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MEMORANDUM

TO: CSU Provosts
CSU Senate Chairs
Office of the Chancellor, California Community Colleges
Academic Senate CCC
California Intersegmental Articulation Council

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith 
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer


James Postma
Chair, Academic Senate CSU

SUBJECT: Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act (SB 1440): Guidance for Implementation

The Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, which recently became law, directs California Community Colleges to offer Transfer AA degrees that correspond to the most popular majors of students transferring to the California State University. For each such degree, the community college is to begin with an established general education transfer curriculum (either CSU GE Breadth or IGETC), and then to designate eighteen units of coursework as lower-division preparation for the major.

The same legislation obliges the CSU to accept these degrees, and in cases where the bachelor's degree for a similar major requires 120 semester units or 180 quarter units, to require only 60 additional semester units or 90 additional quarter units after transfer. The CSU has the responsibility and authority to determine which of its bachelor's degrees is "similar" to a given associate's degree.

Although the legislation calls for creation of the Transfer AA at the level of individual community college districts, the faculty senates of the two segments have been working voluntarily to create consistent lower-division degree pathways across the state. Each such pathway is called a "Transfer Model Curriculum," or TMC. Broad adoption of the TMC model by California Community Colleges would facilitate the development of meaningful upper-division coursework for all CSU transfer students, regardless of the college of origin.

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In support of that coordinating effort, the California Community Colleges are providing the structure and resources of the ongoing Course Identification Project (“C-ID”). C-ID is a supra-numbering system with intersegmentally developed descriptors, used for course-to-course articulation among community colleges. Many of the descriptors are derived from those created for the CSU’s Lower Division Transfer Project which is retired and will not be restored. This new C-ID approach to implementing the new legislation has two benefits:

First, by making use of earlier and ongoing efforts to improve transfer, it is cost effective.

Second, and more importantly, the use of C-ID offers the state’s best hope of developing lower-division degree pathways that are comparable across multiple community colleges and districts. Without such comparability, receiving universities will be challenged to create upper-division curriculum that builds on lower-division work, adequately prepares all their students for life after the bachelor’s degree, and fits within 60 semester- or 90 quarter-units of work.

The CSU Office of the Chancellor and the Academic Senate CSU wholeheartedly endorse the use of Transfer Model Curricula and C-ID as a means to implementing the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act.

Campuses are encouraged to support full faculty participation in the creation and vetting of C-ID descriptors for coursework in the TMC majors. Six TMC are on-line and available for faculty review at: www.c-id.net/degreereview.html. The curriculum review is also conducted online in order to make the review procedure easily accessible. The articulation officer at each CSU campus, as identified by CIAC, is responsible for coordinating the faculty review of the C-ID descriptors.

Since the Transfer Model Curriculum and C-ID descriptors will have a direct impact on the integrity of CSU curriculum, a final review of each TMC proposal will be vetted by the Department Chair of the discipline and will be tabulated in a separate procedure at a future date.

Please direct any questions to Eric Forbes, Director of Enrollment Management Services, at eforbes@calstate.edu or Ken O’Donnell, Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Policy, at kodonnell@calstate.edu at the CSU Office of the Chancellor.