MEMORANDUM

Date: December 6, 2013

To: Dr. Christine M. Miller, Chair, Academic Affairs Committee
    Academic Senate CSU

From: Dr. Ben Fell, Chair, for the Academic Council, College of Engineering and Computer Science
      California State University Sacramento

Re: Recommendation to Amend Title 5 to Establish Appropriate Unit Limits for Engineering Degrees
    (AS-3158-13/AA)

The Academic Council strongly endorses the proposed resolution recommending changes in Title V to allow engineering degree programs to include up to 132 units, and offers the following comments to the referenced ASCSU document.

1. The experiences of the programs in this college have been similar to those described in the Rationale of AS-3158. We have reduced engineering BS requirements from 134-139 to 128-131 through reductions in the major units, even though some of our colleagues in the professional community have expressed reservations about these cuts. To attain further reductions, we are looking for ways to double-count major and general education units, or to get variances on GE requirements. It should be noted that our engineering programs already have some of these in place and further reductions are not in the best interests of our students.

2. The Council agrees with the argument in the Rationale that classes and experiences outside the major are needed to meet accreditation outcomes. The Rationale cited ABET outcome 3g (an ability to communicate effectively) as an example. Additional ABET-required outcomes that benefit from classes outside the major are: 3d (an ability to function on multidisciplinary teams), 3h (the broad education necessary to understand the impact of engineering solutions in a global, economic, environmental, and societal context), and 3j (a knowledge of contemporary issues).

This communication was approved by the Academic Council at its regular meeting on December 6, 2013. The Council is comprised of elected faculty from each of the five departments in ECS. It is charged with acting for the ECS faculty in academic and shared administrative responsibilities, including the planning, development, and approval of programs and courses as well as setting and maintaining standards of instruction.