

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Item 4

AS-2690-05/AA
March 10-11, 2005

Actions Needed to Improve the Quality of Academic Advising in the CSU

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (CSU) re-affirm the recommendations regarding advising in AS-2646-04/AA, March 11-12, 2004, "Definition of Sanctionable Units and Recommendations and Guidelines for Campus Facilitation of Progress to the Degree," and AS-2598-03/AA, January 23-24, 2003, "Recommendation on the Report from the Joint Provost/Academic Senate, California State University Task Force on Facilitating Graduation: *Facilitating Student Success in Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree*"; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU reiterate "the following guidelines for campuses to use for adapting or developing campus policies" regarding advising, which are found in AS-2646-04/AA:
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”; and be it further

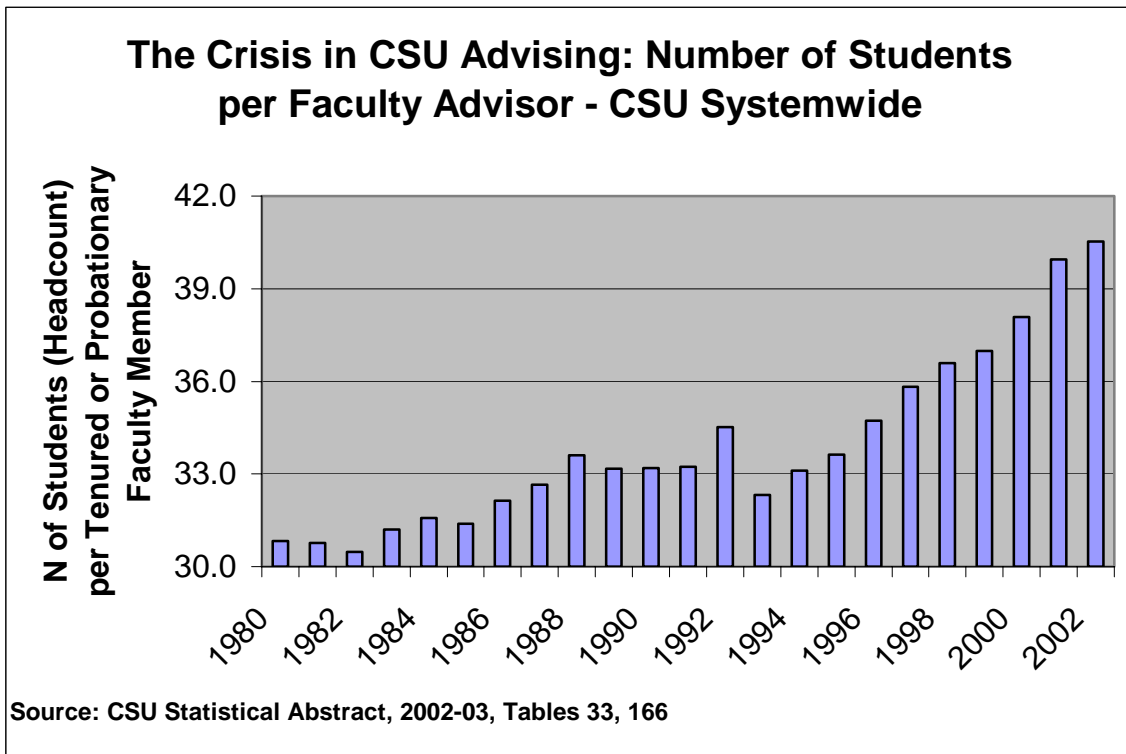
RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU request the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees for a timely report on the current status of the implementation of these recommendations; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU urge the CSU to seek supplemental funding for these important initiatives.

RATIONALE: At the January 2005 Board of Trustees meeting, Board members asked for a resolution on advising from the Senate. This resolution highlights the previous actions taken by the Academic Senate CSU, as recently as May 2004.

According to the Collective Bargaining Agreement and long years of practice in the CSU, it is one of the roles of the tenured and probationary faculty to do advising.

As the following graph shows, the number of students per tenured or probationary faculty member has risen substantially (approximately 25%) over the last decade, and especially in the last few years, reflecting the failure of the system to hire tenured and tenure-track faculty commensurate to the number of additional students:



ATTACHMENT TO AS-2690-05/AA
ACADEMIC SENATE
of
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
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AS-2598-03/AA

January 23-24, 2003

Recommendation on the Report from the Joint Provost/Academic
Senate, California State University Task Force on
Facilitating Graduation: *Facilitating Student Success in
Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree*

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (CSU) receive the report and commend the collaborative process by the Joint Provost/Academic Senate CSU Task Force on Facilitating Graduation that produced: *Facilitating Student Success in Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree* ([http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/E-Senator/Reports/Facilitating Graduation.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/E-Senator/Reports/FacilitatingGraduation.pdf)); and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU endorse the principles and recommendations of the Joint Provost/Academic Senate CSU Task Force on Facilitating Graduation with the following stipulations:
- Given that many of the factors that affect graduation rates are outside the control of the CSU, only incremental improvement in graduation rates can be expected.
 - Any plan to improve graduation rates must be constrained by Principle 1 of the report: "The primary goal of the academic enterprise is to provide a high quality, productive, meaningful academic experience for students."
 - The implementation of the Task Force recommendations will be severely constrained by the lack of funding necessary for faculty, staff, degree audit, and improved advising processes.
 - That the California State University Board of Trustees
 - (1) review, in consultation with the Academic Senate CSU and the Chancellor's Office, the data on improving graduation rates and determine what further research, if any, should be engaged. Any additional policy options that may be considered, based upon this review, should be developed through ongoing consultation with the Academic Senate CSU and the campus senates; and

- (2) ensure that individual campuses of the California State University system, through the shared governance process, retain autonomy in their efforts to design institutionally tailored programs guided by the principles and recommendations articulated in the Report from the California State University Task Force on Facilitating Graduation, to facilitate student success in achieving the baccalaureate degree.

RATIONALE: The committee structure and process that developed the report, Facilitating Student Success in Achieving the Baccalaureate Degree, was a model for shared governance. It was a joint committee of provosts and faculty, selected by the Senate, and supported by staff from the Chancellor's Office. Members of the Board of Trustees were involved in early drafts of the report and the final report is a product of all three groups. The report is being presented to the Board of Trustees on a time line that allows the Academic Senate CSU and the campus senates to respond.

The Joint Provost/Academic Senate CSU Task Force on Facilitating Graduation has produced a report grounded in a large data set, with a good review of the literature, that provides a wide range of policy options. The principles recommended by the report emphasize that facilitating student success toward achieving the baccalaureate degree must be achieved within a framework of academic excellence and program quality. Moreover, the report recognizes that the CSU has only limited influence over the most important factor determining graduation rates: "exposure to a rigorous curriculum in secondary school." In addition, the diversity of our student body and its "priorities of family, work, and school" are not within system control. Because of this, we can expect to have only limited impact on graduation rates by focusing on those things which the system can control.

At the local level, the recommendations emphasize campus autonomy by asking each campus to develop a plan "based on local institutional research, to improve graduation rates." Many of the Task Force recommendations for CSU campuses require increased faculty, staff and equipment resources. "Developing a plan, based on local institutional research," requires that campuses have the resources to conduct this research. Developing "graduation roadmaps" and "improving advising practices" requires additional time by the permanent faculty whose numbers are steadily diminishing. Assuring that courses will be available "during specified terms" requires that campuses have the budgets to offer these courses.

It is important that the California State University Board of Trustees both recognize and acknowledge the need for individually tailored campus efforts to facilitate student success in achieving the baccalaureate. The diversity in institutions, programs, campus cultures, and student populations within the CSU makes it doubtful that any single formula or programmatic structure will address the needs of students on all campuses.

At the system level the California State University Board of Trustees is asked to “assess improvements in graduation rates, and to consider if more incentives and disincentives are needed for both students and institutions.” Because graduation rates are affected by a wide variety of complex issues, it is important that the California State University Board of Trustees and the Chancellor’s Office work closely with the campuses, through the shared governance process, and the Academic Senate of the California State University in developing further policy options.

APPROVED – March 6-7, 2003

VII. Principles and Recommendations

After reviewing local, state, and national information on graduation rates, strategies for helping students achieve the baccalaureate, and the range of additional policy options discussed in the body of this report, the CSU Task Force on Facilitating Graduation identified several principles to which it was committed and which would undergird the recommendations that the Task Force made.

A. Principles of the Task Force

1. The primary goal of the academic enterprise is to provide a high-quality, productive, meaningful academic experience for students.
2. One of the great gifts and strengths of the California State University is the diversity of the student body in terms of age, native language, race, ethnicity, parents' educational levels, socio-economic status, and career and educational goals.
3. While recognizing the diversity of both our students and the campus environments and missions that influence how students progress to a bachelor's degree, the CSU has an overarching commitment to facilitating graduation.
4. Students as well as faculty, staff, and administrators share a responsibility in making sure that students graduate in a timely manner.
5. In undertaking new initiatives to help facilitate graduation, the CSU will focus on things that it can control.
6. The CSU has a responsibility to the state, to its students, and to the taxpayers to make sure that state funds are spent effectively. It is necessary to strike a balance between the wishes and desires of individual students and the wise use of fiscal resources.

B. Recommendations of the Task Force

In making these recommendations, the Task Force has reviewed the research on degree completion and the many different kinds of policy options listed in "Section II: On the Path to the Baccalaureate Degree." We understand that we have limited influence over the most important factor: exposure to a rigorous curriculum in secondary school. We understand that, given a diverse student body, imposing standardized requirements—such as full-time enrollment—is not possible. We understand that we cannot markedly affect students' decisions about the relative priorities of family, work, and school. Hence, in offering these recommendations, we focus on aspects of students' experiences and aspects of the CSU that are realistically subject to intervention and change and recommend only some of the policy options listed earlier.

For CSU Campuses:

Develop a plan, based on local institutional research, to improve graduation rates. The plan should include these actions:

1. Develop 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation roadmaps for all academic degree programs. These roadmaps should be term-by-term depictions of the courses in which students should enroll over the entirety of their academic careers (general education and major) and should address both day and evening programs when program size is sufficient to support both patterns. After the plans have been developed, they should be accessible to students at feeder community colleges and high schools.

2. Develop and implement projected campus master class schedules designed to accommodate these roadmaps and ensure that required courses will be available during the specified terms.
3. Require a mandatory progress-to-degree audit at a specific checkpoint (such as when a native freshman accumulates 65 semester units or upon entry for a transfer student), followed by the requisite advising and regular updates on the audit.
4. Improve online and hard-copy university catalogues so that they are well designed, well organized, readable, and useful.
5. Use summer term to promote student progress to degree by analyzing student course needs so as to offer a class schedule that enables students to enroll in bottleneck courses and required courses in GE and the major.

The plan should include other strategies appropriate to the individual campuses. These could include such strategies as:

6. Offer new students an intensive first-year experience.
7. Expand faculty professional development for improved instructional effectiveness.
8. Improve advising practices.

For the CSU System:

9. Ensure that there is an infrastructure and funding to allow each campus to establish on-demand, online graduation progress reports and progress-to-degree audits.
10. Sponsor multi-campus workshops for the sharing of effective strategies for facilitating graduation.
11. Convene a group to consider the need for CSU systemwide policies on course drops, withdrawals, incompletes, and repeats.

For the CSU Board of Trustees:

12. Review campus plans and progress annually.
13. After four years, assess the improvements in graduation rates, and consider if more incentives and disincentives are needed for both students and institutions. These might include fee surcharges for excess units, fee incentives for students who graduate with close to the minimum number of semester-credits needed to earn the degree, fee rebates for graduating students who attended summer school, mandatory summer school attendance, and performance funding based on campuses' internal improvements in graduation rates.
14. Consider budgetary augmentation to implement recommendations.