



## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, STANISLAUS

### **11/AS/12/SEC Resolution Regarding CSU Board of Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy Sept 2012 Agenda Item 3, Upper Division General Education and Degree Completion Information (Amended)**

**Title:** Regarding CSU Board of Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy September 2012 Agenda Item 3, Upper-Division General Education and Degree Completion, Information (Amended)

**Resolved:** That the California State University, Stanislaus (CSU Stanislaus) Academic Senate reaffirm the faculty's primary responsibility for the curriculum, a responsibility based on the principle of academic freedom, and noted in the CSU Board of Trustees Statement on Collegiality and the American Association of University Professors' Principles Statement on Collegiality; and be it further

**Resolved:** That the CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate object to the lack of consultation in the manner in which the proposed requirement change was developed, formalized and made public as a board agenda item without adequate and timely consultation with, or indeed even notification to CSU faculty governance; and be it further

**Resolved:** that the CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate express deep concern over the disregard for potential impacts to the competitive value of CSU degrees that may result from hasty reductions to unit count without consideration for curricular integrity; and be it further

**Resolved:** that in the event that the amended proposal passes, the CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate strongly urge that:

1. The timelines for review of degrees in the Summary of the proposal be extended;
2. Language be added to an executive order implementing the Title V changes that urges programs to maintain the breadth of the degree by maintaining a strong general education emphasis in the required coursework for the bachelor's degree; and
3. The provisions for chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements on non-complying programs be excluded;

and be it further

**Resolved:** That this resolution be distributed to the Board of Trustees, the chancellor, campus presidents, the ASCSU, and CSU campus academic senate chairs.

**Rationale:**

The Board of Trustees Educational Policy Committee September agenda item “Upper-Division General Education and Degree Completion, Information (Amended)” is a proposal to require, where feasible, all four-year bachelor’s degree programs to require no more than 120 semester or 180 quarter units to complete. The item started out as a proposal to eliminate the upper division general education requirement for CSU undergraduate degrees. The initial proposal was put on the BOT agenda with no prior notice to the ASCSU, and no consultation with faculty. After significant concern expressed by statewide and local faculty governance bodies and campus faculty about the lack of consultation and the potentially significant impact of the proposal on curricula throughout the CSU, the BOT proposal was modified and sent to the ASCSU during its plenary meeting on Friday, September 14, 2012.

The CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate is committed to active partnership in shared governance as it upholds the principle of the faculty’s primary responsibility for the curriculum, a responsibility noted in the CSU Board of Trustees Statement on Collegiality and the American Association of University Professors’ Principles Statements. Of major concern in carrying out that responsibility is the quality of the degree. Because of its potentially significant impact on the nature and content of degrees throughout the CSU system, the proposal to bring all degrees down to 120 units wherever feasible should be thoroughly evaluated by faculty before action by the Board of Trustees.

The Summary in the agenda item indicates that an executive order will be used to implement the Title V changes and also outlines the timeline and provisions for program compliance with the new Title V language. The CSU Stanislaus Academic strongly urges the chancellor and Board of Trustees to consider amending specific aspects of the timeline and provisions presented in the Summary.

The CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate urges that the timelines for compliance with the 120/180 unit goal be extended. The existing timeline does not allow campus program faculty sufficient time to evaluate their required coursework against the benchmark unit level set in the BOT proposal.

We also request that the executive order re-emphasize the CSU commitment to educational breadth by urging programs to maintain a strong GE component. A significant path to reducing units-to-degree outlined in the Summary is a reduction in systemwide general education (GE) requirements. GE has long been an indicator of the CSU commitment to provide an education that goes beyond specific major requirements or career skills. Through GE students are introduced to diverse ways of looking at problems and understanding the world, a skill of lasting value in an interdependent and globalized world.

The CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate also requests that the provision for chancellor’s action to reduce unit requirements on non-complying programs be excluded from the executive order. Faculty’s primary responsibility for the curriculum is well-established in CSU and AAUP statements. Providing for the chancellor to act to reduce unit requirements for specific degrees is a violation of academic freedom and undermines the principle that faculty, as experts in their field, are best qualified to determine the appropriate level and extent of knowledge needed to earn a university degree.

The CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate acknowledges the CSU’s position that moving degrees to 120 units is intended to improve graduation rates, protect academic quality and provide an affordable

education. If that action is to be taken, the CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate urges that it be done in a manner that allows faculty sufficient time to adapt programs to the new requirements, maintains the breadth of the CSU degree and preserves respect for academic freedom.

Approved by the Academic Senate on 10/2/12