

Report to the Board of Trustees

Diana Guerin, Chair
November 14, 2012

At our plenary last week, the Academic Senate passed six resolutions pertaining to the Chancellor transition, baccalaureate unit limits, proposed student fees, the Systemwide Nursing Policy, the Support Budget, and the Consolidation of Executive Orders on International Education.

Chancellor Transition

The Academic Senate recognized the retirement of Chancellor Reed with our traditional practice of reading a commendation as members of our community leave. Senators also made a joint contribution to the Hearst/CSU Trustee Award that bears Chancellor Reed's name. This commendation will be posted on the ASCSU website shortly.

ASCSU Executive Committee discussed the search process for the chancellor, and we would like to recognize publicly Trustee Hauck, Trustee Linscheid, and the Search Committee for expanding the search process to include additional members from the CSU community, including the ASCSU chair and immediate past chair. We also recognize that the search process resulted in the selection of an individual possessing the qualifications that the ASCSU requested be added to the search announcement at the open hearing in June.

We passed a resolution welcoming incoming Chancellor White to the CSU and inviting him to meet with us at his earliest opportunity.

Baccalaureate Unit Limits

The Academic Senate spent a considerable amount of time discussing Item 1 on the agenda of the Committee on Educational Policy. We have serious concerns about the current proposal, because we believe that faculty on the diverse campuses are best positioned to make decisions regarding the curriculum.

We share the stated goals of increasing access and graduation rates. In fact, do you know that the CSU systemwide six-year graduation rates have increased steadily since 1995? For native CSU students, these rates have improved from approximately 40% for the cohort who began in 1995 to 52% for the cohort who began in 2004. Likewise, for transfer students the three-year graduation rate has improved from 40% in the mid 1990's to 52% in 2007, although it has been as high as 54% in 2004. These are the most recent data available on the CSU website.

President King Alexander of CSU Long Beach is a widely-recognized expert on higher education funding. He regularly reminds us how cost effective the CSU is, particularly given the percentage of Pell students we teach.

According to the data provided in your packet in September, 81% of programs are within the limit of 120 semester or 180 quarter units for the bachelor degree. We believe this overstates the problem this item seeks to address. Included in those approximately 500 degrees that

exceed the minimum limit are programs that are exempted from the limit in other sections of Title 5, including 95 Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees and 2 Landscape Architecture degrees. That reduces the number of degrees requiring more than the minimum units by about 20%, to just over 400.

The Academic Senate affirms that some programs have strong rationale for exceeding the minimum number of units, including not only accreditation standards but also more broadly educational quality and student success. For example, of those approximately 400 remaining degree programs exceeding the minimum, 115 are engineering programs. Almost all of these CSU engineering programs are accredited by the ABET, the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology. Not included in the list are the 12 engineering programs on the degree database with the minimum number of units required: Only 1 is ABET accredited. Academic quality must be maintained.

Additionally, the number of students seeking these degrees must be considered. Although this will vary by campus, it is likely that systemwide the percentage of students seeking these degrees is limited.

The Academic Senate strongly opposes the unilateral action described in the agenda item to eliminate curricular elements in order to reduce unit requirements. The timeline shown in the agenda item requires initiation of a process on the campuses even before the Board has made a decision and fails to allow programs to engage in normal and well-established curricular review processes.

A baccalaureate degree is an indication of learning achieved through completion of a program of study. Faculty, on longstanding principles endorsed by the Board of Trustees Statement on Collegiality as well as the American Association of University Professors, have primary responsibility for the curriculum. Violations of shared governance may produce expedited results, but in the long term are likely to produce a less effective instructional environment, poorer decision-making, a reduction in morale, and unforeseen consequences.

The Academic Senate encourages faculty to engage in meaningful discussions concerning program requirements that may be desirable but not necessary to maintain the quality of the degree program. The Academic Senate similarly encourages both system and campus administrations to respect the statutory role of faculty in curricular decision making.

Proposed Student Fees

We approved a resolution opposing the proposed student fees.

As Chair of the Academic Senate, I attend most of the monthly CSSA Board meetings. At their meeting in September, student leaders wanted to know how many students would be impacted by these fees. I offered to request these data from the Chancellor's Office, and I did. These data were not provided to me. I understand from the CSSA meeting last weekend that CSSA also directly requested these data. The data were not provided to them, either. The students and faculty of the CSU deserve better.

To return to the ASCSU resolution, senators had concerns about unintended consequences of such fees that might result in delays in graduation or erect barriers to student success. We also request in our resolution that the Board form a joint task force that includes students and faculty

CSU Campuses

Bakersfield

Channel Islands

Chico

Dominguez Hills

East Bay

Fresno

Fullerton

Humboldt

Long Beach

Los Angeles

Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay

Northridge

Pomona

Sacramento

San Bernardino

San Diego

San Francisco

San José

San Luis Obispo

San Marcos

Sonoma

Stanislaus

to examine the magnitude and structure of the proposed fees prior to the final action by the Board.

Support for an Executive Order on CSU Systemwide Nursing Policy

The Academic Senate supports the issuance of the Systemwide Nursing Policy and commends the staff, faculty, and administrators involved in its development. In particular, the work of Assistant Vice Chancellor Chris Mallon was praised by senators involved.

Proposed Support Budget

The Academic Senate supports the Proposed Support Budget while recognizing that the request represents only a partial restoration of cuts experienced in recent years and leaves the CSU far short of the resources necessary to fulfill its mission.

Executive Orders Regarding International Programs

The Academic Senate shares concerns expressed by other constituencies that the proposed review process could delay approval of international programs, which may negatively impact curriculum and research projects. The Academic Senate requests an opportunity to comment on the final drafts of these orders prior to their approval.

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