

Adopted: January 10 2012

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

**AS-739-12**

**RESOLUTION ON COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- 1 WHEREAS, In its report on the visit of February 10-12, 2010, the WASC visiting team  
2 recommended “1) that there is alignment between university, program, and course  
3 learning objectives across the institution; and 2) that all learning objectives appear  
4 systematically in university documents”; and  
5
- 6 WHEREAS, This recommendation reflects the consensus on best practices among WASC-  
7 member institutions; and  
8
- 9 WHEREAS, These practices include the use of objectives/outcomes to encourage students to  
10 be more intentional and reflective of their own learning; and  
11
- 12 WHEREAS, By Academic Senate action, all programs were asked to evaluate the alignment of  
13 their program learning objectives to the University Learning Objectives; and  
14
- 15 WHEREAS, The course proposal form has asked for a list of course learning objectives since  
16 2000, and the new course proposal form asks for a list of University Learning  
17 Objectives and program learning objectives supported by the course; therefore be  
18 it  
19
- 20 RESOLVED That all courses have course learning outcomes that are approved by program  
21 faculty and aligned to the program learning objectives; and be it further  
22
- 23 RESOLVED: That course learning outcomes be published along with other course information  
24 in the Cal Poly online catalog; and be it further  
25
- 26 RESOLVED: That faculty communicate course learning outcomes to students via the syllabus or  
27 other means appropriate to the course.

Proposed by: WASC/Academic Senate Integration and  
Student Learning Work Group

Date: October 18 2011

Revised: November 21 2011

Revised: January 10 2012

# BACKGROUND MATERIAL

Adopted: May 2, 2006

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

AS-644-06

## RESOLUTION ON COURSE SYLLABI

- 1 WHEREAS, Campus Administrative Policy requires that faculty provide a syllabus for each course that  
2 they teach; and  
3
- 4 WHEREAS, Students have a need and a right to know the expectations and assessment methods of the  
5 courses they are taking; therefore be it  
6
- 7 RESOLVED: That every instructor shall make available to each student in her/his class, during the first  
8 class meeting, a written course syllabus providing:  
9
- 10 • Instructor's contact information including office hours and office location
  - 11 • A list of required text(s) and supplementary material for the course
  - 12 • Methods and expectations for assessing/grading student performance for the course
  - 13 • Attendance requirements and make up policy (if applicable)
  - 14 • Other information the instructor deems necessary to assure the student's  
15 understanding of the nature, requirements, and expectations of the course; and be it  
16 further  
17
- 18 RESOLVED: That each instructor shall be required to spend a portion of the first meeting of the class  
19 discussing the course syllabus; and be it further  
20
- 21 RESOLVED: That this resolution recognizes that faculty hold final responsibility for grading criteria and  
22 grading judgment and does not restrict the right of faculty to alter student assessment or  
23 other parts of the syllabi during the term; and be it further  
24
- 25 RESOLVED: That the above three Resolved clauses shall become part of the Campus Administrative  
26 Policy; this policy shall be included in the Faculty Handbook; and this policy shall be  
27 communicated to all faculty at least once each year by the Provost or her/his designee.

Proposed by: Academic Senate Executive Committee  
Date: March 14, 2006  
Revised: March 28, 2006  
Revised: April 11, 2006  
Revised: May 2, 2006

# BACKGROUND MATERIAL

## *Theme 1: Learn-by-Doing*

Learn-by-Doing is a clearly established and successful practice at Cal Poly. The team urges Cal Poly to develop measurable ways of demonstrating the educational effectiveness of this practice.

## *Theme 2: Teacher Scholar Model*

There is a strong foundation for the teacher scholar model at Cal Poly and great opportunities to further the development of this model. Cal Poly is positioned to rapidly increase the amount of research that is occurring. It is recommended that Cal Poly continue to clarify the definitions associated with the teacher scholar model, including establishing a plan that includes targets to be accomplished by the EER visit and beyond.

## *Theme 3: Integration and Student Learning*

Cal Poly is invested in integrating students' learning experiences that occur in general education, in their majors, and co-curriculum. However, everyone seems to be waiting for someone else to take the initiative to take this effort forward. A leadership structure needs to be identified so that this agenda will benefit from further focus and be moved forward.

## *Recommendations Related to the Standards*

- Considerable effort needs to occur in the next 18 months to assure: 1) that there is alignment between university, program, and course learning objectives across the institution; and 2) that all learning objectives appear systematically in university documents.
- Attention needs to be given to clearly identifying who among the leadership is responsible for educational assessment and assuring that the related educational goals are linked with budgeting.
- Questions have been raised about undue influence of donors in the operation of the university. It is recommended that the university consider an independent review of any such alleged incidences.
- The university has recently adopted an inclusive excellence initiative. The team applauds this effort. Appropriate leadership has been identified to continue this

# BACKGROUND MATERIAL

initiative. We urge continued progress on enhancing the diversity of the students, staff and faculty, with particular attention to campus climate.

- In consideration of their current financial difficulties, it is recommended that close attention be given to maintaining the quality of buildings and facilities.
- Financial uncertainties jeopardize the future viability of the university's comprehensive polytechnic mission. It is recommended that there be continuous monitoring of university finances and that relevant financial options be considered to sustain the quality of academic offerings.
- The faculty is encouraged to invest time in reviewing the role and critical nature of faculty governance in academic decision-making.
- Attention needs to be given to creating a greater awareness of the role of the WASC self-study process in affecting institutional strategic planning.
- Apparent inconsistencies exist in the collection and utilization of data by programs. It is recommended that the university expand its capacity for institutional research and analysis to support academic decision-making.

## SECTION V - Preparations for the Educational Effectiveness Report and Review

In preparation for the EER visit the University will continue to utilize its institutional themes (*Overarching Theme: Our Polytechnic Identity; Theme 1: Learn-by-Doing; Theme 2: The Teacher Scholar Model; and Theme 3: Integration and Student Learning*). As the University pursues these efforts in preparation for the EER, it has expressed awareness that this presents an excellent opportunity for Cal Poly to demonstrate the educational effectiveness of its signature pedagogy, Learn-by-Doing.

State of California  
**Memorandum**

**CAL POLY**  
SAN LUIS OBISPO

**To:** Rachel Fernflores  
Chair  
Academic Senate

**Date:** February 28, 2012

**From:** Jeffrey D. Armstrong  
President



**Copies:** K. Enz Finken  
E. Smith  
B. Giberti

**Subject:** **Response to Academic Senate Resolution AS-739-12**  
**Resolution on Course Learning Outcomes**

---

This is to formally acknowledge receipt and approval of the above-referenced Academic Senate resolution.

Please extend my thanks to the Academic Senate for its efforts in this matter.