

California State University, Fresno

Proposed Resolution Regarding CSU Board of Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy September 2012 Agenda Item 3

WHEREAS: the California State University, Fresno, Academic Senate affirms that faculty have the 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, and a major concern in carrying out that responsibility is the quality of the degree.

WHEREAS: the CSU Board of Trustees' Committee on Educational Policy Sept 2012 Agenda Item 3 has a potentially significant impact on the nature and content of degrees throughout the CSU system, and in particular the proposal to bring degrees down to 120 units should be thoroughly evaluated by faculty before action by the Board of Trustees.

WHEREAS: the speed and manner of this proposal's presentation has not allowed sufficient time for program evaluation and response by all levels of faculty governance, and the timeline in the proposal itself for programs to bring themselves into compliance is too short to allow adequate consideration, deliberation and response.

WHEREAS: the provision in the memo allowing for chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements on non-complying programs is inconsistent with well-recognized tenets of shared governance.

WHEREAS: 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.

WHEREAS: 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.

WHEREAS: this document lacks a clearly stated re-commitment to General Education and its role in creating educational breadth by urging programs to maintain a strong GE component.

WHEREAS: the document in fact suggests one of four paths the chancellor could impose on programs who do not reduce units-to-degree to the new 120 maximum and are not granted an exemption from the chancellor would be to reduce their obligation to meet system wide general education (GE) requirements.

WHEREAS: the CSU Office of the Chancellor Memo from 2/11/10 on Title 5 Section 40508 stating "Each campus shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to ensure that justification is provided for all program requirements that extend the baccalaureate unit requirement beyond 120 units," already exists and programs have been abiding by its terms, drawing into question the need for further action. (For example, the Committee on Educational Policy's "Upper-Division General Education and Degree Completion" summary section states that "81 percent of degree programs [are] not exceeding the minimum..." And the summary goes on to state "Majors requiring more than the minimum number of

units reportedly cannot reduce further because of professional accreditation requirement, pressure from advisory boards and input from employers.”)

Now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of California State University, Fresno 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 Academic Senate of California State University, Fresno condemn the categorical disregard for 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 Academic Senate of California State University, Fresno express deep concern over the disregard for potential impacts to the competitive value of CSU degrees that may result from these hasty and ill-planned reductions to unit count without full consideration for curricular integrity as related to students’ future prospects for graduate school, professional accreditation and career; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of California State University, reaffirms the importance of maintaining a strong GE component in the curriculum in order to provide students with educational breadth and prepare them to be informed citizens of the community, state and nation.

RESOLVED: that California State University, Fresno Senate urge the Board of Trustees to reject the Proposed Amendments to Title V and be it

RESOLVED: in the event that the proposal to Amend Title V does pass the board of trustees we 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 provision for chancellor’s action to reduce unit requirements on non-complying programs be removed.

and be it further

RESOLVED: That the chair of the CSU Fresno Senate see that this resolution is distributed as soon as possible to President Welty, all Fresno State Program Chairs, the Board of Trustees, the chancellor, the president of the statewide senate, and CSU campus academic senate chairs.