

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Annual Report 2011 -12

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Educational Policy's (CEP) responsibilities include the review of proposed and existing undergraduate programs; proposals for new courses and the revision of existing courses; and changes to undergraduate programs and policies. CEP consults with other committees and administrative units about a broad range of issues pertaining to undergraduate education, and reviews program statements and other material relevant to undergraduate education that appears in the general catalog. CEP also considers a large number of individual student petitions each year. A brief overview of the Committee's work this year is provided below.

I. Removing Major Disqualification Policies and Providing Guidelines for Selective Major Qualification Policies

In May 2011, CEP produced a report to the senate regarding major admissions and disqualification policies. This report outlined CEP's concerns with major disqualification policies, including the fact that many of these policies appeared to be in violation of SR 900 which states the circumstances under which undergraduate students can be subjected to academic probation and disqualification. In that report, CEP encouraged departments to replace major disqualification policies with selective major qualification policies.

This year's committee continued the discussion of this issue. We considered whether to seek a variance from SR 900 that would allow us to set a threshold higher than a 2.0 GPA for students to be considered in good standing. The committee concluded that this would not be in the best interests of students, and affirmed a 2.0 GPA as indicating good academic standing. We next considered whether it would be possible to review existing (and future proposed) major disqualification policies to ensure that they would not violate SR 900. It was our conclusion that this would be extremely difficult to accomplish. Only major disqualification policies that were comprised of lower division courses taken early in the student's career would be certain not to violate SR 900 and those policies could fairly easily be restructured into selective major qualification policies. We initiated conversations with all programs that had approved major disqualification policies in place, in order to better understand the goals of these policies and to discuss with programs the possibility of turning their major disqualification policies into selective major qualification policies. Upon the conclusion of those discussions, CEP voted to eliminate major disqualification policies on our campus.

Subsequent to that decision, CEP worked with the affected departments to remove their major disqualification policies. Because CEP's vote was taken fairly late in the year, there was not time for departments to put forward (and CEP to review and potentially approve) new selective major qualification policies. CEP voted to offer programs the option of a temporary selective major qualification policy, based on all or a subset of courses in the program's currently approved major disqualification policy. The following departments chose to pursue such a temporary policy: EEB Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, Bioengineering, and Environmental Studies. These temporary policies are approved for two years (2012-14) and at that point will sunset. This

allows programs time to develop proposals for new selective major qualification policies; such proposals must be accompanied by evidence that the selection criteria are a reliable predictor of future success in the major. Guidelines for these proposals, and a form for their submission, are available on CEP's website at: <http://senate.ucsc.edu/committees/cep-committee-on-educational-policy/policies-guidelines/majors/index.html>. We will also have examples of policies that were recently approved uploaded to the web page soon. Programs have proposed a variety of different types of policies and their supporting data vary as well. In particular, selective major qualification policies might involve the requirement of a particular grade in one or more courses, an overall GPA average across one or more courses, or no more than one NP, D, or F across a set of courses. Note that the requirements must be able to be met before the campus major declaration deadline, for both native and transfer students.

CEP also discussed whether major disqualification policies are covered under catalog rights, and determined that they are. If a student chooses a particular catalog year for fulfilling their major requirements, they are subject to all aspects of that catalog that relate to the major. Thus, students who choose a catalog year for their major of 2011/12 or earlier will be subject to any major disqualification policies included in that catalog. However, this is subject to the following very important caveat. No major disqualification can take place if it would result in late disqualifications from the major and a possible violation of SR 900.

As a result of the discussions regarding major qualification and disqualification, the School of Engineering requested the elimination of a special School of Engineering GPA (used for qualification and disqualification purposes). This request was approved by CEP.

The approved temporary major qualification policies will sunset in 2014 and will not carry forward to the 2014/15 catalog. Programs that wish either to continue the temporarily approved policy or to seek approval for a new policy must submit a full proposal by the deadline for the 2014/15 catalog (i.e., December 2013). Because there is likely to be some back-and-forth as CEP requests additional information about some aspects of the proposal, we strongly encourage programs to submit full proposals by December 2012 or (if that is not possible) some time later in the 2012/13 academic year.

Because of the necessity of eliminating major disqualification policies from the 2012/13 catalog, discussions regarding the temporary major qualification policies happened in the spring and (in some cases) the summer. We extend our thanks to program faculty and staff for their diligence in working with CEP to effect these policy changes under a tight timeline. We extend a special thanks to Associate Registrar Claxton for her thoughtful and patient work on the relevant program statements.

II. Revision of Santa Cruz Regulation (SCR) 9.1.8

In concert with our discussions concerning major disqualification policies, CEP considered the function and importance of Santa Cruz Regulation (SCR) 9.1.8. This regulation states that "Repetition of a course more than once requires approval of the student's college." Although CEP had asked for strict enforcement of this regulation in our 2009/10 annual report, such enforcement is not practical unless there is a mechanism in AIS to prevent students from enrolling in a course for a third time. Previously, AIS did not enforce this policy; however

changes were put into place this year to expand AIS's functionality in this way. Accordingly, SCR 9.1.8 will now be enforced, beginning in Fall 2012.

CEP's interpretation of this regulation is that it is meant to support student progress, not to address curricular capacity issues. Being unable to pass a required major course after two attempts is a signal that the student is struggling in that major. By ensuring that the student must speak with a college adviser to be able to re-attempt the course, there is an opening to either redirect the student to another major and/or to help him or her strategize for success. In addition, of course, there is a potential resource benefit if students are not allowed to attempt courses three, four, or more times – seats will open up for other students. This is fortuitous, and especially so for gateway courses, but we reiterate that our interpretation is that this is not the main intent of the regulation. Curricular capacity should not be an element in the decision making process of the college advisers.

The Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) and his staff created a comprehensive set of guidelines for college advisors to use in deciding whether to allow students to attempt a course for a third time. The guidelines can be found here on the Undergraduate Division Webpage: <http://ue.soe.ucsc.edu/RepetitionOfCourses>. CEP reviewed these guidelines and found them clear, comprehensive, and thoughtful. An important component of the guidelines is that they are structured so that departmental recommendations will be weighted very heavily in making decisions. Department recommendations will be overruled only rarely, and only with clear justification. However, the final determination will be up to the college, as required by the regulation. CEP affirmed that we believe it is best for students for the final decision to be in the hands of the colleges. CEP members also wrote an amendment to (SCR) 9.1.8 to include the “W” grade as an attempt at a course for the purpose of regulation 9.1.8, which will be submitted for vote at a fall 2012 senate meeting.

III. External Reviews

The Committee read and responded to two external review reports and participated in the related closure meetings (Music and Languages.) CEP commented on the charges for one external review committee (Art). The Committee also reviewed mid-cycle reports from the Economics Department, Feminist Studies Department, History Department, and the Film and Digital Media Department. The Committee reviewed requests for deferrals from the Anthropology Department and the Writing Program.

IV. Communication with Administration

The Committee sent a letter to the EVC and VPAA concerning our perspective on the recent budget cuts and their effect on undergraduate education. We noted that in the last few years, two majors have been suspended not because of lack of quality or lack of student interest but because of a cascading chain of events and decisions related to budget cuts. If the elimination or consolidation of majors is necessary for financial reasons, we believe that the full campus, including students, should be a party to making these difficult decisions. When majors are suspended (or discontinued) we believe it is essential to immediately announce these decisions, and to disseminate the information as widely as possible, preferably with an email sent to the entire campus community. We are troubled by what seems to be a growing number of cases in which departments have cancelled offerings of important foundational or gateway courses or cut

the size of these courses. These decisions result in *de facto* limits on the number of students who are able to declare these majors. We are also concerned if budget reductions are taken largely through cuts to lecturer and Teaching Assistant(TA) funds. Such cuts have a serious negative impact on undergraduate education. Several departments appear to be having difficulty mounting their Disciplinary Communications(DC) curricula; this part of the undergraduate curriculum is important and must be supported. Finally, we asked that decisions about funding and cuts in funding consider undergraduate enrollments as one factor.

The Committee also sent a letter to the EVC and VPAA asking for an accounting of the \$300,000 in permanent funds to support the Disciplinary Communication Initiative, approved by EVC Klinger in the letter to the VP/DUE dated 4/17/09. It is CEP's belief that the announcement that this letter from EVC Klinger would be forthcoming, made at the Senate meeting in which the Senate voted on the DC requirement, was instrumental in allaying worries about an "unfunded mandate" and may have been necessary to the passing of the DC requirement. Thus, it is worrisome if no funds were ever expended.

V. Major Mapping Project

CEP consulted with Ryan Montgomery, a UCSC graduate student hired for the project by the Interim VPDUE, regarding the progress with major maps for the campus community to reference for curricular planning. Maps are now available online for all majors; however, only some of the maps have been fine-tuned for simplicity of presentation. CEP believes that the maps have the potential to be useful for a variety of purposes and to a variety of constituencies, and we encourage the administration to devote resources to their continued development.

VI. Programs

CEP reviews all proposals to modify the requirements or policies of undergraduate programs that appear in the general catalog. CEP reviewed the following proposed changes to programs:

- a request for a final exam schedule change for Spanish courses to be held simultaneously was denied due to the challenges related to the shortage of classroom space;
- a new subject area for Punjabi (PUNJ) was approved;
- the subject area for Spanish for Spanish Speakers (SPSS) was changed to Spanish for Heritage Speakers (SPHS);
- CEP recommended approval of the Biology B.A. degree program administrative home change from Molecular, Cell and Development (MCD) Biology to the Ecology & Evolutionary (EEB) Biology Department and the administration of the Biology B.S. degree program by both departments;
- feedback was given concerning a pre-proposal for a new Critical Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES) major, which CEP members endorsed;
- feedback was given concerning a draft proposal to lift the Community Studies suspension, it has still not been decided on at this time.

CEP recommended to approved the discontinuance of the following program:

- the discontinuance of the combined B.A./M.S. Applied Economics and Finance Program.

CEP considered several proposals to selectively admit students to majors:

- requests to introduce selective major qualification policies for the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (BMB) major, majors administered by Molecular, Cell and Development (MCD) Biology, and majors administered by the Computer Engineering department were approved;
- a request from the School of Engineering (SOE) to rewrite their catalog statement eliminating the SOE GPA calculation was approved.

CEP reviewed changes to DC curriculum for the following departments:

- Art, Cognitive Science, Economics, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Italian Studies, Jewish Studies, Latin American and Latino Studies, and Physics.

Community Studies

CEP continues to be deeply concerned about the potential loss of the Community Studies major, which fills a unique and important role on our campus. We saw no other choice than to support the disestablishment of the department because a department comprised of two ladder rank faculty is not viable. These two remaining ladder rank faculty have now been transferred out of the CMMU Department and into Social Sciences as Divisional appointments. The Community Studies major remains under suspension and CEP continues to hope that a viable plan can be formulated that will allow the major to emerge from suspension.

American Studies

In response to a proposal from the VPAA to suspend the American Studies major, CEP reluctantly voted to recommend suspension. The committee is extremely concerned to see yet another well-regarded, high-quality and popular major in jeopardy, especially given that American Studies (AMST) has been an attractive major for underrepresented minority students and had provided one of the few intellectual spaces on campus for a deep engagement with critical race and ethnic studies. This is an excellent program with dedicated faculty that has filled a unique niche at UCSC. We feel strongly that the disappearance of this program (whether temporary or permanent) represents a grave loss to our students and to the campus as a whole. However, the American Studies department was also reduced to two ladder rank faculty and attempts to reconstitute the AMST major as an interdisciplinary program were not successful. The major is now under suspension through June 30, 2014.

VII. Miscellaneous Responses

In addition to the usual review of undergraduate courses and program statements, CEP was asked to provide feedback on a number of reports and proposals. During the past year, CEP read and commented on:

- a request to allow a high score on the SAT to satisfy C1 and C2;
- changes to Appendix C for Academic Program Reviews from the VPAA's Office;
- a proposal from the Academic Council to modify SR 610 such that residency requirements would be based on enrollment in UC-sponsored courses and not the physical location of those courses;
- a proposed change in the funding for UC's On-line Education Project;
- UCOP's five year perspectives campus program development list;
- six departmental proposals to transfer faculty FTE to other departments or divisions;

- a report from CAFA on the pilot undergraduate honors program;
- several versions of a proposal from the VPDUE to alter the length of classes and the class schedule;
- two versions of a proposal from BOARS to streamline transfer student admissions procedures;
- the draft campus academic calendar from the Registrar's Office;
- the request from the Registrar's Office for approval to move to an only online catalog;
- the campus report on retention;
- a draft academic plan for a Silicon Valley Campus;
- changed the name from admissions to the major policy to qualifications to the major policy for clarity;
- a request to add learning objectives to the current course approval form to better align with the upcoming WASC review of UCSC;
- request to modify the definition of the Ethnicity and Race general education designation;
- a report on outcomes for students who enrolled in Math Stretch 2;
- UCUES survey items;
- the VPDUE's proposed guidelines for college advisors concerning the enforcement of SCR 9.1.8.

VIII. Other actions

In addition to general education course proposals, CEP members reviewed 1014 course approvals (including one on –online course), 823 course revisions (including cancellations, suspensions and re-numberings), 191 new undergraduate course approvals, 47 program statements, and 7 individual majors.

The Chair reviewed another 629 petitions, including:

- 98 Writing-Intensive course substitutions;
- 185 other general education substitutions;
- 81 requests to retroactively change the grade option (letter grade vs. pass/no pass) of a class. Approximately 11 of the requests were approved so that a student could meet the graduation requirement that 75 percent of credits be letter graded. In such cases, all grades earned during the student's last quarter were changed to letter grades (with the exception of P/NP only courses);
- 81 requests for retroactive grade changes. All of the requests involved late withdrawals from a course, usually for medical reasons, leading to the grade W. Approximately 19 of the requests were denied due to the lack of supporting documentation;
- 90 requests for the retroactive addition or removal of a class. Most of these requests of were based on purported AIS errors; 10 were denied due to the lack of evidence that the student attempted to change their schedule prior to the deadline;
- 94 other miscellaneous petitions;
- 125 requests for Graduate Student Instructors;
- 17 requests for Undergraduate Student Instructors.

Other work undertaken by the Committee included:

- revisions to the Graduate Student Instructor application form;
- revisions to the course approval forms;
- created a new form for proposals to revise an approved DC curriculum;

- updated the Individual Major guidelines to include the DC requirement;
- reviewed undergraduate teaching assistant guidelines;
- created questions for a student opinion poll on retention that was included as part of the student election poll in spring quarters;
- consulted with EVC Galloway on her five year vision for UCSC;
- extended approval to college advisers for students who would benefit from changing their catalog year, thereby eliminating the need for a student petition;
- consulted with the Mathematics Department and CPE concerning an online Math Placement Exam;
- created a list of priority action items for the AIS Steering Committee;
- revised the Exam and Closed Week Policy;
- created a policy on types of instructors for the Disciplinary Communication (DC) curriculum expectations.

CEP benefited from the expertise of an impressive group of invited guests, including Associate Registrar Margie Claxton; Associate Coordinator of College Advising Cher Bergeon, who represented Academic Preceptors; Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Richard Hughey; Articulation Officer Barbara Love; and Director of Admissions Michael McCawley. Their many contributions to the committee's work were truly invaluable and we thank them for their dedication, their expertise, and their unwavering commitment to making UCSC an exceptional place for undergraduate education.

Finally, we thank Susanna Wrangell for her tireless efforts on behalf of the committee and the campus's students. In addition to all of her standard tasks (e.g., planning our weekly agendas, handling our voluminous correspondence, fielding emails and calls from around campus, and reviewing and organizing a slew of petitions) she proved invaluable in researching policy-related questions for the committee. Her ability to meet challenges with cheerfulness was much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted;

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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