

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**  
**Amendment to Regulation 6.5: Individual Study, Field Study, Internships, etc.**

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) is proposing to amend Santa Cruz Regulation (SCR) 6.5 regarding “special approval courses” (e.g., independent studies, field studies, etc.--see below). The most substantive changes that would result from these amendments are i) that students without declared majors could take up to 7 credits of special approval courses per quarter; ii) that students *with* declared majors could take more than 7 credit hours of such courses per quarter, given permission from their major-sponsoring authority; iii) that there would be no campuswide limit on the number of quarters over which a student could take (with permission) an unusual number of special approval credits. Current Regulation limits all students to 5 credits per quarter of special approval courses barring special permission, and strongly restricts exceeding this limit in a second quarter or beyond.

For other changes, see the discussion below.

In its own words, SCR 6.5 addresses courses that “include but are not limited to lower and upper division tutorials, lower and upper division field studies, independent field studies, internships, senior theses, senior projects, group tutorials[.]” The term for such courses at the systemwide level is “special study course”. Judging by its usage across UC campuses, “special study course” can be or has been interpreted to include at least the following:

- Independent study courses
- Group study courses
- Independent field study courses
- Supervised field study courses
- Internships
- Laboratory research courses
- Senior thesis or project courses

In CEP’s view, what these course categories have in common is that *they lack a curriculum that has been approved in advance by CEP*. Hence our term “special approval course”.

A likely exception is the supervised field study, by which we mean a field study where a faculty member is *on-site*. (Of course, all high-quality field study courses and internships involve supervision in the sense of having general faculty and staff oversight.) Such courses therefore should not be considered “special approval courses” at all. Since they are included in the systemwide definition of “special study course”, we have adopted a different term here. (The current term in SCR 6.5 is “individual studies course”, but this is also inappropriate, since some of the courses listed above involve groups.)

A minor goal of the proposed amendments is to clarify for our campus which courses count as “special approval courses” and should therefore be subject to the restrictions discussed below. There is a great deal of confusion on this point at both the systemwide and campus levels.

Systemwide Regulation (SR) 764 states that “Credit in special study courses for undergraduates is limited to five units per term”. UC Santa Cruz has an active variance to this Regulation that allows a student to take up to 15 credits of special study courses in one quarter, given permission. This variance also allows a student to take more than five credits of such courses in any *subsequent* quarters only “in special circumstances and for students of outstanding demonstrated ability”. The full text of the variance is given in an appendix here.

In response to a recent inquiry by our campus, the University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction (UCRJ) ruled that SR 764 applies to all of the course types listed on the previous page, while our campus variance (see below) applies only to courses numbered 199. It follows from the latter ruling that students may not take more than 5 credits of *any* special study course apart from a 199, under any circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

CEP has several concerns about SCR 6.5, as well as SR 764 and the variance, especially the following:

- CEP does not support an inviolable limit of 5 credits per quarter of special approval courses.
- CEP does not support a restriction to only one quarter of extra special approval courses or credits.
- These restrictions are not followed on our campus. The most notable example of this involves the Community Studies major, whose *requirements* have for decades included two 15-credit quarters of field study.

The degree of presumption against special approval courses, implicit in both SR 764 and SCR 6.5, is arguably too restrictive for our current educational setting. (These Regulations are about 40 years old.) First, experiential learning opportunities are today more numerous and more prevalent than before, considered by many to be a “best practice” of undergraduate education. There are experiential learning curricula at UC campuses and sites that routinely require or allow more than 5 credits of academic credit per term, some for more than one quarter. Below we list some examples.

At UCSC, during the summer session 2008, 140 students took 10 credits (in one term) of special study courses. Of these, 117 were Community Studies internships, while the rest were divided among Economics, Biology, College 8, Philosophy, Chemistry, Latin American and Latino Studies, and Psychology. (Many more students, mostly Community Studies majors, took 15 credits of special study courses in a summer term.)

Psychology students at UCSC can take a 5-credit field study course (193), and they can also work in faculty-sponsored research groups through a 5-credit advanced research course (194). These sometimes overlap; in addition a field study course might easily overlap with a senior thesis course. Since the field study requires a 2-quarter commitment and many faculty also require a 2-quarter commitment for their research groups, overlap can go on for more than one quarter. This state of affairs in Psychology is no doubt mirrored in other majors.

---

<sup>1</sup> UCRJ’s finding that it is the course number 199 that matters rather than any properties of the course likely misses the original point of restrictions on special studies courses. It entails that the intent of Regulation could be circumvented by renumbering restricted courses to 199. There is in fact much inconsistency in the use of numbers for special study courses across UC campuses, and numbers change; it seems better for Regulation to avoid using them.

Looking to other campuses, UCLA has a variance to SR 764 allowing up to 8 credits of special study per quarter. Furthermore, UCLA interprets “special study” to include only courses number 195-199; other courses are even less restricted. For example, in the UCLA Nursing program, a course Clinical Internship: Integration (169) requires 36 hours of work per week and gives 12 credits.

In the year 2006-07 UC Davis recorded a total of 214 course enrollments of greater than 5 credits having the number 192, the number reserved there for field studies.

At UC Santa Barbara, twenty-four courses were counted in the 190-199 number series that have variable credits exceeding 5 credits. Some of these courses appear to be internships or field studies which are located off campus. Others appear to be similar to 198-199 courses (independent studies), though UCSB Regulation prohibits more than 5 credits per term of such courses. Also at UCSB, in the College of Creative Studies, any special study course can give up to 6 credits depending on the work accomplished.

Currently UCLA, UC San Diego, and UC Santa Cruz have active variances to SR 764. UC Davis and UC Irvine have variances that have expired.

Second, and in a similar vein, the University of California is currently devoting serious attention to the importance for undergraduates of research opportunities. The best of these opportunities are typically available by means of special approval courses such as independent studies. We see no compelling reason for a Regulation that sets a blanket limit on such experiences of 5 credits per term.

For the reasons given above, CEP finds current Regulation on special approval courses to be too restrictive.

On the other hand, when students attempt to take an unusual number of special approval courses (either within or across terms), it is prudent that a mechanism be in place that ensures reasonable oversight and good advising. Our proposed changes to Regulation reaffirm the importance of oversight, but are adapted to current advising structures.

The proposed amendments to SCR 6.5 would have the following specific effects:

- They would define “special approval” courses as those whose curricula are not approved in advance by CEP.
- While current Regulation requires that students obtain permission to take “two or more” special approval courses in a term (the number of credits is unclear in 6.5 but set at 5 by systemwide), the new Regulation would set the threshold at above 7 credits.
- The 7-credit threshold would be absolute for students without declared majors, because i) there is no realistic means to provide oversight and approve exceptions outside of departmental structures and ii) students who have not found a major should probably not take excessive amounts of special approval courses in any case.
- For students with declared majors, the 7-credit threshold could be exceeded given permission of a student’s major-sponsoring unit(s). Requiring approval ensures that students are using special approval courses prudently, making progress toward degree, etc.
- Approval for individual students to exceed the 7-credit limit would be waived when it follows from degree requirements already approved by CEP.

- Unnecessary portions of the current legislation would be removed. These include especially current SCR 6.5.2, which defines field studies as opposed to “tutorials”, and current SCR 6.5.7 which states general policy on narrative evaluations that is adequately stated elsewhere.
- Many changes would be effected to improve clarity, update terms, and improve consistency.

It is inconsistent with SR 764 to allow more than 5 credits of special approval courses per term. The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) recently voted to propose to the Academic Council that SR 764 be rescinded. If that proposal fails and these amendments to SCR 6.5 pass, then our campus will seek a variance to SR 764, including a variance to the limit on amount of special approval courses beyond one quarter.

**Current wording**

**Proposed wording**

<p><b>6.5 Individual Study, Field Study, Internships, etc.</b></p> <p><b>6.5.1</b> Individual studies courses include but are not limited to lower and upper division tutorials, lower and upper division field studies, independent field studies, internships, senior theses, senior projects, group tutorials, and are subject to the definitions and limitations of this section.</p> <p><b>6.5.2</b> Lower and upper division tutorials (courses 99 and 199) have as their focus material that is a normal part of the academic resources of the campus (e.g., books, laboratories, instructors); lower and upper division field studies (courses 93 and 193) have other material as their focus.</p> <p><b>6.5.3</b> Independent field study (course 198) is the only course for which either: (a) the student's supervision is conducted by a regularly appointed officer of instruction by a means other than the usual supervision in person (e.g., the supervision is by correspondence), or (b) the student</p>	<p>6.5 Individual Study, Field Study, Internships, etc. <b><u>Special Approval Courses.</u></b></p> <p>6.5.1 <del>Individual studies</del> <b><u>Special approval</u></b> courses <b><u>are courses whose curricula are not approved in advance by the Committee on Educational Policy. These</u></b> include, but are not limited to, <del>lower and upper division tutorials, lower and upper division field studies, independent field studies, internships, senior theses, senior projects, group tutorials</del> <b><u>independent or group studies (or tutorials), independent field studies or internships, senior thesis or project courses, individual research project courses, and recital preparation courses,</u></b> and are subject to the definitions and limitations of this section.</p> <p><del>6.5.2 Lower and upper division tutorials (courses 99 and 199) have as their focus material that is a normal part of the academic resources of the campus (e.g., books, laboratories, instructors); lower and upper division field studies (courses 93 and 193) have other material as their focus.</del></p> <p>6.5.3 <b>[Renumbered to 6.5.5]</b></p>
--	---

is doing all or most of his or her course work off campus. The student must show on application for course 198 evidence of having had suitable preparation for the field study and facility and competence in the subject-matter area. Before credit may be assigned for course 198, the student must file a written report (or paper) with the department, program of studies, or college sponsoring the course. Students taking course 198 will be officially registered and pay regular University of California fees. Course 198 is not ordinarily available to freshmen. Course 198 is not available for course credit by petition.

**6.5.4** Determination of lower or upper division credit is based on the level of the work done and not on the class standing of the student. Upper division work is of truly advanced nature, and if upper division credit is requested, the application must provide evidence of competence in the subject-matter area within which the project lies.

**6.5.5** Students wishing to take an individual studies course of 2 or 5 credit hours should apply to the department, program of studies, or college sponsoring the course, outlining in reasonable detail the expected course of study. Deadlines for filing applications may be set by the sponsoring agency and included in the catalog description of that agency's course. Agencies may waive their own deadlines up to the final date for enrolling in courses. Applications must be approved by the instructor as proposing a worthwhile study which the instructor is capable of supervising and willing to supervise. The instructor must indicate on the application the number of credit hours to be granted upon successful completion of the work proposed. Applications also must be approved by the chair or provost (or senior curricular officer) of the agency sponsoring the course as being appropriate and in conformity with the educational policy of the agency.

~~6.5.4~~ **6.5.2** Determination of lower or upper division credit **for special approval courses** is based on the level of the work done and not on the class standing of the student. Upper division work is of truly advanced nature, and if upper division credit is requested, the application must provide evidence of competence in the subject-matter area within which the project lies.

~~6.5.5~~ **6.5.3** Students wishing to take ~~an individual studies~~ **a special approval** course of 2 or 5 credit hours should apply to the department, program of studies, or college sponsoring the course, outlining in reasonable detail the expected course of study. Deadlines for filing applications may be set by the sponsoring agency and included in the catalog description of that agency's course. Agencies may waive their own deadlines up to the final date for enrolling in courses. Applications must be approved by the instructor as proposing a worthwhile study which the instructor is capable of supervising and willing to supervise. The instructor must indicate on the application the number of credit hours to be granted upon successful completion of the work proposed. Applications also must be approved by the chair or provost (or senior curricular officer) of the agency sponsoring the course as being appropriate and in conformity with the educational policy of the agency.

**6.5.6** Students must receive authorization from their college to take two or more individual studies courses in a given quarter. Before the authorization may be granted, the student must present to the college the signatures of all instructors and chairs (or provosts) who approved the individual course applications, showing that they know that their course is part of an extended use of individual studies courses by the student. Authorization by the college indicates that the above signatures have been obtained and that the courses are appropriate to the educational needs of the student. If this permission is granted more than once during a student's undergraduate career, it implies also that the circumstances are special.

~~6.5.6~~ **6.5.4 Students without declared majors may not take more than seven credit hours of special approval courses in a given quarter.** Students **with declared majors** must receive authorization from ~~their college~~ **their major-sponsoring unit(s)** to take **more than seven credit hours of special approval courses** ~~two or more individual studies courses~~ in a given quarter. Before the authorization may be granted, the student must present to the college **major-sponsoring unit(s)** the signatures of all instructors and chairs (~~or provosts~~) who approved the individual course applications, showing that they know that their course is part of an extended use of individual studies courses by the student. Authorization ~~by the college~~ indicates that the above signatures have been obtained and that the courses are appropriate to the educational needs of the student. **Authorization as described in this section is not needed if the seven or more credits of special approval courses are part of a regular curriculum that has been approved by the Committee on Educational Policy.** If this permission is granted more than once during a student's undergraduate career, it implies also that the circumstances are special.

**[renumbered from 6.5.3]**

**6.5.5** Independent field study (course 198) is the only course **studies or internships are courses** for which either: (a) the student's supervision is conducted by a regularly appointed officer of instruction by a means other than the usual supervision in person (e.g., the supervision is by ~~correspondence~~ **email**), or (b) the student ~~is doing~~ **does** all or most of his ~~or her~~ **the** course work off campus. The **application for field studies courses must show evidence of suitable preparation and competence in the subject matter.** ~~student must show on application for course 198 evidence of having had suitable preparation for the field study and facility and competence in the subject matter area.~~ Before credit may be assigned for **the** course 198, the student must file a written report (or paper) with the department, program of studies, or college

<p><b>6.5.7</b> The written evaluation by the instructor for an individual studies course shall include a description of the work done by the student, as well as an evaluation of the quality and characteristics of the student's performance. One copy of the written evaluation shall be kept by the chair or provost of the sponsoring agency who will file it with the original application for the course. These documents shall be available to appropriate Santa Cruz Division and Santa Cruz Administrative officers for at least five years.</p>	<p>sponsoring the course. Students taking <del>course 198</del> <b><u>independent field studies or internships</u></b> will be officially registered and pay regular University of California fees. <del>Course 198 is</del> <b><u>Such courses are</u></b> not ordinarily available to freshmen <b><u>first-year students</u></b>. <del>Course 198 is not</del> <b><u>and are not</u></b> available for course credit by petition.</p> <p><del>6.5.7 The written evaluation by the instructor for an individual studies course shall include a description of the work done by the student, as well as an evaluation of the quality and characteristics of the student's performance. One copy of the written evaluation shall be kept by the chair or provost of the sponsoring agency who will file it with the original application for the course. These documents shall be available to appropriate Santa Cruz Division and Santa Cruz Administrative officers for at least five years.</del></p>
---	---

Respectfully submitted;

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Linda Burman-Hall

David Helmbold

Pamela Hunt-Carter, *ex officio*

Loisa Nygaard

Donald Potts

Eileen Zurbriggen

Jaye Padgett, Chair

Holly Gritsch de Cordova, NSTF Representative

Matthew Palm, Student Representative (SUA)

Ravi Rajan, Provost Representative

Shawn Riley, Student Representative (SUA)

May 6, 2009

**Appendix: UCSC Variance to SR 764**

“A.6.5.4. Ordinarily a student may include no more than one course 49 or 199 in his program in any term. But with the permission of their College or Board of Studies, students in good [sic] standing may undertake an independent study project 199 equivalent to two or three courses in one quarter under one, two or three instructors. Except in special circumstances and for students of outstanding demonstrated ability, only one such augmented (block of two) or full-time (block of three) 199 may be taken during a student's undergraduate career. Such augmented or full-time 199s are available in two ways: (a) in such courses as may be offered by Boards of Studies where permission to take will be obtained by the student from his advisor, instructor(s), and the Board of Studies, and (b) in such courses as may be offered by Colleges, where permission to take will be obtained by the student from his advisor, instructor(s) and Provost. The use of such 199s in the University shall be reviewed by the Committee on Educational Policy.”