ACADEMIC SENATE
of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

RESOLUTION ON MANDATORY EARLY START PROGRAMS
AS-714-10

Background:
The CSU Board of Trustees has proposed Mandatory Early Start Programs beginning in the summer of 2012. All incoming students deficient in English and/or mathematics will be required to begin making up those deficiencies before matriculation.

Funding for these summer remediation courses is still unclear. The Board of Trustees has indicated that there will be no additional funding provided for this instruction.

The Academic Senate of the CSU and the English Council of the CSU have opposed implementation of the Mandatory Early Start Programs.

WHEREAS, The CSU Board of Trustees has proposed Mandatory Early Start Programs beginning in the summer of 2012; and

WHEREAS, The Academic Senate of the CSU has identified the following concerns regarding the Mandatory Early Start Programs that have been proposed by the CSU Board of Trustees (AS-2895-09/APEP/AA):

- the legality of denying admission to fully qualified FTF;
- the limitation of access to economically disadvantaged students;
- the financial aid implications for students;
- the potential hardship for out-of-area students;
- the shift of mandatory instruction to a non-traditional instructional session;
- the presumed desirability of identifying a single or limited number of “early start” programs for the CSU system;
- the paucity of evidence-based, longitudinal data on the effectiveness and social impact of “early start” programs; and

WHEREAS, The Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Exam and the English Placement Test (EPT) were originally designed as placement instruments; and

WHEREAS, Many campuses, including Cal Poly, have very effective remediation programs; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly oppose the implementation of “early start” math and English programs as a pre-condition for enrollment at the Cal Poly campus; and be it further
RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly urge that prior to any implementation the CSU ensure that serious attention be paid to the financial consequences—both to campuses and to individual students—resulting from the various “early start” approaches; and be it further.

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly oppose the use of tests, such as the ELM and the EPT, to either grant or deny otherwise qualified first-time freshmen (FTF) admission to Cal Poly; and be it further.

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly urge that Cal Poly faculty be fully engaged in any planning, teaching, and evaluating of Cal Poly “early start” programs; and be it further.

RESOLVED: That such “early start” programs supplement but not supplant already existing, successful models of proficiency attainment at Cal Poly and other campuses; and be it further.

RESOLVED: That success of the programs themselves be assessed over time to determine their effects upon such factors as retention rates and progress toward degree before the CSU considers mandating adoption of any “early-start” model system-wide; and be it further.

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of Cal Poly distribute this resolution to the CSU Board of Trustees, the Office of the Chancellor, the Chair of the Academic Senate of the CSU, campus Presidents, Provosts, and Academic Senate Chairs, the Chair of the English Council of the CSU, and the Chair of the Mathematics Council of the CSU.

Proposed by: Cal Poly English Department and Cal Poly Mathematics Department

Date: May 4 2010

Revised: May 18 2010
Opposition to Impending Implementation of Mandatory Early Start Programs

AS-2895-09/APEP/AA

RESOLVED: The Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) recognizes the value of diverse campus approaches to moving fully qualified first-time freshmen (FTF) who require additional skill acquisition (remediation) in English or mathematics to achieve proficiency either prior to, or during, their first year of enrollment; and be it further,

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU oppose the implementation of “early start” programs as a pre-condition for enrollment at any CSU campus until such time as a number of concerns, including but not limited to:

- the (1) unilateral implementation by campuses which are “already moving toward requiring”, FTF to engage in remediation and (2) doing so prior to Fall 2009 enrollment;
- the legality of denying admission to fully qualified FTF;
- the limitation of access to economically disadvantaged students;
- the financial aid implications for students;
- the potential hardship for out-of-area students;
- the shift of mandatory instruction to a non-traditional instructional session;
- the presumed desirability of identifying a single or limited number of “early start” programs for the CSU system;
- the paucity of evidence-based, longitudinal data on the effectiveness and social impact of “early start” programs;

are addressed in the context of shared governance at both the local and systemwide levels; and be it further,

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU urge the CSU Board of Trustees, the CSU Office of the Chancellor, and campuses of the CSU, to explore other means to improve FTF proficiency, including but not limited to Directed Self Placement and credit-bearing stretch courses; and be it further,

RESOLVED: That this resolution be sent to the following CSU entities: the Board of Trustees, the Office of the Chancellor, campus Presidents, Provosts and Senate Chairs, the Chair of the English Council of the CSU, and the Chair of the Mathematics Council of the CSU.

Committee on Educational Policy. “Proficiency in English and Mathematics Before the First Year.” Board of Trustees Agenda Item 3, May 12-13, 2009: p. 2 of 2.

RATIONALE: The Board of Trustees of the CSU has an on-going commitment to require all fully eligible and admitted First Time Freshmen (FTF) to demonstrate college level proficiency in both English and mathematics no later than the end of their freshman year. The CSU has achieved this goal to a roughly 85% compliance rate but continues to seek more efficient approaches and identify best practices to assist students in their efforts.

Faculty leadership has led campuses to invest in a number of “early start” programs to assist students in their efforts to demonstrate proficiency before the start of their freshman year. However, Agenda Item 3 of the Committee on Education Policy for the Board of Trustees’ May 12-13, 2009 meeting features a resolution focusing on “Proficiency in English and Mathematics Before the First Year.” The resolution authorizes the pilot testing of “early start” programs, including those considering mandatory involvement of FTF students anticipating matriculation in the fall of 2009, who have not demonstrated readiness for college work in either mathematics or English, or both. The resolution requires the CSU, by March of 2010, to use the reported results of these pilot tests to establish policies requiring a full-scale implementation of such pre-matriculation programs with a timetable throughout the CSU.

Approved – May 7-8, 2009
To: Rachel Fernflores  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: June 18, 2010

From: Warren J. Baker  
President

Copies: R. Koob, E. Smith

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-714-10  
Resolution on Mandatory Early Start Programs

This memo acknowledges receipt of the above-entitled Academic Senate resolution.