



1156 HIGH STREET
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95064

Office of the Academic Senate
SANTA CRUZ DIVISION
125 CLARK KERR HALL
(831) 459 - 2086

December 10, 2024

STEVEN CHEUNG
Chair, Academic Council

RE: Systemwide Senate Review of Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479

Dear Steven,

The Santa Cruz Division of the Academic Senate has completed its review of the proposed revisions to systemwide Senate regulation 479 - CalGETC with the Committees on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA), Educational Policy (CEP), Planning and Budget (CPB), Teaching (COT), and the Graduate Council (GC) having provided responses.

All committees responding were supportive of the perceived intent behind the proposed changes. However, almost all committees also expressed misgivings of the potential downstream unintended impacts of these changes, if and when they are implemented. A main focus of these concerns was the impact on GE courses and their instruction, in particular workload issues for GSI's as well as unanticipated impacts linked to the availability of needed GE courses. Several committees worried this might actually lengthen time to degree as well as raise equity issues, in particular for some STEM majors where such courses are often carefully planned toolkit sequences with limited availability. An overriding sentiment was that if these changes are implemented, careful monitoring of impacts will be required.

CPB noted that there is a need to reduce time to degree for some majors (chemistry, physics, engineering) and that these proposed changes are focused on achieving this. However, they were leery of the possible unintended consequences of these changes stating, ". . . if the proposed change is implemented, it could adversely affect all students who need to take GE classes at UCSC . . . since many GE courses are already heavily impacted and students often have difficulty getting into the classes they need." That is, despite the intent of the change in policy to reduce time to degree, it could also increase time to degree in specific majors. This same observation is shared by both COT, GC, and CEP. CPB also noted an additional unintended consequence might be equity, in requiring different metrics vis a vis GE courses and major declaration for transfer students, and possibly have the effect of forcing students out of carefully designed major "toolkit" courses into summer or other offerings.

CEP was supportive of the principles behind the proposed changes recognizing possible positive goals such as streamlining transfer pathways, reducing barriers to course enrollment, and improving equity for transfer students. However, beyond raising concerns noted above linked to unintended consequences and time to degree, CEP also wondered about other opportunities for transfer students to take deferred GE, in particular at community colleges. CAFA was brief in its response stating that it understood the rationale behind, and was in favor of the proposed changes.

Finally, another major vein of concern running through most committee responses is the possible impact on the instructional burden placed on graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) in the general education (GE) courses that would fall within the revised policy. As noted by CPB, the GE courses could become larger and increase the workload on both faculty and TAs. GC centered this concern in its response, noting that “TAs and GSIs could have greater workload expectations and even less time for their graduate training during these teaching quarters, which could ultimately have a negative impact on time-to-degree (for graduate students).” CEP and COT concurred that this could be an issue.

Overall, given concern for downstream unintended consequences there was a strong sentiment that there should be careful ongoing assessments of the impacts of this policy, if implemented. This should include monitoring impacts for transfer students themselves, but also GE courses most affected and their instructors, as well as more broadly for all students who may be impacted by course availability change. Specifically, CPB offered the recommendation to “evaluate . . . potential impacts on workload and to study the downstream effects of potential increased demand for non-STEM GE courses.” These sentiments were supported by CEP and COT, the latter suggesting that there should be periodic impact reports to track and document the consequences of implementation. CEP also noted importance of careful monitoring specifically of the transfer students who defer GE’s, to understand impacts on success and time to degree.

On behalf of the Santa Cruz division, I thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this proposed change to systemwide policy.

Sincerely,



Matthew McCarthy, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Enc: Senate Committee Responses (Bundled)

cc: Luca de Alfaro, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Tanner WouldGo, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Chad Saltikov, Chair, Graduate Council
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Megan Thomas, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

November 27, 2024

MATTHEW MCCARTHY
Academic Senate Chair

Re: Senate Regulation 479 - CalGETC

Dear Matthew,

During its meeting of October 16, 2024, the Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA) discussed the proposed revisions to systemic Senate regulation 479 regarding the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC). As CAFA understands the rationale behind the proposed changes, the committee is in favor of the proposed changes.

Sincerely

lsl

Luca de Alfaro, Chair,

Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid

cc: Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Tanner WouldGo, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Chad Saltikov, Chair, Graduate Council
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Eleonora Pasotti, Chair, Committee on Rules, Jurisdiction and Elections
Megan Thomas, Chair, Committee on Teaching

December 3, 2024

MATTHEW McCARTHY, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Re: Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC)

Dear Matt,

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) has reviewed the proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479, which details the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC). Overall, members are supportive of the UC's efforts to streamline transfer pathways, reduce barriers to course enrollment, and improve equity for transfer students. At the same time, we do have some concerns about implementation and its broader implications for workload and resource allocation.

1. Partial Cal-GETC certification creates a clear pathway for transfer students who may face barriers to completing all requirements before matriculating at UC Santa Cruz. However, it also poses administrative and logistical challenges: Students attending UC Santa Cruz with partial Cal-GETC will require careful tracking, clear communication, and targeted advising. CEP recommends developing a comprehensive systemwide framework to guide partial certification implementation that includes guidance on advising and student outreach.
2. The increased expectation on UC campuses to provide deferred GE courses for transfer students risks exacerbating existing pressures on instructional faculty. Many GE courses, for instance, already face enrollment challenges. An influx of additional demand may negatively affect non-STEM departments who more commonly offer GEs. Thus, we echo the Committee on Planning and Budget's (CPB) recommendation to evaluate these potential impacts on workload and to study the downstream effects of potential increased demand for non-STEM GE courses.
3. Deferring GE requirements until after transfer may lead to longer time-to-degree for some students, particularly if GE courses are unavailable or scheduling conflicts arise. While the intent is to prioritize major preparation, this could unintentionally disadvantage transfer students by delaying graduation^[06].
4. CPB also notes the constraints transfer students will face with deferred GEs that must be taken at a UC. Is it possible for transfer students to take deferred GEs through articulated community college courses the summer after they transfer, in order to reduce burden on UC-offered GEs?
5. While we support the additions of the Ethnic Studies and Oral Communication requirements, we are concerned about the availability of these courses at both community colleges and UC campuses. Ensuring sufficient offerings to meet demand will require careful planning and potential investment in faculty hiring and course development.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on proposed regulation. We look forward to continued collaboration on this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tanner WouldGo". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Tanner WouldGo, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

cc: Luca de Alfaro, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Megan Thomas, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Chad Saltikov, Chair, Graduate Council
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget

November 25, 2024

MATTHEW McCARTHY
Chair, Academic Senate

Re: Systemwide Review of Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC)

Dear Matt,

Graduate Council (GC) has reviewed the proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC). The intention behind these revisions is commendable and could help transfer students at community colleges fast-track their entrance to a UC school. However, GC is hesitant to support this proposal based on potential unintended consequences, such as increased competition and enrollments in GE courses at UC Santa Cruz.

From a GC perspective, we are most concerned about how this proposal will negatively affect the workload of GSIs and graduate student TAs of these GE courses. As discussed by the Committee on Planning and Budget (10/10/24), one consequence of the proposal is increased students in GE courses at UCSC. Providing sufficient TA support for large classes may become challenging, especially given the current threats of dwindling TA positions under the budgetary environment. GC's concern is that TAs and GSIs could have greater workload expectations and even less time for their graduate training during these teaching quarters, which could ultimately have a negative impact on time-to-degree. The proposal sounds good in principle, and community colleges stand to benefit the most by getting students out the door quicker. Yet, we worry that UCSC would shoulder the greatest responsibility and cost in fulfilling the GE requirements if those courses are not completed at the community college.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine.

Sincerely,



Chad Saltikov, Chair
Graduate Council

cc: Luca de Alfaro, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Raphe Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Megan Thomas, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Tanner WouldGo, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Melissa Caldwell, Vice Chair, Academic Senate
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

October 10, 2024

MATTHEW McCARTHY, Chair
Academic Senate

Re: Systemwide Review of Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC)

Dear Matt,

At its meeting of September 26, 2024, the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) discussed proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC). While we understand that there is an issue with time-to-degree for some majors (chemistry, physics, engineering), and that this proposal addresses that by relaxing General Education (GE) requirements, CPB notes that there may be unintended consequences at both the UC level and specifically for our campus, but it is difficult to assess this quantitatively without some description of the number of transfer students that are affected.

Of primary concern is that allowing some STEM students to transfer with missing GE courses will of necessity require them to complete those courses at a UC campus. Possible impacts include longer time-to-degree for those students (particularly if GE classes are difficult to get into), larger GE classes with a more uneven distribution of students (declared vs. undeclared), increased workload for faculty and TAs, and potentially greater student reliance on summer courses, which are often online courses taught by GSIs. While STEM divisions may benefit from more (and perhaps better prepared) majors, the non-STEM divisions may be expected to provide more GE coursework, effectively shifting the teaching load for upper-division vs. lower-division courses between divisions. This shift can increase the invisible faculty labor in large GE courses due to the higher need for guidance and support many students have, and may lead to higher student loads for TAs. We also note that many GE classes are major toolkit classes, potentially reducing availability for majors (or even the number of majors), and shifting the balance of the classes. Indeed, if the proposed change is implemented, it could adversely affect all students who need to take GE classes at UCSC (whether for their GE requirements or their major), since many GE courses are already heavily impacted and students often have difficulty getting into the classes they need.

Finally, CPB recognizes the issue of equity, in that 4-year students are not required to complete GEs before declaring, while transfer students must do just that. We suggest that an alternative way to address this issue is to return to a model where GEs are completed in the first two years (or before declaring) by all students, since this better aligns with the pedagogical intent of those classes.

If Senate Regulation 479 is passed as written, CPB therefore recommends that the relevant committees evaluate the impact (if any) on the distribution of workload and responsibilities across the divisions, as well as the downstream impacts on existing curriculum, and adjust as necessary.

Sincerely,



Raphael M. Kudela, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

cc: Luca de Alfaro, Chair, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Chad Salitkov, Chair, Graduate Council
Megan Thomas, Chair, Committee on Teaching
Tanner WouldGo, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Melissa Caldwell, Vice Chair, Academic Senate
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

November 19, 2024

MATTHEW McCARTHY
Chair, Academic Senate

Re: Systemwide Senate Review Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC)

Dear Matt,

The Committee on Teaching (COT) discussed proposed revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (CalGETC).

The committee strongly supports efforts to increase transfer pathways and improve time to degree for transfer students. The committee therefore supports proposed modifications to Area 5 of Cal-GETC, which makes it possible to reduce the units devoted to general education before transfer, in a number of STEM majors by permitting students to satisfy the Area 5 requirements with courses from two distinct academic disciplines rather than requiring that one course must be from the Physical Sciences and the other from the Biological Sciences.

While the committee's support for improving transfer pathways includes support in principle for equalizing the time available for 4-year students and transfer students to meet their GE requirements by permitting the deferral of additional GE requirements until after transfer, COT also notes the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) concerns shared in their October 10, 2024 correspondence that "impacts [could] include longer time-to-degree for those students (particularly if GE classes are difficult to get into), larger GE classes with a more uneven distribution of students (declared vs. undeclared), increased workload for faculty and TAs, and potentially greater student reliance on summer courses, which are often online courses taught by GSIs." COT therefore supports CPB's recommendation that the relevant committees "evaluate the impact (if any) on the distribution of workload and responsibilities across the divisions, as well as the downstream impacts on existing curriculum." In particular, COT would like additional information on the likely future impacts of these decisions on departments outside STEM fields. COT would be interested in seeing such impact reports when they are available to facilitate our ongoing work on teaching at UC Santa Cruz.

Sincerely,



Megan Thomas, Chair
Committee on Teaching

cc: Tanner WouldGo, Chair, Committee on Educational Policy
Luca de Alfaro, Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid
Chad Saltikov, Chair, Graduate Council
Gabriela Arredondo, Chair, Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Raphael Kudela, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget