

## COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY Annual Report 2008-2009

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Educational Policy's (CEP) work can be divided into two categories. There is the work the Committee carries out as a matter of course, including reviews of campus programs, approval of program statements and of new and revised courses, consultations with other committees and administrative units, and consideration of student petitions. Then there are policy initiatives raised by CEP (sometimes in tandem with other bodies). CEP continued work this year on a major initiative, general education reform. We begin with discussion of this initiative.

### I. General Education

Culminating a three-year effort, the Santa Cruz Division Academic Senate passed comprehensive general education (GE) reform in the winter quarter. The full CEP report on GE reform is available at <http://senate.ucsc.edu/cep/CEPproposal2.pdf>. Here we present a brief overview.

The larger goals of GE reform were i) to converge through faculty conversation on a set of educational goals for general education at UC Santa Cruz at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (our last major general education reform occurred 25 years ago); ii) to make those goals more explicit and clear than they have been in the past; iii) to make the general education curriculum more topics-based and less division-based, and therefore (we hope) more interesting and reflective of UC Santa Cruz's identity; iv) and finally, to redress some clear shortcomings in the current GE requirements, such as the shortage of writing-intensive classes and the unclarity of distinctions such as "topical" vs. "introductory".

#### *Requirements*

The chart below summarizes the new general education requirements. Except for the writing-related Disciplinary Communication requirement (discussed below), these requirements become effective in fall 2010. Departments are being asked to submit proposals for new GE course designations by the December catalog deadline of this year.

Under the new requirements, students will take one 5-credit course from each of the first seven categories. They will also take one 5-credit course fulfilling any of the three *Perspectives* categories, and one course (minimally 2-credit) fulfilling any of the *Practice* categories. The C1 and C2 (composition) requirements are carried over from current GE requirements.

Detailed descriptions, and educational goals, for these GE categories can be found in the document linked to above. At a broader level, the new requirements differ from our current ones in several ways. First, the number of required courses/credits is smaller. Whether the difference is modest or substantial depends on how successful a student might have been under our current system at "overlapping" requirements that is, finding courses that satisfied more than one requirement at a time. Depending on the amount of overlap, a student under our current system

will take anything from 10 to 15 five-credit courses. Under the proposed system, the range would be from 9+ to 10+ courses, where “+” refers to a two-credit course in the “Practice” category. Second, as just noted, there is no overlap of requirements allowed (except that, at CEP’s discretion, C1 or C2 may overlap another designation for certain core courses). Third, there is no more distinction between “Topical” and “Introductory” courses. Fourth, the new GE requirements are more specific, and tied to UC Santa Cruz’s educational identity. This relates to a fifth difference from the current GE requirements: the new requirements are not anchored to divisions; many will plausibly arise out of several divisions.

		Code	Distinct Courses	Possibly Overlapping
Cross-Cultural Analysis		CC	1	
Ethnicity & Race		ER	1	
Interpreting Arts & Media		IM	1	
Mathematical & Formal Reasoning		MF	1	
Scientific Inquiry		SI	1	
Statistical Reasoning		SR	1	
Textual Analysis & Interpretation		TA	1	
Perspectives (Choose 1)	Environmental Awareness Human Behavior Technology & Society	PE-E PE-H PE-T	1	
Practice (2-credit) (Choose 1)	Collaborative Endeavor Creative Process Service Learning	PR-E PR-C PR-S	+ (2cr)	
Writing	Composition	C1&C2	1	1
	Disciplinary Communication	DC	*	
Total (= 9+ to 10+)**			9+	1

\*CEP advocates building DC into existing major courses

\*\* ‘+’ refers to a 2-credit course. So, ‘9+’ means nine 5-credit courses and one 2-credit course

### Writing

GE reform has also recast the post-composition writing requirement. Until now students have been required to take one 5-unit Writing-intensive (W) course in any academic discipline. The new Disciplinary Communication (DC) requirement differs from the W in the following ways:

- It specifies training **appropriate to a student’s major**, rather than training in “any academic subject”. This does not mean that departments (or other major-sponsoring entities) must mount DC courses themselves; however, departments are responsible for

articulating their own educational goals for their majors in the area of disciplinary communication, subject to the general policies defined by CEP.

- The requirement is broadened to embrace forms of disciplinary communication besides writing (e.g., oral presentation, poster presentation). However, as the proposed guidelines make clear, writing still forms the most substantial component of the requirement.
- It is possible to meet the requirement over any of 1-3 courses (totaling no fewer than 5 credits), giving departments more flexibility in meeting their goals. These courses have to be upper-division (so that transfer students are not left out), and **all** pathways through a major have to meet the DC goals.

Unlike the other new GE requirements, the DC requirement is effective as of fall 2009. Since it is an upper-division requirement, though, and since transfers bring catalog rights, departments generally have at least a year in order to implement their DC curricula. Departments are being asked to do so this year, so that DC courses will be in place at the same time as other new GE courses, in fall 2010.

### *Interdisciplinary Topical Clusters*

A third element of GE reform, called Interdisciplinary Topical Clusters (ITCs), are particularly interesting. But since they do not require legislation and are not required, they are less apparent to the faculty. At this point they remain largely an idea to be encouraged, and one of CEP's tasks this year will be to continue publicizing the idea and fostering potential ITCs. Only one ITC exists currently, discussed below.

Our new GE requirement categories seen above are more specific than categories like the existing "Humanities and Arts" or "Social Sciences" categories. We hope that this gives general education a stronger sense of vision and identity. Our requirement categories are nevertheless still distributional categories. The freedom and choice offered by a distributional system is good, but in some respects distributional systems can leave something to be desired. Because no course chosen relates to any other course chosen, a student's GE curriculum usually lacks any coherence or unifying vision.

CEP is proposing the establishment of ITCs as a way to bring more coherence and unifying vision to a part of a student's GE curriculum. ITCs are clusters of two or more GE courses defined by attention to a specific issue or question of importance to society. An ITC is not normally attached to any division or department; ITCs should be genuinely interdisciplinary. The faculty who design ITCs must work together to ensure that each course fits well into one overall vision and that educational objectives of later courses build on outcomes of earlier ones.

For example, the first existing ITC is summarized in the chart below; more information can be found at <http://eight.ucsc.edu/core-course.html>. On the right is a list of new GE designations a student might conceivably earn by taking this cluster. (The actual list of 3-4 designations will be decided this year as CEP approves GE designations.)

*Nurturing Environmental Citizenship*

Courses	Candidate GE designations
The Environment and Society (College 8)	3 or 4 of... Environmental Awareness
Fundamentals of Environmental Science (EE Biology / Earth Sciences)	Mathematical/Formal Reasoning Statistical Reasoning
Technological Innovation and Environmental Challenges (Electrical Engineering)	Scientific Inquiry Technology & Society Collaborative Endeavor Service Learning

A cluster is not an additional set of required courses. Rather, the courses of a cluster themselves satisfy GE requirements. Each course in a cluster should normally belong to a different GE category. Nor are ITCs required. Rather, groups of faculty or departments should be encouraged to create them, and students should be encouraged to take them.

A clustered curriculum has benefits beyond purely academic ones. Clusters create learning communities within UC Santa Cruz, and one might hope for the sort of benefits to institutional identity, retention, and educational success that such learning communities can foster. In fact, ITCs are an attempt to accomplish some of the very same goals that colleges try to accomplish: they represent a kind of core curriculum built on a theme with the intent of fostering identity and community. As a separate proposal, we see great appeal in the idea of linking a cluster to a specific college. Clusters can work as learning communities with or without college affiliation. But to establish them entirely independently of colleges might be missing an opportunity—the chance of fusing *learning* and *residential* communities—that is unique to UC Santa Cruz.

The ITC *Nurturing Environmental Citizenship*, for example, is linked to College 8; only College 8 students will normally take it. Yet two of the courses of this cluster are mounted by departments, just as GE courses usually are. Student FTE for teaching these courses will accrue to the departments, as it does now. General education courses are already funded, so there are no obvious new resource implications to them. Furthermore, the ITC above involves ladder-rank and other long-term faculty in the academic life of a college without the familiar and intractable problem of involving them in existing core courses.

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## II. Other CEP initiatives

### A. SCR 6.5 on “special approval courses”

CEP sponsored a change in Santa Cruz Regulation (SCR) 6.5 regarding “special approval courses” (e.g., independent studies, field studies, etc.—see below). This change passed at a spring quarter Senate Meeting. The most substantive changes that resulted from these amendments are i) that students without declared majors can take no more than seven credits of special approval courses per quarter; ii) that students *with* declared majors can take more than seven credit hours of such courses per quarter, given permission from their major-sponsoring authority; iii) that there is no campuswide limit on the number of quarters over which a student can take (with

permission) an unusual number of special approval credits. Existing Regulation limited all students to five credits per quarter of special approval courses barring special permission, and strongly restricted exceeding this limit in a second quarter or beyond.

The kinds of courses affected by this legislative change include the following. 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".

Independent study courses

Group study courses

Independent field study courses

Supervised field study courses (only if lacking a pre-approved curriculum)

Internships

Laboratory research courses

Senior thesis or project courses

Systemwide Regulation (SR) 764 states that "Credit in special study courses for undergraduates is limited to five credits per term". UC Santa Cruz has had 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."

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 above, 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 five credits of *any* special study course apart from a 199, under any circumstances.

CEP raised 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 five 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.

CEP argued that the degree of presumption against special approval courses, implicit in both SR 764 and SCR 6.5, is too restrictive for our current educational setting. (These Regulations are about 40 years old.) The amendments to SCR 6.5 had the following specific effects:

- They define "special approval" courses as those whose curricula are not approved in advance by CEP.

- While existing Regulation required that students obtain permission to take “two or more” special approval courses in a term (the number of credits was unclear in 6.5 but set at five by systemwide), the new Regulation sets the threshold at above seven credits.
- The seven-credit threshold is 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 seven-credit threshold can 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 seven-credit limit will be waived when it follows from degree requirements already approved by CEP.
- Unnecessary portions of the existing legislation were removed, and many changes were effected to improve clarity, update terms, and improve consistency.

It is inconsistent with SR 764 to allow more than five credits of special approval courses per term. The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) proposed to the Academic Council that SR 764 be rescinded, and the Council voted to send the question for systemwide Senate review. After that review it will be voted on by the systemwide Assembly. If SR 764 is not rescinded, then our campus will seek a variance to it, including a variance to the limit on amount of special approval courses beyond one quarter.

#### **B. SCR 10.2.2.3 on Topical Requirement waivers for transfer students.**

CEP proposed to amend SCR 10.2.2.3 on general education requirements and transfer credit, and these amendments passed.

Before fall 2007 SCR 10.2.2.3 prohibited the articulation of transfer courses to meet the Topical general education requirement. The relevant text of 10.2.2.3 before fall 2007 is given here:

**Transfer or advanced standing credit may apply toward all of the requirements in SCR 10.2.2.1 [i.e., general education requirements, CEP] except the Topical and Writing-intensive courses... Because it is difficult to judge whether courses passed elsewhere meet the spirit of the topical course requirement, transfer students shall be exempted from up to three of these courses depending on the amount of credit transferred at the time of entrance.**

In the fall of 2006 the Senate amended this legislation, among other things removing all text specific to the Topical requirement. The change was justified by the Senate’s judgment that individual transfer courses *can* be evaluated as satisfying (or not) the Topical requirement. Hence Topicals were to be treated like any other general education course (except the Writing-Intensive requirement). Since then the Admissions office has been working to identify Community College courses that can be articulated to specific Topical courses at UC Santa Cruz.

Since then our campus has passed comprehensive general education reform, to go into effect fall 2010. The Topical requirement will cease to exist as of that time, though some students will

continue to satisfy it for several years due to catalog rights. CEP argued that the Admissions Office should not continue devoting significant time to finding and articulating courses to satisfy this requirement, since Admissions will have to begin identifying courses to satisfy all of our *new* general education requirements.

The change to SCR 10.2.2.3 re-establishes a transfer student's right to be exempted from 1-3 Topical courses based on credits transferred in, as existed for students before fall 2007. Departing from the earlier legislation, however, it does not *prohibit* the transfer of courses to satisfy Topical requirements. Both students and the Admissions Office can therefore continue to benefit from the work that has already been done toward identifying courses for articulation and applying them toward requirements.

Given catalog rights beyond the 2010 date of the general education change, this legislative change will affect a significant number of students for about 3 more years.

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### **III. Other work**

#### **A. Budget cuts and Senate process**

This was a year of serious budget stress. The pressure to make significant decisions in a short amount of time resulted in inadequate Senate consultation in some cases. A notable example involved decisions that threatened the existence of the Community Studies major (and perhaps even the department). CEP spent a good deal of time in the spring quarter responding to budget-related decisions. Given this experience, the chair has recently sent a letter to deans, provosts, and program chairs reminding them of the extensive requirements for consultation when decisions are made affecting the content, feasibility, or existence of academic programs on campus. The requirements for consultation are laid out in detail in the document "Academic Programs and Departments: Guidelines for Establishment and Disestablishment", at <http://planning.ucsc.edu/budget/AcadPlan/guidelines.full.feb08.pdf>.

#### **B. Miscellaneous responses**

CEP read and gave feedback on the following:

1. A draft Accountability Report provided to the Senate by the UC Office of the President.
2. A draft new business plan for the University Office of the Education Abroad Program.
3. A document provided by our EVC's office called Action Plan High-Level Indicators, intended to provide metrics by which the campus can measure progress in meeting some of its goals.
4. A proposed amendment to Regents Standing Order 100.4 (Duties of the President) giving the UC President authority to declare an Emergency (subject to Regental approval) and implement furloughs or salary reductions for UC employees.
5. A report of the 2009 Undergraduate Advising Workgroup.
6. Principles for Non-Resident Enrollment at UC, drafted by BOARS.

### **C. External Reviews**

This was an unusually heavy year of program review activity. The Committee read and responded to eleven external reviews and participated in the related closure meetings (Astronomy and Astrophysics, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, History of Consciousness, Information Systems Management, Literature, Mathematics, Ocean Sciences, Politics, Sociology, Theater Arts). CEP also commented on charges for four external reviews (Economics, Feminist Studies, Film and Digital Media, History).

### **D. Programs**

As usual, CEP reviewed a great deal of proposed changes to the general catalog.

CEP reviewed and approved two new campus majors. These were a combined major in Economics and Mathematics (sponsored by Economics), and a major in Physics Education (Physics). CEP also provided feedback on two proposed new majors, one in Cognitive Sciences (Psychology), and an Economics intensive major. CEP approved the discontinuation of one major, the general Earth Sciences B.A. (Earth and Planetary Sciences Department). CEP also approved the discontinuation of the Dual Degree Engineering Program (run in cooperation with UC Berkeley).

CEP reviewed and approved one new campus minor (after revision), in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Education (Education Department). CEP approved the discontinuation of one minor, in Western Music (Music).

The Committee also approved the following three new concentrations: Bioeducation (MCD Biology), Integrated Critical Practice (Film and Digital Media), and Science Education in Earth and Planetary Sciences (Earth and Planetary Sciences).

CEP also reviews proposals for new University Extension certificate programs and, as of this year, periodically reviews existing ones. CEP reviewed and re-approved existing programs in Accounting, Business Administration, Internet Programming and Development, and Very Large Scale Integration. CEP also reviewed programs in Clinical Trials, and in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, but returned these proposals for review next year pending the appointment of UC Santa Cruz Senate faculty member liaisons. CEP thinks that each UNEX certificate program should have at least one specially designated Senate faculty member on the advisory board, someone who would take part in the review process, would be available for consultation with CEP, and would also, along with the relevant department chair(s), review and approve changes to courses and curricula.

### **E. Other**

University and Dean's Honors were implemented smoothly, effective fall 2008.

The campus has long struggled with problems that arise when a department makes significant changes or cancels a course without always consulting adequately with other departments and



programs that depend on that course in some way. With the crucial support of the Registrar's Office, CEP has been working on campus "stakeholder maps". These "maps" will allow anyone to see, for any course taught at UC Santa Cruz: what majors outside of the sponsoring department require it or allow it to satisfy a requirement; what courses it is a prerequisite to outside of the sponsoring department; what courses are prerequisite to it outside of the sponsoring department. Our hope is that these stakeholder maps will greatly improve cross-unit consultations.

With CEP's support, the Registrar's Office refined two-pass enrollment appointments effective fall 2009, improving equity: enrollment appointments are now assigned by class level in descending order according to credits earned rather than randomly.

Following up on CEP's efforts to encourage timely grade submission, the Registrar's Office developed specific communications with faculty regarding late grades, which met with resounding success, significantly reducing the number of late grades at the deadline, the number of late grades from past quarters, and improving faculty understanding of the grading process.

UC Santa Cruz students are approved to take one UC Santa Cruz course through UC Santa Cruz Extension ("concurrent enrollment"). CEP approved a new policy on concurrent enrollment courses that ensures that concurrent enrollment courses are treated consistently with regard to their effect on the UC Santa Cruz GPA. The policy now (ignoring some details) is that such courses count toward the UC Santa Cruz GPA.

Students are currently dropped from classes for which they have not met the prerequisites after grades are in for classes in the previous quarter. This is enforced by the Registrar's Office for classes in which students earn a D, F, or NP grade. CEP agreed to extend this policy for the grades of Incomplete, Z, and DG.

CEP discussed and approved a new language requirement for Literature majors.

CEP Subcommittees reviewed 200 new courses, 887 course revisions/substitutions/cancellations, 61 program statements, and 9 individual majors.

CEP approved 279 Writing-Intensive Course substitutions.

The Chair reviewed another 386 petitions:

- Other general education substitutions (89). Most often these involved the Topical or Introduction to the Discipline courses.
- Late requests to change the grade option (letter grade vs. pass/no pass) of a class (45). Most were denied. Approximately 10 were approved so that a student could meet the graduation requirement that 75 percent of credits be letter graded. In such cases students are not allowed to choose which class(es) to change. Rather, all courses of their last quarter are changed to letter grade option (with the exception of P/NP only courses).
- Requests for a grade change (84). All of these involved late withdrawals from a course, usually for medical reasons, leading to the grade W.

- Late add and drop requests (143).
- Miscellaneous other petitions (25).

## Thanks

CEP meetings are large, typically around 16 people. In spite of this size they work very well. This is a tribute to the individuals who make it up. We are grateful, first of all, to the Committee's guests. CEP would be at a loss without the dedication, expertise, and infinite patience of Academic Editor Margie Claxton; Academic Preceptor Elaine Kihara; Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Bill Ladusaw; Articulation Officer Barbara Love; and Associate Director of Admissions Michael McCawley. We thank all of you for your commitment of time and energy.

CEP relies on its Analyst Roxanne Monnet to function. Roxanne juggles managing materials and planning for a weekly 2½ hour agenda, holding long meetings with the chair, and dealing with a torrent of emails and phone calls from around the campus. (This ignores her work for *other* Senate committees...) More than that, Roxanne helps to keep CEP members on track and focused on what is most important. This was needed more than ever in a year of general education reform. We thank her.

Respectfully submitted,

## COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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