

## CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

### Report to the Chancellor's Office on Facilitating Graduation Action Plans

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California State University, Sacramento has committed to a serious examination of our collective efforts to facilitate the success of our students in achieving their educational objectives. This report evolved from a collaborative process among the faculty, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs. President Gonzalez articulated the vision of Destination 2010 for the University focusing on student success and strong academic programs and has formed the context in which we have worked.

We have examined the status, policies, and practices associated with the 22 recommendations, and have implemented changes and developed plans for further improvement. The campus continues to work with the departments to discover areas where units to degree can be reduced while maintaining quality. Six programs that required more than 120 minimum units to graduate had reduced units in the last program review cycle. The campus continues to work with the departments to evaluate the curriculum.

Our current policies allow many opportunities for students to apply courses to meet multiple aspects of graduation requirements. This and many other related issues will be examined in the review of General Education, which begins in spring of 2006. The goal is to establish a clear and comprehensive GE program to be combined with effective advising.

Life and career goal advising has been strong on this campus. We have strengthened the coverage and frequency of freshman advising to build a strong first-year experience. The Career Center has recently expanded its face-to-face career advising to include satellite offices in four colleges.

The Faculty Senate is examining the campus policies on repeated courses, early declaration of majors, drops, withdrawals, and grades of incomplete. Changes were made or proposed in related policies and practices.

As a supplement to the face-to-face student advising, our campus is developing an interactive roadmap program – DegreeQuest. DegreeQuest can provide students with a semester-by-semester academic plan based on the major selected by students and number of units taken per semester. We are designing this roadmap program centrally and will work with student advising and departments to test the online program. A pilot program for seven relatively complex majors is scheduled to be introduced in early 2006.

DegreeQuest and degree audit programs will be implemented with CMS student modules currently being implemented on campus. We plan to take advantage of the strength of CMS in tabulating student information and communicating with students to urge them to plan their university years with various advising tools. As a first step, students will receive an automatic notice and link to our online Degree Audit program upon their completion of 70 units.

This report represents the first step in cultivating a campus culture for student success. We have established a collaborative infrastructure to conduct meaningful discussions among faculty, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs. It is with this structure and spirit that we will continue to monitor and improve student success.

### **Task Force on Facilitating Graduation**

Co-Chairs: Cristy Jensen, Faculty Senate Chair  
Mike Lee, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs

Members: Richard Kornweibel, Chair, Faculty Senate GE Committee  
Robert Buckley, Chair, Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee  
Thomas Krabacher, Interim Chair, Faculty Senate Academic Policy Committee  
Fred Baldini, Chair of Kinesiology and Health Science Department  
Paul Noble, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Greg Wheeler, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
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Resource Specialists:  
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Jeanette Norton, Director of CMS  
Anita Hall, University Registrar  
Vivian Llamas Green, Degree Evaluation Coordinator

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Sacramento State Task Force on Facilitating Graduation was established to develop and implement action plans to address the mandates from the CSU Board of Trustees as described in Coded Memorandum AA-2005-21 (August 2, 2005). The task force and the following report are the outcome of a collaborative approach shared by the Faculty Senate, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs to develop both short-term and long-term strategies and action plans to improve student success and timely graduation. Each of the 22 recommendations identified in the Coded Memo was assigned to a group of Action Units who were responsible for collecting information, designing action plans, implementing changes, and monitoring and reporting the progress back to the task force. As part of our response to this initiative, the Faculty Senate focused the annual Fall Retreat on topics related to General Education, Comprehensive Writing Policy (Graduation Requirement), and Strengthening Support for Students.

Sacramento State was also an active participant in the national study on graduation rate outcomes entitled “Student Success in State Colleges and Universities: A Matter of Culture and Leadership” sponsored by AASCU (American Association of State Colleges and Universities) in 2005. A member of Academic Affairs staff participated as a study team member, and we conducted a mini self-study using the protocol for the AASCU study as a model. The AASCU study identified the key success factors as a strong campus culture of student success, campus leadership, strong collaborative structure among all units on campus, and high expectation of the

students. Sacramento State, through a coordinated effort among faculty, Academic Affairs, and Student Affairs, is establishing a collaborative infrastructure to answer the long-term challenge of building a campus culture of student success. Our goal is not only to provide a response to the mandates of the CSU Board of Trustees, but also to continue monitoring and improving student success through studies of our student population and the best practices identified in the AASCU study and at other comparable institutions.

Of the 22 recommendations, 19 items need to be addressed by the campus. The following is a summary of the current status at Sacramento State, actions taken in the fall semester of 2005, and proposed and potential actions.

## **1. Reduction of Required Units in Programs Leading to the Baccalaureate Degree** (Action Units: Faculty Senate, Academic Affairs, Deans, and Department Chairs)

### Introduction:

The programs currently requiring more than 120 units are listed in Table 1 below. Table 1 and Table 2 (Bachelor's Degree's Which Cannot be Completed in 110 Units Minimum) are based on the 2004-06 University Catalog and verified with department chairs. These tables provide an overview of the graduation requirement status of the campus. Departments were aware of the Facilitating Graduation initiatives and were asked to consider further reduction of minimum required units within the boundaries of accreditation standards and program quality. Provost Ric Brown and AVP Mike Lee have repeatedly urged deans and department chairs to review the curriculum and explore possible ways to achieve that goal. We remain committed to the use of the program review process as the expected context for ongoing review of the baccalaureate unit requirements.

### Actions Taken in Fall 2005:

In response to the request that we renew our examination of this issue, we have initiated a process for systematic review of those baccalaureate majors which continue to require more than the 120 unit minimum to urge that they explore opportunities for aligning general education and major requirements. The Division of Nursing has proposed a plan to align its GE requirements and to permit a student to complete the baccalaureate with 120 units. Kinesiology, upon completion of its program review, has initiated program change proposals to reduce its required units. The Biology Department has reduced their program to 120 units for both the BS in Microbiology and Molecular Biology. The blended (teacher preparation) program in Kinesiology has also recently received approval, via the faculty's curricular review process, to count some of their major courses for upper division GE credit.

### Potential Changes/Courses of Action:

Both major departments and GE have been asked to examine unit requirements again and specifically identify where double counting units or decreasing units in the major might be possible.

**TABLE 1. Undergraduate Degrees That Require More Than 120 Units Minimum\***

Major	Overlap between major and GE	Remaining GE Credits = 51-overlap	English 20**	Major Credits	Lowest minimum credits = Major + GE + ENGL 20	Date of most recent program review	Outcome of review: were units reduced?	Date of next program review	Accredited?	If beyond two years: candidate for accelerated program review?
Biological Sciences (BS) Clinical Lab Tech.	12	39	3	80	122	2002/03	Yes	2008/09	no	n/a
Chemistry	9	42	3	77	122	2001/02	no	2007/08	Yes (1)	n/a
Computer Science	12	39	3	87	129	2003/04	no	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Engineering										
Civil	18	33	3	103	139	2003/04	no	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Computer	18	33	3	101	137	2003/04	no	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Construction Mgmt.	18	33	3	99	135	2003/04	Yes	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Electrical	18	33	3	98	134	2003/04	No	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Engineering Tech.	9	42	3	92	137	2003/04	Yes	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Mechanical	18	33	3	101	137	2003/04	Yes	2009/10	Yes (2)	n/a
Geology (BS)	9	42	3	79	124	2001/02	no	2007/08	no	n/a
Kinesiology										
Athletic Training	12	39	3	80	122	2004/05	Yes	2010/11	Yes (3)	n/a
Exercise Science	9	42	3	79	124	2004/05	Yes	2010/11	Yes (3)	n/a
Music										
Bachelor of Music Intst.	3	48	3	76	127	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Jazz	3	48	3	78	129	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Keyboard	3	48	3	77	128	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Music Ed.	3	48	3	77	128	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Theory	3	48	3	78	129	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Voice	3	48	3	79	130	1998/99	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Nursing	21	30	3	99	132	1999/00	no	2005/06	Yes (4)	n/a
Rec & Leisure Studies										
Therapeutic Rec.	0	51	3	69	123	2000/01	no	2006/07	Yes (5)	n/a

\*This table is compiled with 2004-06 University Catalog (printed and online versions). Department chairs were contacted to verify the information.

\*\*The English 20 requirement IS included in the minimum required credit totals; however, in the event that students fulfill English 20 with a course from another college (which also fulfills a GE requirement), the total credits to graduate will be reduced by 3 credits (to not less than 120 credits).

**\*\*\* Accrediting Organizations:**

- 1 - American Chemical Society
- 2 - Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
- 3 - Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Athletic Training  
Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs  
National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
- 4 - National Association of Schools of Music
- 5 - National Recreation and Parks Association

**TABLE 2. Bachelor's Degrees which cannot be Completed in 110 Units Minimum**All bachelor's degrees **not** listed below can be completed within 110 credit units (List does not include Blended Teaching majors)

<b>Major</b>	<b>Overlap between major and GE</b>	<b>Remaining GE Credits = 51-overlap</b>	<b>English 20**</b>	<b>Major Credits</b>	<b>Lowest minimum credits = Major + GE + ENGL 20</b>	<b>Date of most recent program review</b>	<b>Next program review</b>
Biological Sciences (BS)							
no concentration	12	39	3	77	119	2002/03	2008/09
Bio. Conservation	12	39	3	77	119	2002/03	2008/09
Clinical Lab Tech.	12	39	3	80	122	2002/03	2008/09
Microbiology	12	39	3	78	120	2002/03	2008/09
Molecular	12	39	3	78	120	2002/03	2008/09
Bus. Administration							
Accountancy	9	42	3	75	120	1999/00	2005/06
Acc. Inf. Systems	9	42	3	72	117	1999/00	2005/06
Finance	9	42	3	69	114	1999/00	2005/06
Gen. Management	9	42	3	69	114	1999/00	2005/06
Int'l. Business	9	42	3	72	117	1999/00	2005/06
Manag. Inf. Systems	9	42	3	72	117	1999/00	2005/06
Marketing	9	42	3	69	114	1999/00	2005/06
Oper. Management	9	42	3	66	111	1999/00	2005/06
Real Est. & Land Use	9	42	3	69	114	1999/00	2005/06
Risk Manag. & Insurance	9	42	3	66	111	1999/00	2005/06
Chemistry	9	42	3	77	122	2001/02	2007/08
Computer Science	12	39	3	87	129	2003/04	2009/10
Engineering							
Civil	18	33	3	103	139	2003/04	2009/10
Computer	18	33	3	101	137	2003/04	2009/10
Construction Mgmt.	18	33	3	99	135	2003/04	2009/10
Electrical	18	33	3	98	134	2003/04	2009/10
Engineering Tech.	9	42	3	92	137	2003/04	2009/10
Mechanical	18	33	3	101	137	2003/04	2009/10
Geology (BS)	9	42	3	79	124	2001/02	2007/08
Graphic Design	6	45	3	66	114	Oct-97	2010/11
Interior Design	6	45	3	69	117	2004/05	2010/11
Kinesiology							
Athletic Training	12	39	3	80	122	1998/99	2004/05
Exercise Science	9	42	3	76	121	1998/99	2004/05
Music (BA) mgmt core	3	48	3	66	117	1998/99	2005/06
Bachelor of Music Intst.	3	48	3	76	127	1998/99	2005/06
Jazz	3	48	3	78	129	1998/99	2005/06
Keyboard	3	48	3	77	128	1998/99	2005/06
Music Ed.	3	48	3	77	128	1998/99	2005/06

	Theory	3	48	3	78	129	1998/99	2005/06
	Voice	3	48	3	79	130	1998/99	2005/06
Nursing		21	30	3	99	132	1999/00	2005/06
Rec & Leisure Studies								
	Rec & Park Manag.	0	51	3	66	120	2000/01	2006/07
	Therapeutic Rec.	0	51	3	69	123	2000/01	2006/07

Foreign language proficiency is a requirement to graduate at California State University, Sacramento; however, due to the various ways of demonstrating this proficiency, students can take 0-8 credits of foreign language. This requirement is not included in the above credit totals and cannot count towards a student-athlete's eligibility unless used towards available general electives.

\*\*The English 20 requirement IS included in the minimum required credit totals; however, in the event that students fulfill English 20 with a course from another college (which also fulfills a GE requirement), the total credits to graduate will be reduced by 3 credits (to not less than 120 credits).

The above information and chart are accurate based on appropriate California State University, Sacramento academic policies and procedures as of October 2005.

## 2. Selective Reduction of Campus Graduation Requirements

(Action Units: Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs)

### Introduction:

The thrust of this requested examination of campus graduation requirements is to consider greater efficiencies in our general education and graduation requirements which might positively improve our students' progress to graduation. Our campus is one of those which have allowed a considerable degree of "double counting", permitting students to utilize some units to fulfill more than one requirement.

Over the last decade the campus significantly improved program management and qualitative supervision of graduation requirement courses through:

- The upgrading and revision of the position of responsible administrator.
- Cyclical review of all graduation requirement courses (now in second cycle.)
- The successful development of assessment strategies for all grad requirement courses.

This year begins a new cycle in our campus review of our General Education program which for several years has focused on the management of the program, including assessment and evaluation. We hope that this new cycle of review will permit our faculty to seriously consider the General Education program as it has evolved in practical terms. Our intent is to more fully achieve the intent of EO 595.

Our campus response and strategy therefore consider both the efficiencies to be achieved in reducing overlapping or redundant requirements, and will also revisit the spirit of EO595 to strengthen the substantive connections and logic of our program. We feel that this effort to strengthen the coherence and clarity of our program will improve student retention by helping them make more effective course choices. We want students to see General Education as important to their learning and to view GE as much more than a "check off list" on the way to the major.

### Actions Taken in Fall 2005:

The Office of Academic Affairs has been working with the Faculty Senate to initiate a comprehensive review of the current GE and graduation requirements. As a response to the Facilitating Graduation initiative, the Faculty Senate held a one-day workshop in the beginning of fall 2005 to brainstorm and develop action plans to address curricular issues, including the GE and graduation requirements. The following are the actions being proposed and discussions are underway in the Faculty Senate GE Committee.

- Streamline the review and concentrate on number, order and definition of requirements.
- Invite high unit majors to propose adjustments to provide either more overlap of major and graduation requirements or replacement of graduation requirement courses with major courses. (This is not a policy issue and can be handled by the GE/GRC committee).
- Investigate overlap and similar policies to see if useful efficiencies can be found. (This is a policy issue but can be handled separately from a major program revision.)
- Propose to the President via GE/GRC and Faculty Senate the statement of principles for campus wide General Education and Graduation Requirements revision.

### **Statement of Standards for General Education and other Graduation Requirements for California State University, Sacramento** (Approved by GE Committee)

The program of non major degree requirements (General Education and Graduation Requirements) at Sacramento State shall:

- Fully respond to the spirit and letter of the CSU vision and the administrative law (specifically but not exclusively in E.O. 595 ) that expresses that vision.
- Have coherence, clarity and simplicity such that it is reasonable for students, faculty and administrators to understand and explain.
- Not exceed the current level of requirements; faculty should consider a reduction in units.
- Provide students with a unique Sac State educational experience in upper division general education, since this is the only opportunity for the campus to provide a common experience for all students completing the baccalaureate.
- Advantage neither transfer students over native students nor the reverse.
- Allow for reasonable overlap of coursework with major and minor requirements.

### Potential Changes/Courses of Action:

Based on the discussion above, initiate the GE review process and the reconstruction of campus graduation requirements.

### **3. Emphasis on Graduation in Orientation Sessions for New Students**

(Action Unit: Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Chairs, Faculty Advisors, Orientation Leaders, Academic Advising Center, Career Center, Admissions, EOP)

#### Introduction:

Since President Gonzalez recently approved a recommendation to make freshman orientation mandatory, there is currently considerable interest in orientation. The Director of Academic Advising and the Orientation Coordinator are working closely with an advisory group, which includes all constituents, to achieve a smooth implementation of this change. Workgroup members are mindful of the intent of Graduation Initiative Recommendation 3 and will assure that it is carefully addressed in the training class that orientation leaders take during spring semester and in training meetings with staff and faculty advisors who assist incoming freshmen with registration during orientation.

#### Actions Taken in Fall 2005:

The President's Cabinet approved and Faculty Senate Executive Committee supports the January 2005 report which recommended:

- Requiring freshmen to attend orientation, to be implemented in Summer 2006
- Establishing an overnight, residential orientation program for freshmen, to be implemented in Summer 2007
- Establishing a coordinated schedule of Fall welcoming activities for all students, especially new freshmen and transfer students, currently being implemented

#### Potential Changes/ Planned Actions

- Provide worksheets and instruction at freshman orientation to involve students in calculating and understanding the relationship between (1) the number of units taken per semester and the number of semesters needed to graduate and (2) the number of hours worked per week and the number of units taken per semester.
- Work proactively with orientation leaders to change a prevailing mindset that freshmen should have a reduced course load in their first semester to adjust to college.
- Meet with administrative council and advisors in each college to reinforce the need to emphasize long range academic planning and the use of 4 and 5 year plans in advising sessions during orientation.
- Provide the training, staffing and controls needed to assure that the schedules of all freshmen have been reviewed by an advisor or orientation leader for appropriateness of course selections and, if needed, revised, before students leave orientation.

#### **4. Strengthened Support for both General Education and Life/Career Goal Clarification for Lower Division Students**

(Action Units: Student Affairs, Faculty Senate, Academic Affairs, faculty participating in the joint Academic Affairs/Faculty Senate Advising Initiative)

##### Introduction:

The student advising programs at Sacramento State have been reenergized by the Facilitating Graduation initiative and the Destination 2010 planning initiatives. The first strategy of Destination 2010, “Foster Excellent Academic and Student Programs,” aims to enhance student academic success through collaborative programs among faculty, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs.

##### Actions Taken in Fall 2005 and Before:

- Implemented faculty-based Academic Advising Center in 1975. This enduring, successful partnership between Student and Academic Affairs brings together faculty, staff and student advisors to serve as the locus for general education advising.
- Implemented Freshmen Seminar program six years ago; currently offer 50 sections to 1200 freshmen (about half of incoming freshmen).
- More than half of incoming freshmen, about 1700, participate in Career Center orientations during their first year, many as a requirement of their Freshman Seminar.
- Implemented Undeclared Student Advising (USA) program four years ago – required advising, workshops on study skills and time management, connection to Career Center
- Cooperative Education program has career counselors in five colleges.
- Mandatory advising for student athletes and EOP students.
- Established lower division transfer patterns for 29 majors.
- Established Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with Los Rios Community College district and Sierra College to facilitate transfer.
- Participated in Early Assessment Program to enable more freshmen to enter the university college-ready in math and English.
- Five Faculty Senate Advising Grants in four colleges (NSM, HHS, AL, EDU) related to major/career exploration, all beginning in Fall 2005.
- Campus-wide advising initiatives to improve advisement for pre-major students in the Colleges of Arts and Letters, and Health and Human Services.

##### Potential Changes/Courses of Action:

- Develop a program of mandatory freshman advising that will integrate general education advising with major and career exploration.
- Expand (or require) Freshman Seminar.
- Develop MOUs with additional feeder colleges.
- Collaborate with community colleges to encourage early declaration of majors upon transfer to Sacramento State. To be included in future MOUs.
- Support from the Co-op Education program.
- Emphasis on life/career goal in Freshman Seminars.

- Workshop to be conducted by the Faculty Senate in spring 2006 sharing the lessons learned from the Faculty Senate Advising Initiative. Faculty advisors from across the campus will be invited to participate in the workshop to communicate best practices gleaned from the projects funded for 05-06 and to stimulate the development of another cycle of proposals.

## **5. Prominent Association of Career Outcomes with Majors in Catalog and Other Student Materials and Resources**

(Action Unit: Student Affairs)

### Introduction:

The Career Center serves as a clearinghouse for a myriad of career programming information as well as providing front-line direct services to students and alumni. The program offerings are developmental in nature and address the many stages of a student's development. The collaboration with colleges takes on the form of classroom presentations, career counseling and assessments, career center tours, workshops, information sessions, on-campus interviews, career fairs, and mock interviews for job preparation as well as graduate school preparation. Students have access to student development professionals, career counselors and faculty to assist them with their career education and needs.

### Actions Taken in Fall 2005 and Before:

- Listing of "Career Possibilities" with each major has been in the printed University Catalog for 13 years; and is now, in the online Catalog. The Career Center and Academic Advising have been holding an annual major fair to further advise students on career outcomes associated with the majors.
- A 2005 campus career program audit was conducted on the Sac State campus. The results were conclusive that all Colleges and most departments provide a career development function for their students. Four of the seven Colleges have provided an office space for a "satellite career office." This integrated career center system provides a career advising professional as resource for the students, faculty and employer for their particular college with a centralized career administration infrastructure housed in the main Career Center.

### Potential Changes/Actions

- Develop a one-unit course, e.g., "Exploring Majors, Careers and Yourself," which would begin during freshman orientation and be completed in November, prior to registration for spring semester.
- Compile and distribute a list of best career advising practices in all departments.
- Review of the college catalog revealed a lack of consistency in the formatting of the career outcome text. It is the recommendation that the career outcomes text follow a standard template, which is easily identified by the reader. The campus Career Center will provide a template for the text and assist departments in writing career outcomes text.

## 6. Choice of Degree Major at a Reasonable, Early Juncture (Action Units: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs)

### Introduction:

An ad hoc group was convened to develop recommendations in response to this directive. The workgroup retrieved and analyzed data for the cohort of first-time freshmen who entered the university in fall 1998. Of these 1,562 entering freshmen, 144 students attempted 71 or more units while on undeclared status (32% of those entering undeclared), and 48 students (11%) attempted more than 100 units. The workgroup also looked at junior-level transfer students and found that only a very small percentage of them enter Sacramento State without declaring a major. For the past three fall semesters, an average of fewer than 50 community college transfers per semester entered as undeclared (2.0%  $\pm$  0.4% of the total).

### Actions Taken in Fall 2005:

Based on the discussion of the above findings and in concurrence with advisors in the Academic Advising Center, the workgroup developed the following recommendations for consideration by appropriate Academic Senate committees:

- Update, expand, and use more proactively the “Career Possibilities” lists included in the Catalog description of each major.
- Update and promote the Academic Advising Center’s list of “Recommended Career Advisors” in each major.
- Update and promote the Career Center’s Internship Directory.
- Develop with the Faculty Senate a comprehensive, two-semester program of mandatory academic advising, major exploration, and career awareness for all freshmen. A program proposal, which would utilize on-line career technology (EUREKA and CHOICES), provided by the Career Center is currently being developed by the Coordinator of Freshman Programs.
- Develop and implement a parallel required academic/career advising component for undeclared transfer students.
- Work with Freshman Seminar faculty to assure that all sections are addressing the “career awareness and life goals” component to the Freshman Seminar syllabus template.
- Continue the work with the Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate to establish and implement a policy requiring students to declare a major in a timely manner; use registration holds to enforce this requirement. The policy recommendation below has been approved by the committee and will be considered by the full Senate at an early meeting in the Spring Semester 2006. Policy recommendation:
  - Native freshmen and lower division transfer students are required to **initially** declare a major upon completion of 60 units; failure to do this will result in a hold on subsequent registration.
  - Junior-level transfer students are required to declare a major prior to registration for their second semester; failure to do this will result in a registration hold.
- Provide resources for additional workstations, training and staff time that will be needed to work more intensively with undeclared students.

- Assess workload considerations for faculty in light of increased expectations for major advising, and develop guidelines for colleges and departments to compensate for the time expectations (assigned time, course load reductions).
- Develop informational/training opportunities to link departmental major advisors and general advisors in the Academic Advising Center.

**7. Wide Promulgation of Roadmaps to Degree in an Official, Centrally Archived, Graphically Authoritative Format**

**8. Alignment of Class Schedules to Roadmaps**

**9. Provision in Policy of Mandatory Individual Student Study Plans to the Degree**

**10. Use of Cumulated Individual Student Study Plans in Planning Class Schedules**

(Action Units: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Departments)

Introduction:

Early in the process of planning actions for these four recommendations, Academic Affairs decided to take a more centralized approach in developing the recommended student academic plans, the roadmaps. In collaboration with faculty and Student Affairs, Academic Affairs will develop an interactive roadmap for all majors offered at Sacramento State and ask the departments to affirm its accuracy. The interactive roadmap tool is being developed under the name of “DegreeQuest.”

DegreeQuest is the interactive graduation roadmap that is designed to assist students in academic planning toward graduation and to assist departments in course scheduling. This online application will provide term-by-term depictions of the courses in which students should enroll over the entirety of their academic careers. In addition, DegreeQuest will explicitly show students opportunities for multiple counting of the courses required for their graduation.

Academic Affairs will monitor the use of DegreeQuest to investigate the usage pattern, the effectiveness in assisting students in planning their curriculum, and how well the interactive roadmaps supplement our face-to-face advising.

Actions Taken in Fall 2005 and Before:

- The first development phase is underway that includes the interactive roadmaps for seven academic programs, including GE and graduation requirements, (Communication Studies, Computer Science, Child Development, Criminal Justice, Marketing, Psychology, and Geology) will be completed in January 2006.
- Academic Affairs has initiated a plan to strengthen academic planning at the department level. This plan was developed by the Enrollment Management Committee to provide a guideline to departments for better planning, budgeting, and scheduling. This departmental planning initiative provides a natural platform for better class schedule development. With additional information gained from DegreeQuest, departments will be requested to plan their class schedule accordingly in order to avoid “bottleneck” courses.
- Academic Affairs has worked with all colleges to offer additional classes based on an analysis of student demands and course taking patterns. These additional classes created

additional opportunities for students to complete their graduation requirements. The College of Continuing Education has also been offering additional courses over the winter intercessions to provide opportunities for students to meet their graduation requirements.

#### Potential Changes/Courses of Action:

The development of DegreeQuest will take place in phases.

Phase 1: GE and graduation requirements, along with seven pilot programs, will be incorporated into the interactive roadmap program. Upon completion of Phase 1, students can log into DegreeQuest, check courses they have taken and the degree they are seeking, and the online program will generate a recommended academic plan for them based on the number of units they plan to take in a semester. The beta program will be shared with departments, advising programs, and students to solicit trials and feedbacks. The comments and suggestions collected from the first phase will assist the phase two development.

Phase 2: The coverage will be expanded to all undergraduate academic programs at Sacramento State with the same configuration as in Phase 1.

Phase 3: The projected academic plan for students will be connected to the online listing of course schedules. Students will receive a recommended list of courses to be taken in sequence. The program can also indicate when the courses will be offered and the meeting schedules. Information collected through DegreeQuest will be combined with the aggregated information on student demand and enrollment data to guide class scheduling at the department level.

## **11. Adoption of Strategies for Student Success and Learning Support**

(Action Unit: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs)

### Introduction:

We have utilized traditional strategies for augmenting student success and supporting student learning. Tutors are available from the Learning Skills office, the Math Lab, and the English Writing Lab. Some academic departments supply tutors through student clubs. Writing tutors are available through the campus Reading and Writing Coordinator. Equity programs like EOP, CAMP, SEE, and MESA all have tutors. Additionally:

The campus has trained and placed student peer mentors in all 20 learning communities.

In the past 6 years over 275 faculty, 30% of the fulltime faculty, have been trained by the Center for Teaching and Learning in teaching using technology and provided hardware and software to ensure that cutting-edge technology is available to them, and especially, teaching strategies that are learner centered.

The Center for Teaching and Learning is responsible for two annual technology “showcases” which feature all levels of faculty expertise using multi-media to improve student learning outcomes.

CTL provided over 526 hours of mentoring by Technology Faculty Mentors to faculty for improving their teaching strategies through the use of multi-media in their classes aimed to more effectively meet student learning needs.

CTL provided over 343 hours of mentoring by Faculty Mentors to faculty for improving teaching strategies that improve learner outcomes.

- In 2004, Academic Affairs (AA) created the new unit of Academic Technology & Creative Services to better connect its technology resources to the University academic mission. AA recognized then and now that the new faculty will make effective uses of media in a number of ways that can facilitate learning. Here are some examples of those methods:
- Use of video streaming and distance learning methods to provide content and advising anytime anywhere to our learners.
- Provide our students the ability to review and reinforce the learning of difficult concepts.
- The ability to fill in knowledge gaps (remediation) caused by articulation inconsistencies and long time periods between courses and their prerequisites.
- While the technology offers these faculty clear learning opportunities, coordination and collaboration between the CTL and ATCS provides both the infrastructure, the training, and the mentoring required for faculty to take advantage of these tools. With over 14,000 students (1/2 of our student population) taking courses through our learning management system, taught by over 300 faculty members, the data are clear regarding how Sacramento State is offering learning opportunities in a ubiquitous and open-boundary environment.
- The Distance and Distributed Education Program (DDE) makes learning accessible to a wide variety of students who have disabilities or family/work requirements that restrict them geographically. Students who are Second Language Learners benefit from the use of technology which permits repetitions of lectures, exam or quiz review. Technology permits the use of multiple pedagogies and asynchronous testing.
- The Distance and Distributed Education Program under ATCS works each semester to provide guidance to almost eighty faculty who are committed to providing courses using web technology (more than 50% of coursework) or video based technology. Seventy-three (73) courses were offered during the fall semester. These courses often include a variety of student support mechanisms including links to library and tutorial resources, e-mail interaction with faculty and teaching assistants, and web based tutorials.
- The Department of Learning Skills has developed adjunct classes to aid students in “bottleneck” courses.

#### Actions Taken in Fall 2005:

- Reading and Writing tutors are being trained to aid in student instruction in the Colleges of Business and Engineering.
- Freshman Programs (Freshman Seminar, Learning Communities) are striving to develop cohorts of students who study and learn together.
- The Faculty Senate approved an Honors Program in General Education. This is being developed by a faculty committee to better serve academically advanced students.

### Potential changes/Courses of action:

- Academic Affairs will collaborate with Student Affairs to strengthen the Freshman Programs' administrative structure to allow for better training and coordination of instructors.
- The University Reading and Writing Committee were charged by the Faculty Senate to review the entire writing program on our campus and report by March 2006. The goal is to look for efficient, effective ways to help students meet the writing learning objectives
- Beginning this fall, students on continued probation will not be allowed to take more than 14 units of course work. The object is to increase student success by preventing students from taking more units than they are prepared to complete successfully.
- During the next Academic Year, DDE will be offering closed captioning in its video courses to meet the requirements for disabled students' access to learning.
- A new transfer community will be offered this spring to extend the concept to transfer students.

### **12. Reviewed Enforcement of Policies that Limit or Discourage Drops, Withdrawals, and Grades of Incomplete**

### **13. Adoption or Renewed Enforcement of Policy that Limits the Number of Course Repetitions**

(Action Units: Faculty Senate and Academic Affairs)

### Introduction:

The application of academic policies related to a student's access to courses and grading involves both the technical structure and the understanding and skill of faculty and students in using those policies. We are also conscious of the tradeoffs between an inflexible policy accompanied by strict enforcement and the unintended consequence of additional barriers for first generation students seeking to maintain GPA eligibility. We have sought to examine our policies and their appropriate use in the context of these tradeoffs and have therefore sought a middle ground emphasizing information dissemination and incremental tightening of our policy statements.

### Actions Taken in Fall 2005 and Before:

### **Policies that Limit or Discourage Drops, Withdrawals, Grades of Incomplete**

The Faculty Senate and its Academic Policies Committee have recently reviewed and considered our policy documents in this area and have determined that the policies are appropriate, but that we need to continue to inform and advise our colleagues on the appropriate application of these policies. To that end, the Faculty Senate adopted a resolution approved by the President.

Relevant elements of that policy include guidance in the following areas:

- Distinctions between *administrative withdrawals* which are administratively assigned and cannot be overridden by the faculty; *withdrawal unauthorized* in which a student fails to complete course requirements (stops attending class, stops completing class

- assignments and grade cannot be determined); and *incompletes* in which a portion of required course work has not been completed due to “unforeseen and fully justified reasons” and there is still a possibility of earning credit
- Elaboration of responsibilities of faculty and students in the assignment of these grading symbols to include expectations for informing faculty, determination of remaining course requirements to remove an incomplete, a signed agreement with time frame, etc.
  - Identification of appropriate circumstances for the assignment of incompletes, e.g. NOT to be assigned when it is necessary for student to repeat course.

These guidelines will be distributed to faculty before the completion of the fall semester of 2005. We also plan to discuss the guidelines during ongoing meetings of Department Chairs who can then extend that discussion in departmental meetings.

### **Policy that Limits the Number of Course Repetitions**

- As approved in the Academic Policy Committee, a Sacramento State student may repeat any course one time at Sacramento State without department approval. However, a given course may not be repeated more than three times. In addition to the letter grades A-F, the grades of WU and Incomplete are also counted as attempts. WU grades that have been deleted through the WU Grade Deletion Policy are not counted as an attempt. Attempts made at another institution before the student enrolls at Sacramento State do not count toward the number of repeats. Attempts made elsewhere after a student enters Sacramento State are counted.
- Departments may further limit the number of times a course may be repeated within an academic major. If a student enrolls in a course more than the allowed number of times specified by the department, the department may administratively drop the registration, or may refuse to accept the grade in fulfillment of graduation requirements.
- The student must file a Repeat Grade Replacement Petition at the Admissions and Records Office as soon as she or he is registered in the repeat course.
- We have initiated a serious and data driven examination of our current campus policy on course repetitions, conscious of the flexibilities in the current policy. That examination has focused on three dimensions of the policy: course grade cutoff; limits on the total number of units/courses which may be repeated; and limit on number times a student may repeat a single course.
- Overall, the committee determined that the pattern of course repetitions is inconsequential in terms of impeding student progress to graduation. First, the data suggest that the number of third repeat attempts is *extremely* small and second, there would be unintended consequences to a stricter policy on repeats. Specifically, academic advisors routinely encourage students at risk of probation or disqualification to repeat classes as the most effective way of raising their GPA to remain in academic good standing.

### **14. Campus Provision of a Rich CMS Information and Communications Environment for Major Advising**

### **15. Strong, Timely Major Advisement, Including Mandatory Advisement upon Declaring or upon Changing a Major**

### **16. Frequent Use of Degree Audits**

**17. Mandatory Degree Audits not later than at 70 Semester Units**

**18. Mandatory and If Needed Intrusive Advisement as Student Approaches/Exceeds Minimum Units Required for the Degree.**

(Action Units: Faculty Senate, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and CMS)

Introduction:

Sacramento State began planning for the installation of CMS student modules in fall 2005. To best utilize the CMS capabilities related to the 22 recommendations and other needs, the CMS project hired a faculty member familiar with the GE and graduation requirements to advise the team during implementation. The advising and communications capacity of CMS will be explored to provide faster and better advising assistance.

Actions Taken in Fall 2005 and Before:

- Faculty have expressed in a number of discussions recently that the commitment to advising is the integral and linking lynchpin to facilitating graduation. We see a commitment to strengthening advising in terms of access and quality to be a significant priority. Advising is key to our WASC examination of the relationship between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs and its impact on student learning. Advising is also key to our curricular interests, expressed elsewhere, in greater connections between General Education and Major Coursework.
- Last spring the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost committed equal resources to support a two year advising initiative aimed at stimulating innovation among faculty at the department, college and campus level. We funded nine projects which involve almost twenty faculty members (at least one project in each of the seven colleges). The projects include an interdisciplinary effort in the College of Natural Science and Mathematics to advise pre-health majors which recognizes the needs of students who initially commit to one health profession goal and decide to change direction (e.g. from admission to medical school to physical therapy or nursing). Another project seeks to link Teacher Education faculty with math and science undergraduates who may be interested in becoming math/science teachers. The Senate and the office of Academic Affairs are committed to supporting the dissemination of this work in the hope that other departments and colleges can adapt successful projects to their own context.

Potential Changes/Courses of Action:

- On a more operational level we are considering policy and procedural changes which may include requesting a department to place holds on registration for students who are in need of declaring a major, a student changing a major, or a recent transfer student. The resource and workload implications of these alternatives are significant and require more study and discussion before we move ahead.
- As a first step to require mandatory degree audit when students reach 70 units, Student Affairs will send out an e-mail notice to students with a link to the Degree Audit provided in our current system (SIS). When the CMS Student modules are completed, this function will be transferred to CMS.

## **CMS Development**

Sacramento State is participating, along with the system-wide SOSS/CMS Baseline staff and members of the Student Administration Implementing Campuses committee, in a series of collaborative discussions regarding the necessity to enhance the PeopleSoft software to enable campuses to meet the relevant recommendations in AA-2005-21. Areas identified for study and development include a method to track the frequency of degree audit access by a student and correlate that to degree-related outcomes; providing students with interactive individualized study plans (ISPs); expansion of PeopleSoft's "wish-list" functionality beyond its current limit of one semester; ways to collect data from ISPs and wish-lists to aid planning of future course offerings; insuring a hardware environment robust enough to store the data that might be collected from students' degree audits, wish lists, and/or ISPs; investigating the PeopleSoft analysis database function as a possible tool for the "dashboards" initiative.

There is a degree audit function, available for student self-service, in our legacy SIS system. Although further development in that application is frozen because resources are devoted to CMS implementation, the implementation timeframe affords Sacramento State the opportunity to deliberate formal policies and design business processes leading to improved advising and degree progress as we reach CMS milestones in 2006-2007. Sacramento State's development of the DegreeQuest system aims to supplement these functional areas to provide students a planning tool in addition to the in-depth information to be made available by CMS.

### **19. Development and Use of "Dashboard Indicators" for Campus-wide Monitoring of Graduation.**

(Action Unit: Academic Affairs)

Dashboard indicators were designed to provide timely, measurable, and actionable key information to enhance decision making pertaining to student progress toward graduation. These indicators also assist us in evaluating student academic progress in key areas and specify appropriate targets that trigger corrective action. The recommended indicators and measures, developed by the Office of Institutional Research, are as follows:

#### **General Information on Graduation**

- Average units completed on graduation
- Percentage of students who graduate with 120-125 units in degrees requiring no more than 120
- First to second year retention rate for freshmen and community college transfers
- 4, 5 and 6 year graduation rates for freshmen
- 2, 3 and 4 year graduation rates for junior transfers
- Percentage of graduating students who never repeated a course, repeated 1-3 courses
- Percentage of native students with 60 or more units who have declared a major

### **Encouraging students to choose efficient pathways to the baccalaureate**

- Number and percentage of undergraduate students (excluding post-baccalaureates) who have accumulated more than 120 earned units and continue in good academic standing
- Number and percentage of undergraduate students who have not declared a major upon completion of a) 60 earned units for native freshmen and lower division transfers; b) the first semester for upper division transfers
- Number and percentage of students who have repeated the same course a) with grade of C- and below, including Withdrawal Unauthorized (WU); b) more than three times.
- Number and percentage of new native freshmen and transfers who stop out during and at the end of their first semester
- Number and percentage of students who have completed their remedial requirements within 1 year

### **Tools to keep students on efficient pathways to the baccalaureate**

- Monitoring the use of CMS Degree Audit by classification or total earned units
- Monitoring the use of DegreeQuest, satisfaction of usefulness and ease of use by enrolled students