanimously

   In response to reports of a study group exploring the possibility of California community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees in the future, this resolution asserts that any baccalaureate degree offered by a public institution in this state should be offered only by the California State University or the University of California.

2. **Support for the Extension of the Statway Curriculum Pilot Program as an Alternative for Establishing Proficiency in Quantitative Reasoning**
   
   \textit{AS-3147-13/AA/APEP (Rev)}
Approved Unanimously
As the title indicates, this pilot project is to be extended for an additional two years.

3. **Concerns and Recommendations Regarding Cal State Online Reorganization**
   **AS-3152-13/AA/FA**
   Approved Unanimously
   This resolution acknowledges that a re-envisioned Cal State Online is consistent with recommendations previously made by the Academic Senate while expressing serious concerns about the lack of shared governance implicit in the disbanding of the current board, which had included faculty. It calls for a new governing body as well as the development of planning documents.

4. **Recommendations Related to Nursing Preparation**
   **AS-3154-13/AA (Rev)**
   Approved Unanimously
   This resolution makes a number of recommendations about the relationship between General Education (GE) and nursing curricula as well as about the need for campuses to provide effective advising for pre-nursing students, particularly the majority who are not admitted, ultimately, to the impacted nursing programs but who might pursue alternate pathways in the health sciences and allied fields.

5. **Recommendation to Amend Title 5 to Re-establish Appropriate Unit Limits for Engineering Degrees**
   **AS-3158-13/AA (Rev)**
   Approved Unanimously
   In the context of the 120/180 unit minima and maxima for baccalaureate degrees in the CSU, (unless a program is granted an exception by the Chancellor), this resolution urges a reinstatement of the 132/198 unit maxima for engineering degrees—an exception that was formerly in Title 5. The resolution further calls for a broadly constituted task force to examine the implications upon the quality of the degrees when General Education (GE) units are waived, substituted for, and “double-counted.”

6. **Concerns Regarding Proposed Legislation Authorizing Community College Baccalaureate Degrees**
   **AS-3163-14/AA (Rev)**
   Approved
   Lays out a series of criteria to be considered in legislation designed to pilot or implement baccalaureate degrees for one or more community colleges, including UC/CSU right of first refusal to offer such degrees; required cost-benefit analysis of such degrees; and the requirement that resources appropriate to offering them be in place.
7. **In Support of Ethnic Studies in the California State University**  
   **AS-3164-14/AA/FA (Rev)**  
   **Approved Unanimously**  
   Commends the Chancellor for convening a task force and instituting a moratorium on changes to Ethnic Studies programs; urges support for such programs; encourages academic merit and societal value of such programs be considered; commends the legislature for ACR 71 (2013), which supports the continuation of Africana Studies departments and programs in California’s institutions of higher education.

8. **Advice Regarding Unit Limit Exception Requests**  
   **AS-3166-14/AA**  
   Encourages further discussion about and states specific concerns on the handling of program requests to exceed 120/180 unit minimum for BA/BS degrees; suggests suspension of current procedures.

9. **Designation and Compilation of Online Course Modalities**  
   **AS-3169-14/AA**  
   In response to AB 386 (Levine, 2013) endorses definitions for course modalities in the CSU, ranging from face-to-face to remote online; recommends the establishment of a system-wide database to designate these modalities in order to facilitate cross-enrollment; and suggests a deadline for the assignment of modalities.

10. **Recommendations Regarding Changes to Title 5, Section 40510, The Master’s Degree**  
    **AS-3171-14/AA**  
    Endorses the proposed changes, including that at least 70% of total units required in a master’s degree program be completed in residence and that 60% of courses in a master’s degree program be “designed primarily for graduate study.”

   ii. Co-authored

   **Creation of California State University Discipline Councils**  
   **AS-3167-14/APEP/AA**  
   As the title suggests, urges the Chancellor’s Office to facilitate formation of academic discipline councils to enhance intra- and inter-system coordination and articulation.

b. **Position Statements**—appended to the end of this report to become part of the committee’s official archive

i. Bottlenecks

ii. Online education
3. Discussions

   a. Chancellor’s Office responses to ASCSU resolutions
   b. Board of Trustees agendas
   c. Faculty to Faculty newsletter reports
   d. Issues
      i. Title 5 unit limits
         1. Process issues and progress related to two phases of review of requests for exception in programs exceeding 120/180 units
         2. Re-establishing Title 5 exception from unit limits for Engineering
         3. Chancellor’s Office reports and memos
         4. ASCSU Chair reports and memos
         5. Academic Affairs Committee Chair reports
      ii. Online education
         1. CalState Online / Commission on Online Education
         2. AA position statement on online education
         3. Definitions of online education
         4. MOOC Task Force
         5. Quality Assurance of Online/Hybrid courses (Quality Online Learning and Teaching, Quality Matters)
      iii. California Community College baccalaureate degrees
         1. Powerpoint report
         2. Task Force report
         3. SB 850 legislation
      iv. SB 1440 transfer degree pathways
         1. Transfer Model Curricula proposed legislation
         2. The effect of California Community College baccalaureate degrees on TMC in Nursing
      v. Graduation Initiative
1. Definition of “bottleneck”
   a. AA position statement
2. Faculty hiring
3. High Impact Practices
4. Course redesign
   vi. Intrasystem Concurrent Enrollment / Online Concurrent Enrollment / Course Match
      1. Transitions to each of these iterations of system-wide online concurrent enrollment in online education courses and programs
      2. Course Match webinars
   vii. Statway
   viii. Open Educational Resources
   ix. Graduation fees
   x. CLEP
   xi. Campus policies on program suspension
   xii. Metrics for graduation rates
   xiii. Campus autonomy versus system-ness
   xiv. Degrees Database
   xv. Nursing preparation
   xvi. COMPASS project
   xvii. Opening up earned degrees (e.g., revisiting a baccalaureate to award a master’s)
   xviii. Review of revised degree program proposal template
   xix. Discipline-based review of AP courses
   xx. Ethnic Studies programs
   xxi. Faculty Trustee bill
   xxii. Governor Brown’s “Awards for Innovation”
   xxiii. Reverse Transfer degrees
xxiv. Career Technical Education degrees
xxv. Early Start assessment
xxvi. Student Success fees
xxvii. Statewide disciplinary councils
xxviii. Extended Education and “supplant” versus “supplement”
xxix. Linked Learning
xxx. Statewide Student Involvement and Representation fee (CSSA)
xxxi. Student mental health services

4. Future directions
   a. Committee functioning
      i. An examination of the bylaws comparing the responsibilities of each ASCSU committee reveals that this committee’s scope is quite large, and appropriately so. As a result, the committee often found itself challenged to address all of its business. Indeed, before one meeting the committee requested that the Executive Committee authorize the start-time of the committee to commence an hour earlier than other committees simply so that more progress on its agenda could be made. The AA committee was grateful for this extra time, and likely could have benefitted from this as a regular practice.

      ii. The AA and Executive Committees may wish to discuss beginning committee work at 10am rather than 11am on Wednesdays. Depending on travel schedules and committee membership, this may necessitate expending a few additional resources to accommodate the shift, but under current circumstances, the committee is quite challenged to conclude its business by 5pm, even with a “working lunch”, which ought to be an exception rather than a rule—much valuable discussion among senators happens during informal small group collaborations in addition to formal meeting times.

   b. Specific hold-over issues
      i. Student mental health and impact on academic programs
         1. American Psychological Association and American Council on Education issuing report
         2. Student Affairs professionals are a resource
      ii. Course Match implications for campuses
iii. Gender differences in academic success

iv. Student success fees used for academic programming purposes

v. Follow-up on any of the issues outlined in 3.d.i-xxxi, above

In conclusion, this report has summarized the actors, actions, discussions, and future directions of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate CSU. It has been my distinct honor to work closely with professionals dedicated to protecting and enhancing the quality of public higher education in the State of California. I am grateful to members of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Chancellor’s Office for their sustained support of my leadership of the committee’s efforts this year. It has been my privilege to serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Miller
Chair, Academic Affairs Committee

May 2014
The Academic Affairs (AA) Committee has discussed the two definitions of “bottlenecks” presented to the Board of Trustees (BOT) on September 24, 2013 (http://www.calstate.edu/bot/agendas/sep13/EdPol.pdf):

- “Anything that limits a California State University (CSU) student’s ability to make progress toward a degree and graduate in a timely manner can be called a bottleneck” (p. 8)
- “. . . [A] bottleneck is an undergraduate course students are ‘required’ to take to earn a degree in a timely manner (4 to 6 years) but for any given reason could not be offered during the 2012-13 academic year; is likely to cause undergraduate sequencing problems for students that can delay their expected graduation date; [and] can occur in undergraduate classes required in the major, prerequisite courses required outside of the department and general education (GE) courses taught in the department” (p. 15)

The AA Committee firmly contends that the second definition is superior to the first. This definition:

- Helps clarify a confusing dialogue in the CSU
- Is firmly grounded in faculty input
- Establishes an operational definition allowing for empirical investigation of the issue

The AA Committee further endorses the methodology, results and discussion of the study presented to the BOT by AVC Vogel:

- The methodology is sound, and the response rate is quite impressive
- The limitations of the study are thoughtfully noted

However, the AA Committee notes two disturbing themes in both information items: solutions to the bottleneck problem 1) do not address the issue of faculty hiring, and 2) feature a focus on system-wide versus campus-based interventions.

**Faculty Hiring**

AVC Vogel’s survey of departments with bottleneck courses reveals that there are 9 reasons for bottleneck courses (p. 15). The top three rank-ordered reasons are: 1) not enough funding to hire faculty; 2) not enough tenured and tenure-track faculty available; and 3) not enough qualified part-time faculty available.
• At least 1,254 (one section per bottleneck course) additional sections were needed to solve the bottleneck problem last year; *additional faculty would obviously significantly alleviate the problem*

• Expansion of Online Concurrent Enrollment (OCE) is the only solution proposed to address the lack of qualified faculty (p. 21); *both BOT information items were silent on alleviating bottlenecks through hiring*

**System-wide versus Campus-based Solutions**

Four system-wide responses to bottlenecks are offered. *None address why a system-level response is superior to a campus-level response.*

• **Curricular bottlenecks:** Some courses have high rates of D, W, F, I and U grades, and because “the CSU does not have a standardized course repeat policy” (p. 20) it is presumed that a system-wide policy would be worthwhile
  - each campus has developed its own repeat policy, and system-wide variability has not been established as a problem
  - high rates of D, W, F, I and U grades may be a measure of curricular quality, so lowering these rates may reduce quality, and could lead to grade inflation
  - solutions should focus on helping students in these classes succeed, including the use of technology, supplemental instruction, tutoring, among others

• **Place-bound bottlenecks:** Since students may be place-bound, and since the only solution offered for this circumstance is to expand OCE (pp. 8, 21 & 22), diversity of programs and course requirements within the system is presumed to be a problem, e.g., “course numbering, titles and learning objectives of each bottleneck course must be examined to determine similarity.” (p. 22)
  - This would be needed *only* if OCE was deemed a better use of resources than local campus action, e.g., hiring faculty and offering more sections
  - Given that *student behavior* in OCE has not yet been studied, it is premature to seek to establish similarity across campuses
  - *Authentic* access to the CSU by well prepared and proficient students is superior to online access that may widen achievement gaps for under-prepared students

• **Facilities bottlenecks:** Virtual labs in the STEM disciplines are the key strategy mentioned in this category. Aggressive assessment of such labs is vital to determine their quality and utility, and campuses should have a choice as to whether such labs meet their students’ needs. Virtual labs should only be used when appropriate for the pedagogy.

• **Advising and scheduling bottlenecks:** While clear pathways between institutions should remain a system-wide concern, specific aspects of advising and scheduling are squarely in the purview of what works best for each campus and its students, faculty, and staff/administration.
Academic Affairs Committee Position Statement on Online Education in the CSU

1. **CSU Faculty** have for decades been enthusiastic creators and committed stewards of **high quality, innovative hybrid and online education** in the CSU.
   a. Each academic year, thousands of hybrid and online courses are taught across the CSU. Virtually all are independent of any for-profit, third-party vendor.
   b. At least 112 fully online programs are offered at 17 different CSU campuses (eight of these programs are offered using Cal State Online services).
   c. At least another 70 programs are offered in a hybrid (combination online and face-to-face) form at 16 campuses.
   d. 20 of the 23 campuses offer programs that are fully online, hybrid, or they offer both fully online and hybrid programs.

2. **A variety of pedagogies and technological resources is available for online instruction**, and faculty **select the most appropriate ones to meet the educational needs of CSU students**. CSU faculty are expert teachers and have the primary responsibility to determine best practices in their classrooms. These practices include fostering student-centered learning, creating active and engaging learning environments, managing active faculty/student presence in the course, and giving prompt response to student inquires. **Current MOOC course delivery methods violate many of these key principles**. A recent study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education concluded that hybrid models of instruction, which value human contact, were another “best practice” for optimal student learning.

3. **Fully online education is not appropriate for all students**. Online learning is inappropriate for some students (e.g., some first generation students) and not appropriate for all courses (e.g., remediation).

4. **High quality online Education is not less expensive, it does not afford more students access to education, and it does not require fewer faculty**. In fact it is often more expensive. Online courses require highly trained expert faculty to deliver high quality online courses. Quality online education requires substantial investments in hardware, software, faculty and faculty development.

5. **Online programs will not solve the issue of limited access to the CSU; only increased funding will address access issues**. Online programs may allow different student populations access to a CSU education, but they will not afford a greater number of potential students access to the CSU. In particular, MOOCs have been promoted as a modality that will increase access. However, CSU, UC and Community College Senate leaders jointly proclaimed that “To encourage the use of MOOCs as a solution to access issues would be irresponsible,” and we agree.
6. **Faculty support quality research on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), including research on evolving online pedagogies.** An example is the pre-MOOC pilot research recently conducted at SJSU. We support research efforts that are empirically based and evaluated appropriately, and that are faculty-driven, thus respecting the faculty’s expertise in both pedagogy and curriculum.

7. **It is dangerous to rely on private sector partnerships that promise large-scale or one-size-fits-all solutions to the complex challenges that confront the CSU.** Faculty welcome innovative solutions to address the challenges to increase access, provide underprepared students with academic support, and afford all students the opportunity to graduate in a timely manner. However, all options should be critically evaluated to ensure their compatibility with the public mission of the CSU: a high quality, affordable education accessible to all eligible students. Moreover, we must always remember, as Chancellor White has said, that these are students we’re talking about, not widgets. We are obligated to consider any such partnerships from the standpoint of how potential successes and failures may affect their lives and livelihoods.