

FS 12/13-79/EX

CODED MEMORANDUM AA-2013-2, IMPLEMENTATION OF TRUSTEES TITLE 5 CHANGES TO BACCALAUREATE DEGREES: RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTIAL EXTENSION DEADLINE FOR CURRICULAR REVISION OF PROGRAMS REQUIRING 121-129 UNITS.

The California State University, Sacramento Faculty Senate requests Chancellor White grant the Sacramento State campus a partial extension of the deadline for compliance with Coded Memorandum AA-2013-2, approved by the Board of Trustees at its January 2013 meeting, specifically with regard to the deadlines associated with programs in the 121-129 unit range.

The Faculty Senate further requests that the Chancellor permit all programs at Sacramento State exceeding 120 units to be treated in an equivalent manner, consistent with the deadlines outlined in the above document with regard to programs that have 130 or more units. I.e., that the campus submission of plans for curricular reductions (or requests for exception) to the 120 semester unit maximum requirement for programs in the 121-129 unit range be extended from the April 2013 deadline date, specified in Executive Vice Chancellor Smith's memorandum on this subject, to January 30, 2014, the same deadline date specified for submission of plans for programs requiring 130 units or more.

The Faculty Senate further directs its Chair to send a copy of this request to the Chancellor, to the Faculty Trustee Cheyne, Sacramento State President Gonzalez, the Chair of the ASCSU, and Chairs of all campus Senates.

Rationale:

The Board of Trustees, at its last meeting, approved changes to Title 5 that require baccalaureate degree programs not to exceed 120 (semester) units, unless an exception is approved by the Chancellor's Office. Required reductions will take place in two phases: Programs that require 121-129 units must have plans in place by April 2013, and programs with 130 units or more must have plans in place by January 2014. Implementation is expected by Fall 2014.

While the April 2013 deadline for programs in the 121-129 unit range is onerous, and perhaps even logistically impossible, for faculty on many campuses, the current situation on our campus is exceptional in that the General Education program is currently under review, along with existing Graduation Requirements that fall outside General Education. As a result, the number of units associated with both General Education and Graduation Requirements for all undergraduate students is currently subject (and likely) to change, with several special meetings of the Faculty Senate scheduled throughout the spring semester, and with multiple related action items already scheduled for debate and disposition.

For this reason, many programs cannot know, at this time, how many units will be necessary for graduation when this process is finished. Some that are currently in the 121-129 range may drop below that range and not require any further action. Some that currently require 130 units or more may fall into the 121-129 unit range and suddenly be subjected to an earlier deadline

(which may already have passed when any change becomes effective) if such an extension is not granted.

It doesn't seem to be a good application of scarce resources and faculty time to develop contingency plans for curriculum reduction within the major, when such changes may be rendered redundant should the General Education and Graduation Requirements be reduced enough to cause a major program to no longer require in excess of 120 units. Coincidentally, it is unfair to programs that might currently appear to have until January 2014 to develop a plan, to suddenly find that they are required to develop a plan nine months sooner.

Additionally, aside from these unique circumstances on our campus, there are other concerns about the dual deadlines that cause such a distinction (between the 121-129 programs and the 130+ programs) to seem counter-productive.

Programs that have conscientiously attempted to reduce units, such that they might have already reduced from 130+ to the 121-129 range, are essentially penalized for the progress they have already made by being given nine months less time to make further reductions. Conversely, a program that requires 130+ units and that has made little or no progress towards unit reduction is permitted more time to adjust.

As a result, any program that might currently be planning a reduction from 130+ to 121-129 units might be well advised to delay such a change to avoid being penalized for their hard work by virtue of the earlier deadline.

This isn't a hypothetical concern. On our campus we have a program that is currently awaiting Faculty Senate consent and Administrative action to make just such a reduction in unit requirements. The result of this laudable work, involving significant faculty review and redevelopment of the curriculum, is likely to be an earlier deadline than if they were to withdraw their existing program change proposal.

A distinction in deadlines, such as this, that causes such unfairness and potential arbitrariness in application seems generally ill-advised. However, regardless of these more general problems that are likely to manifest themselves on multiple campuses, the specific debates and pending decisions regarding General Education and Graduation requirements on our own campus make the earlier deadline untenable. For this reason, the Faculty Senate requests that the earlier deadline be extended to match the later deadline.

Note: We have referred to this as a "partial extension" as only the earlier deadline is extended and the ultimate deadline for implementation of all such program changes has not been altered, remaining Fall 2014. Thus no practical change in implementation would result from the requested partial extension.

Carried unanimously