

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Item 3

AS-2646-04/AA
March 11-12, 2004

Definition of Sanctionable Units and Recommendations and
Guidelines for Campus Facilitation of Progress to the Degree

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (CSU) accept the definition:

Sanctionable Units: units in excess of 20% over the student's current degree/credential program including all CSU eligible units transferred and all CSU baccalaureate-level units attempted and excluding units accumulated prior to completion of the summer immediately following high school graduation.

; and be it, further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU urge, rather than using the above definition of sanctionable units as a means to penalize CSU students or campuses, that the Task Force on Excess Units recommend and the CSU Board of Trustees approve campus review and action in the following areas to facilitate students in their progress to graduation:

1. Each campus will conduct a careful survey of possible impediments to the progress to the degree.
2. Each campus will review its advising procedures with the goal of creating improved and mandatory advising that is the best fit for the campus's own calendar and particular mix of majors.
3. Each program that offers a degree or credential will review its plans for advising majors and for scheduling required courses and stipulated electives.
4. Each campus academic senate should review campus policies on repeating courses, changing majors, and registration to ensure those policies encourage students to graduate in a timely fashion; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU recommend the following guidelines for campuses to use for adapting or developing campus policies:

1. Advising:
 - A. Require a timely declaration of major. In general, require that students declare a major after completing 25% of their total program (e.g., 30 semester units for a 120 semester-unit

- program, 45 quarter units for a 180 quarter-unit program) and before completing 40% (i.e., 48 semester units, 72 quarter units) in the example above.
- B. Require students to develop a personal graduation plan based on the declared major. Students should work with a faculty advisor in their major to develop a personal graduation plan permitting timely completion of the degree. If the personal graduation plan is not completed by the time the student completes 75% of the program, there should be a hold placed on registration until the plan is completed and approved by the appropriate advisor.
 - C. Perform a degree audit in the semester or quarter when a student reaches 75% of the program and inform the student and the student's advisor of missing requirements.
 - D. Implement an automated degree audit system as soon as possible.
 - E. Put in place requirements such that when a student reaches 100% of the units needed for the degree program and does not graduate there are specified and progressively more stringent procedures that the student must follow until, at an appropriate point, the student is disenrolled for failing to make adequate progress toward the declared degree objective.
 - F. Campuses should provide adequate funding for both major and general-education advising.
2. Departmental plans and schedules:
 - A. Each program should regularly review and, as necessary, revise its "academic road map" to ensure a clear and expeditious path to degree.
 - B. Each program should offer, as resources allow, required courses and stipulated electives regularly and on a predictable, published schedule.
 - C. For higher-unit sequential degree programs, the program faculty should develop alternative plans to assist students who take courses out of sequence.
 3. Policies:
 - A. Campuses should develop policies that discourage late changes in major.

- B. Campuses should develop policies that discourage excessive course repetition.
- C. Campuses should, to provide access to courses for the greatest number of students, develop policies that discourage registration for more than a full load of courses.
- D. Campuses should give careful consideration to the role of "gateway" courses and inform students that inability to make the required grade in the courses indicates a different degree program choice.
- E. Develop financial aid policy to encourage students to take degree-appropriate units and finish their programs expeditiously.

RATIONALE: The proposed definition was developed by the Academic Affairs Committee in response to a request for a definition from the Task Force on Excess Units. Application of the definition would provide a basis for penalizing campuses for allowing students to take units well beyond those required for a baccalaureate degree program and/or to penalize students for those units. During a time of budget pressures combined with increased demand for access to the CSU, it may not be unreasonable to assert that at some point beyond the units necessary to complete a degree program, units may be deemed excessive. The definition of sanctionable units is a curricular matter and should be determined by the faculty.

The most effective action toward facilitating progress to the degree, however, is for each campus to build on the plans developed in response to Facilitating Student Success in Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree (2002). Only by identifying the relevant issues will the campus be able to move most effectively to resolve those issues. Results of campus surveys of impediments are likely to vary; while Facilitating Student Success identifies some possibilities, it is unlikely that one size fits all. Further, each program that offers a baccalaureate degree should review the material in the report and adopt or adapt those best suited for its own situation.

APPROVED – May 6-7, 2004