

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

AS-2603-03/AA

March 6-7, 2003

Systemwide Maximum Physical Capacity Enrollment Ceiling

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (CSU) support a systemwide maximum physical capacity enrollment ceiling for campuses; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU request that the CSU Board of Trustees, in consultation with the Chancellor's Office and the Academic Senate CSU, establish a new systemwide maximum physical capacity enrollment ceiling for campuses in the CSU based on: the historic mission of the CSU, the demographics of the State of California, the geographic distribution of the campuses, and a study of any literature relating to the optimal size of comprehensive universities and to best practices in determining university growth; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU support limited increases in individual campus enrollment ceilings above the 25,000 full-time equivalent student (FTES) physical capacity enrollment maximum while the study of a new systemwide maximum physical capacity enrollment ceiling is progressing so long as the request is accompanied by a recommendation from the campus senate.

RATIONALE: The current policy on the systemwide maximum physical capacity enrollment ceiling was set 30 to 40 years ago using a relatively informal procedure. It is time that the ceiling be re-examined, paying careful attention to our mission, current and future demographics, and available literature.

While some might argue for the elimination of any systemwide maximum physical capacity enrollment ceiling, citing the principle of campus autonomy, we do not. Rather, we believe that there are limits to individual campus growth beyond which the nature of a given campus and the system will change. We believe that size is a factor in our ability to provide our students with personal attention and a caring environment within which teaching is valued and student success is foremost.

Some might argue for local campus determination in deciding such issues, subject only to CSU Board approval, but the size of a campus is not just a local statistic that has no impact on the other campuses of the system. Resources are shifted, students are shifted, and the voices of the largest campuses become louder. The disproportionate growth of a campus affects not only its neighbors, but also the entire system.

APPROVED – May 8-9, 2003