

**Academic Senate  
of the  
California State University**

**Loss of Confidence in the California State University Board Of Trustees,  
Chancellor, and Administration's Commitment to Consultation on Internal CSU  
General Education Modification**

- 1. RESOLVED:** That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) has lost confidence in the CSU Board of Trustees and CSU Chancellor's Office and Administrators' commitment to the robust consultation and systemwide faculty feedback required for internal changes to CSU General Education; and be it
- 2. RESOLVED:** That in contrast the ASCSU and the Chancellor's Office have demonstrated a successful mechanism for robust faculty consultation on general curriculum matters as modeled by the effective implementation of [AS-3565-22/APEP](#) in consideration of adoption of the California General Education Transfer Curriculum; and be it
- 3. RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU condemn the wholesale replacement of internal CSU General Education curricula with the Cal-GETC transfer pathway through Title V changes without a formal vote of approval or consultation of the ASCSU or CSU Campus Senates; and be it
- 4. RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU strongly urge Chancellor Garcia to put the May 6, 2024 revision of CSU General Education (GE) Requirements into abeyance and defer implementation according to the robust consultation and formal ASCSU approval outlined in the "Tenets of Shared Governance"; and be it

5. **RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU maintain its position that faculty have purview over changes made to the curriculum, including its structure, and deserved an opportunity to analyze the impacts Cal-GETC was likely to have on CSU GE Breadth when proposed as a substitution model; and be it
6. **RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU continue to request data about the now-enacted changes and their impacts on the system; and be it
7. **RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU request that the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) review the process and circumstances that led to the decision to align CSU GE Breadth with Cal-GETC in relation to HEERA and other relevant California state law; and be it finally
8. **RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU distribute this resolution to:

California Gov. Gavin Newsom  
California Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis  
CSU Board of Trustees  
CSU Chancellor  
California State Assembly Education Committee  
California State Senate Education Committee  
CSU campus Presidents  
CSU campus Senate Chairs  
CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs  
CSU campus articulation officers  
California State Student Association (CSSA)  
CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty & Staff Association (CSU-ERFSA)  
Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges  
Academic Senate of the University of California  
California Community Colleges' Board of Governors  
University of California Board of Regents  
American Association of University Professors

### **Rationale**

The rationale behind this decision is that, following the protocol required by our “Tenets of Shared Governance”<sup>1</sup> the CSU faculty must be allowed the opportunity to consult with—and survey—campus faculty, students, and staff on best practices in CSU General Education (GE), strengths and weaknesses of current curricula, the barriers to student success students face within the disciplines and workforce, accreditation and certification concerns within the disciplines, etc. Through a final vote, the CSU faculty decide what changes to recommend. Quite recently, Cal-GETC was approved along these lines. This is historic!

In contrast, no vote has been taken by the CSU faculty on alignment of Cal-GETC with internal CSU GE Breadth requirements.

To be clear, the issue at hand is not the decision itself to impose Cal-GETC onto CSU GE Breadth. Instead, the issue is the process used to arrive at this decision. Rather than following the collaborative decision-making process outlined in the “Tenets of Shared Governance,” framed by HEERA, and practiced according to convention, the process became one of information-sharing with an exclusive subset of the ASCSU body, without opportunities for individual campuses legitimately to weigh in. This process seemed to embody the changes being made in Arizona right now with their HB2735 (see <https://www.azleg.gov/legtext/56leg/2R/bills/HB2735P.pdf>), in which informing is falsely equated with sharing the governance process through robust consultation.

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<sup>1</sup>See <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/resolutions/2018-2019/3348.pdf>)

The March 2024 meeting of the Committee on Educational Policy of the CSU Board of Trustees became an object lesson in this limiting of faculty voices when the Chair of that committee broke long-standing committee convention by not allowing ASCSU Chair Steffel to respond to a question from a Trustee, as it had “not been directed toward her.” In contrast, when a later question was directed at Chair Steffel, the Chair of the Committee on Educational Policy insisted on allowing DVC Nathan Evans to respond. This double standard is indicative of the arbitrary and haphazard way in which faculty were allowed to be involved at the Board of Trustees meeting (or not) and in the process of making the curricular decision to adopt the Cal-GETC structure as the new CSU GE Breadth. Furthermore, the ASCSU requests that the Board of Trustees revise the [Rules Governing the Board of Trustees of the California State University](#) to specify the speaking rights of the ASCSU spokesperson at meetings of the Trustees and to specify the rules governing invited content expert presenters on items before the board. The ASCSU also requests the leadership of the Educational Policies Committee, the Board of Trustees, and the Chancellor publicly apologize to the ASCSU and its current Chair, Beth Steffel, for its treatment<sup>2</sup> of the ASCSU Chair during the March 2024 plenary.

## History

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<sup>2</sup> See [https://youtu.be/TFj5\\_9tdTWA?si=p0j711iRoxTEsgF\\_&t=7273](https://youtu.be/TFj5_9tdTWA?si=p0j711iRoxTEsgF_&t=7273) to view DVC Evans raised nameplate. While not a member of the EPC nor the Board of Trustees, the DVC was provided a nameplate which was raised to indicate a desire to speak. No other members of the expert panel were provided nameplates. Also see, [https://youtu.be/TFj5\\_9tdTWA?si=logjtAEluOr7A7y\\_&t=8055](https://youtu.be/TFj5_9tdTWA?si=logjtAEluOr7A7y_&t=8055) for the first unequal treatment of the ASCSU Chair. Finally, see [https://youtu.be/TFj5\\_9tdTWA?si=FGh\\_3H1NRgZitljg&t=8430](https://youtu.be/TFj5_9tdTWA?si=FGh_3H1NRgZitljg&t=8430) where the EPC insisted on ensuring that the DVC was provided an opportunity to respond after the ASCSU Chair.

It is important to note that when collaborative discussions and work began on what became Cal-GETC in 2020, both the “Tenets of Shared Governance” and the protocol of the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) (requiring respect for segments and segment ratification of all ICAS actions) were followed in letter and spirit. Central in these student-success-centered discussions was the question of what skills students coming to the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) from the California Community Colleges (CCC) needed to handle their course work and graduate in two, four, and six years (depending on whether students must support themselves, are returning students, have families of their own, etc.). These discussions were attended by appointed student leadership from each of the segments. They were guided by two premises: that each segment needs to maintain its own identity (or, in the case of the CSU, 23 identities) in the types of students it produces through GE, and that it was important to move the narrative from ‘get the GE out of the way’ to ‘create culturally competent and informed 21<sup>st</sup>-century citizens through GE.’ At no meeting was it ever discussed, or even alluded to, that Cal-GETC would become the exclusive GE pathway for any segment.

A subsequent survey collected data from all CSU faculty regarding their needs and priorities with regards to General Education. This data informed the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU) Senators through the ASCSU Executive Committee (2020-2021 and

2021-2022) as well as ICAS. The survey results indicated that the following competencies were deemed crucial to CSU transfer student success<sup>3</sup>:

- Critical thinking
- Oral Communication (including command of a second language for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce)
- Written Communication (particularly college writing proficiency)
- Quantitative Literacy

These competencies are not only important for major preparation but also for workforce and graduate school readiness.<sup>4</sup>

A variety of constituents—administrators, legislators (including the author of AB 928, Assemblymember Marc Berman), and Trustees—expressed doubt that faculty could accomplish their task, while the third-party Campaign for College Opportunity intervened with their own doubts. Nevertheless, the work was completed, and on May 6, 2022 (well before the May 31, 2023 deadline), ICAS presented the CSU faculty, administrators, and Trustees (as reported by the ASCSU Chair during the May 2022 meeting) with an approved version of the ICAS Special Committee recommendations on the AB 928 transfer pathway. Consistent with AB 928 and then Chancellor Joseph Castro’s letter of support to Governor Newsom (in the face of all three segments—CCC, CSU, and

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/resolutions/2021-2022/3530.pdf>

<sup>4</sup>See <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/06/aacu-survey-finds-employers-want-candidates-liberal-arts-skills-cite-preparedness>

UC—urging a veto), the recommended transfer pathway, now called Cal-GETC, consisted of the following:

- English Composition (1 course)
- Critical Thinking and Composition (1 course)
- Oral Communication (1 course)
- Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning (1 course)
- Arts (1 course)
- Humanities (1 course)
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (2 courses)
- Physical Science (1 course)
- Biological Science (1 course)
- Laboratory (Biological/Physical Science) (1-unit course)
- Ethnic Studies (1 course)

This historic pathway, approved by CSU faculty vote in the ASCSU, consists of 34 units, guarantees admission to the California State University (CSU), and can and should be celebrated by all!

### Concerns

In the face of this historic and successful collaboration, it is surprising, to say the least, that the faculty of the CSU, the very faculty in charge of ICAS (who, when given the task of creating a transfer pathway, laid the groundwork for its completion), were not given the same opportunity to review our internal CSU GE, follow the protocols agreed upon by

the ASCSU and the CSU Chancellor's Office in the "Tenets of Shared Governance," and produce an internal General Education pathway on behalf of all CSU students. This internal pathway may or may not have been aligned with what is expected of transfer students from the CCC.

It is all the more surprising that opportunities were not provided and protocols not followed considering that the 21<sup>st</sup>-century CSU student is unique. When our commitment to access was established, the CSU promised to ensure that K-12 students could effectively pursue a college degree regardless of gaps in preparation.<sup>5</sup> In effect, this meant that the CSU committed to providing students the remediation or support needed to fill in educational gaps from their K-12 experience. When remediation was eliminated through EO 1110 in 2017, CSU GE courses took on the additional burdens not only of addressing gaps in preparation, but also of teaching additional skills necessary for student success, with significant limitations in the types of support campuses could offer. Indeed, many of the skills taught in GE courses are highly associated with student success and ensure that our students have the knowledge and skills that make them the contributing backbone of the State of California that they are today.<sup>6</sup> By now aligning Cal-GETC with first-year GE, we are undermining and devaluing the unique contributions that CSU faculty have made to the first-year experience and to GE more broadly. These very experiences give all of our student a sense of belonging as Keelhaulers, Matadors,

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<sup>5</sup>See

<https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/resolutions/2007-2008/2840.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/resolutions/2018-2019/3371.pdf>



Gators, Spartans, Titans, Wildcats, etc., and enable many in our great state capital to understand the self-determination that “Stingers Up!” truly represents.

### Proposed Solution

Putting EO 1101 into abeyance may remedy the loss of confidence and trust in the CSU Board of Trustees and restore confidence that the Board of Trustees is fulfilling its fiduciary responsibility to our system. Similarly, putting EO 1101 into abeyance may restore faith in the CSU Chancellor’s commitment to shared governance. The CSU faculty are not just teachers, but researchers and practitioners who—through GE, among other avenues—provide our students from diverse backgrounds with the lifelong learning skills necessary to make their unique marks in the State of California and beyond. Our CSU motto is “Vox, Veritas, Vita” (Voice, Life, Truth) or ‘speak truth as a way of life.’ This motto and its embodiment in the GE curriculum are not aligned with the CCC or UC, but unique to the CSU.