An act to amend Sections 66720 and 66739.5 of the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 2168, as introduced, Liu. Public postsecondary education: common core curriculum.

(1) Existing law establishes the 3 segments of public postsecondary education in this state. These segments include the California State University, the campuses of which are administered by the Trustees of the California State University, the University of California, which is administered by the Regents of the University of California, and the California Community Colleges, which is administered by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. Existing law establishes community college districts, which operate campuses that provide instruction to students throughout the state.

Existing law, known as the Donahoe Higher Education Act, sets forth the missions of the segments of postsecondary education. Provisions of the act are applicable to the University of California only to the extent that the regents act, by resolution, to make these provisions applicable. An existing provision of the act requires the governing bodies of the 3 public postsecondary segments, with appropriate consultation with the Academic Senates of the respective segments, to develop, maintain, and disseminate a common core curriculum in general education courses for the purposes of transfer. This provision requires that a person who has successfully completed the transfer core curriculum is to be deemed to have completed all
lower division general education requirements for the University of California and the California State University.

This bill would express findings and declarations of the Legislature with respect to the necessity for a single, common core curriculum of general education requirements between the University of California and the California State University. The bill would express the intent of the Legislature that an integrated single common core curriculum be developed and maintained by the 3 public postsecondary segments in a manner that protects and perpetuates faculty responsibility in determining the contents of that curriculum.

This bill would require the board of governors and the trustees, and request the regents, in consultation with the Academic Senates and with student representatives of the respective segments, to jointly develop, maintain, and disseminate a single common core curriculum for the purposes of transfer on or before June 1, 2008.

(2) Existing law establishes a program with the purpose of ensuring that community college students who wish to earn baccalaureate degrees at a campus of the California State University are able to do so. Existing law requires the Chancellor of the California State University to carry out specified tasks in connection with the establishment of this program.

Existing law requires the Chancellor of the California State University to establish admissions requirements for community college transfer students in accordance with specified criteria. Existing law requires the Chancellor of the California State University, in consultation with the Academic Senate of the California State University and with the faculty responsible for each high-demand baccalaureate degree major program, to specify for each high-demand baccalaureate program major a systemwide lower division transfer curriculum. This provision declares that it is not to be construed to limit in any way the ability of students to gain admission through alternative paths to transfer, such as the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum or the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements.

This bill would add the single common core curriculum to be developed, maintained, and disseminated on or before June 1, 2008, pursuant to this bill to the list of alternative paths to transfer in this provision.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:
1. Students and families who choose the California Community Colleges, as an excellent and affordable lower division path to a high-quality four-year degree, face a tangled maze of degree requirements and general education patterns.
2. The transfer function is one of the most cost-effective aspects of postsecondary education in California; its effectiveness is a critical matter for the prudent use of resources and for providing a clear path to each person’s educational goals.
3. Simplicity brings clarity for students and families. Students should be able to keep their options open to compete for the best they can achieve in a fair admissions process or be able to arrange a transfer admission guarantee to a specific campus if preferred.
4. A single, common core curriculum of general education requirements between the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) is necessary for an understandable set of requirements, and can be accomplished, as it was in the agreements related to the high school “A-G” pattern, through consultation, accommodation, and professionalism.
5. Simplicity should not be imposed on academic content. California’s renowned academic excellence and academic freedom are protected only when curriculum is solely within the purview of faculty, who are in a position to determine the skills and bodies of knowledge that should be required in a general education pattern. Additionally, agreement upon curricula is not a one-time project. It is an ongoing regular responsibility of the segments—an evolving process that must reflect the most current content or California will suffer from stagnant education.
6. While it is important that general education requirements not differ between UC and CSU, it is acceptable and valuable for there to be variations by discipline; for example, for those preparing in the sciences, so that students may maximize the value of their lower-division preparation as it relates to their eventual educational goals.

(b) Thus, it is the intent of the Legislature that an integrated single common core curriculum be developed and maintained by
UC, CSU, and the California Community Colleges in a manner that protects and perpetuates faculty responsibility in determining the contents of that curriculum.

SEC. 2. Section 66720 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66720. The (a) On or before June 1, 2008, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, the Regents of the University of California, and the Trustees of the California State University shall, and the Regents of the University of California are requested to, with appropriate consultation with the approval of the Academic Senates of the respective segments, shall and appropriate consultation with student representatives of the respective segments, jointly develop, maintain, and disseminate a single common core curriculum in general education courses for the purposes of transfer. The single common core curriculum developed, maintained, and disseminated pursuant to this section may contain variations by academic discipline, but not by segment. Any

(b) Any person who has successfully completed the transfer core curriculum; shall be deemed to have thereby completed all lower division general education requirements for the University of California and the California State University. The single common core curriculum developed pursuant to this section shall be utilized as the general education component in all transfer agreement programs.

SEC. 3. Section 66739.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66739.5. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) The California Master Plan and supporting statutes place utmost importance on the effective transfer of community college students to the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) as a means of providing access to the baccalaureate degree.

(2) In 2002, CSU enrolled 55,000 transfer students from community colleges.

(3) Two out of three students who earn CSU baccalaureate degrees begin in a community college.
(4) Effective use of state and student time and resources would be maximized by students accruing fewer unrequired units in earning their degrees.

(5) Additional access to community colleges and CSU will be created by higher graduation rates and fewer nonessential units taken.

(6) The state budget situation makes it urgent to streamline the path of the transfer student to the baccalaureate degree.

(b) It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature to ensure that community college students who wish to earn the baccalaureate degree at CSU are provided with a clear and effective path to this degree.

(c) This section shall not be construed to limit in any way the ability of students to gain admission through alternative paths to transfer, such as the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)—or, the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements, or the single common core curriculum, which shall be developed, maintained, and disseminated pursuant to Section 66720 on or before June 1, 2008.

(d) On or before February 1, 2005, the Chancellor of CSU shall establish transfer student admissions requirements that give highest priority to transfer students who are qualified in accordance with subdivision (f) and paragraph (3) of subdivision (g).

(e) (1) CSU campuses admitting students qualified in accordance with subdivision (f) and paragraph (3) of subdivision (g) will make it possible for these students to complete their baccalaureate degree in the minimum number of remaining units required for that degree major.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, the “minimum number of remaining units” is the minimum number of units required for a degree major after subtracting the number of fully degree-transferable units earned at the community college.

(f) The Chancellor of CSU, in consultation with the Academic Senate of CSU, shall establish the following components necessary for a clear degree path for transfer students:

(1) On or before June 1, 2005, the Chancellor of CSU, in consultation with the Academic Senate of CSU and with the faculty responsible for each high-demand baccalaureate degree
major program, shall specify for each high-demand baccalaureate program major a systemwide lower division transfer curriculum composed of at least 45 semester course units, or the quarter-unit equivalent, that will be common across all CSU campuses offering specific major programs.

(2) (A) The systemwide lower division transfer curriculum for each high-demand baccalaureate degree major program shall be composed of at least 45 semester units, or the quarter-unit equivalent, and shall include all of the following:

(i) General education courses.

(ii) Any other lower division courses required for graduation.

(iii) Lower division components of the student’s declared major.

(iv) Elective units, as appropriate.

(B) The coursework described in subparagraph (A) shall be designated by the CSU faculty responsible for the student’s major degree program.

(3) The systemwide lower division transfer curriculum shall be specified in sufficient manner and detail so that existing and future community college lower division courses may be articulated, according to the usual procedures, to the corresponding CSU courses or course descriptions.

(g) (1) On or before June 1, 2006, the Chancellor of CSU and the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, in consultation with the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges, shall articulate those lower division, baccalaureate-level courses at each campus of the California Community Colleges that meet for each degree major the systemwide lower division transfer curriculum requirements specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (f).

(2) To the extent that the goals of efficiency and urgency are advanced, existing articulation procedures such as the California Articulation Number (CAN) program shall be employed.

(3) On or before June 1, 2006, each CSU campus shall have identified any additional specific, nonelective course requirements beyond the systemwide lower division transfer curriculum requirements for each major, up to a maximum of 60 semester units or the quarter-unit equivalent, for the systemwide and campus-specific requirements combined. To the extent these
additional course requirements are identified, each CSU campus shall provide that information to all community colleges.

(4) The Chancellor of CSU shall amend CSU’s transfer admissions procedures to encourage prospective community college transfer students to identify and, to the extent possible, commit to, a specific CSU transfer destination campus before earning more than 45 semester units, or the quarter-unit equivalent, of lower division, baccalaureate-level courses, as described in subdivision (f).

(h) As allowed by enrollment demand and available space, each CSU campus shall develop a transfer admission agreement with each student who intends to meet the requirements of this section, including the declaration of a major and identification of a choice of a destination campus, before earning more than 45 systemwide semester units, or the quarter-unit equivalent. The transfer admission agreement shall guarantee admission to the campus and major identified in that agreement and transfer of all 60 semester units, or the quarter-unit equivalent, as creditable to the baccalaureate degree, subject to the student’s meeting the following conditions:

(1) Completion of the 60 semester units of college-level coursework, or the quarter-unit equivalent, specified for the student’s major degree program.

(2) Declaration of a major.

(3) Satisfactory completion of the systemwide lower division transfer curriculum requirements for the student’s declared major.

(4) Satisfactory completion of any requirements beyond the systemwide lower division transfer curriculum that are specified by the CSU destination campus.

(5) Any impaction criteria for that campus or major.

(i) A CSU campus shall guarantee that the transfer students admitted under this section will be able to complete the baccalaureate degree in the minimum number of course units required for that degree.