

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Report on Senate Resolution on Graduation Rates

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

In May 2006 the Academic Senate passed the following resolution:

Resolution

Whereas the Faculty of the University of California, Santa Cruz, desire all admitted undergraduates to complete their UCSC degree, and

Whereas the loss of first and second-year students is a primary cause of lack of degree completion, and

Whereas many approaches exist for improving first and second-year retention,

Therefore Be it Resolved

That the Santa Cruz Division requests the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor to ensure that issues of retention and graduation are a key component of academic and budgetary planning and evaluation; and

That the Santa Cruz Division requests the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor work with the Division to establish a task force on retention that brings together those with interests and with authorities related to retention and graduation; and

That the Santa Cruz Division requests each of its programs to consider ways to improve retention and graduation among its students with particular attention to students seeking academic challenge in the lower division.

We report here on CEP's work in response to this resolution.

First, CEP has formally proposed to the Chair of the Senate a Joint Task Force on Retention and Graduation, included as an appendix to this report. However, CEP believes that endeavors to assess and improve retention and graduation must be on-going rather than short-lived or episodic. To this end, the charge of the Task Force is to recommend membership and a charge for a **permanent** Joint Steering Committee on Retention and Graduation. The Task Force is to provide its recommendations by May 15, 2007, so that the Steering Committee can be in place by fall 2007.

In the meantime, CEP has continued to raise the issue of retention and graduation with members of the administration. For example, CEP's response to the draft Strategic Plan requests that attention be paid to the connection between Plan elements and retention. Last year, in a letter to the VPAA concerning the external review process, CEP recommended that, as part of the process, units be provided with and report on statistics regarding degrees awarded. Finally, CEP

is recommending that the proposed Joint Task Force be chaired by either a current or recent high-ranking administration officer.

The May 2006 resolution required that “the Santa Cruz Division requests each of its programs to consider ways to improve retention and graduation among its students with particular attention to students seeking academic challenge in the lower division.” Such a request to units was included in CEP’s 2005-06 annual report and in a letter to departments and colleges sent by the CEP 2005-06 and 2006-07 Chairs. An important function of the future Joint Steering Committee will be to continue nurturing policies of monitoring and improving retention at the program level.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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