

ACADEMIC SENATE

CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN LUIS OBISPO

PROPOSAL FOR A POLICY STATEMENT WHICH SPECIFIES THE  
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BACHELOR OF ARTS AND BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREES  
AT CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN LUIS OBISPO

Background information: Last year the Academic Senate Curriculum Committee was asked to prepare a policy statement which would differentiate between Bachelor of Science degrees and Bachelor of Arts degrees at California Polytechnic State University, SLO. The need for this arose when some departments at Cal Poly proposed to change their B.A. degrees to B.S. degrees. The requests were refused by the Chancellor's Office in part because Cal Poly, SLO, had no campus policy which specified the differences between the two degrees.

There appear to be few, if any, features that will always separate B.A. and B.S. degrees, but the Academic Senate Curriculum Committee has made an attempt to differentiate between the two degrees and submits the accompanying resolution for consideration.

At present, six B.A. degrees are given at Cal Poly (English, Recreation Administration, History, Political Science, Liberal Studies, and Speech Communication). In Fall, 1983, there were about 1164 students enrolled in these degrees.

Where there are numbers of units given in the proposal, the units are taken from Title V or/and CAM:

Title V requires 72 quarter units in GE&B for both the B.S. and B.A.

For the B.A., Title V specifies 36 quarter units in the major, and 18 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major. CAM specifies 48-60 quarter units in the major, and 24 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major.

For the B.S., Title V specifies 54 units in the major, and 27 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major. CAM specifies 54-70 quarter units in the major, and 27 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major.

B.A. degrees as presently given at Cal Poly require from about 52 to 60 quarter units in the major, depending on the department, and from 36 to 56-60 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major, depending on the department.

WHEREAS, The separation of the two bachelors' degrees developed in England, where the faculty of arts was separate from the faculty of science. In the United States, the faculties are usually combined, but the two degrees still exist. With the combined faculties, the result has been that the distinction between the two degrees has become blurred, and

WHEREAS, There is a need to develop a policy here at Cal Poly that will serve to distinguish the difference between the two bachelors' degrees. The policy will serve as a measure to determine if degree changes or proposed degrees for new majors are appropriate; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Administration of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, adopt the following as policy defining the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees:

1. Both the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees should have a reasonable balance of three components:
  - a. A major providing depth of preparation in an academic or vocational field.
  - b. General education and breadth providing basic university-level education in science and mathematics, in the social sciences, in the arts and humanities, and in human communication.
  - c. Electives chosen to fit the student's preferences or needs. (It is recognized that the number of these electives may be fewer in some degrees because of accreditation requirements, but the inclusion of some electives is important.)
2. A Bachelor of Arts Degree:
  - a. is usually less specialized than a Bachelor of Science degree.
  - b. requires 186 quarter units for the degree; 48-60 quarter units in the major; and 24 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major.
  - c. is normally awarded in such majors as the languages, literature, other humanities, and history.

3. A Bachelor of Science Degree:
  - a. often involves technical fields.
  - b. requires 186-198 quarter units for the degree (186-210 for engineering); 54-70 quarter units in the major; 27 quarter units of 300-400 series courses in the major.
  - c. is normally awarded in such majors as the physical and biological sciences, engineering, and agriculture.