



Academic Affairs
Faculty Senate

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FAM 822.5

I. New Programs, Changes in Programs

1. Academic Master Plan.

New degree proposals must be in harmony with the University's Academic Master Plan. Each year, the University submits a five-year Academic Master Plan to the Chancellor's staff, the Board of trustees, and the California Postsecondary Education Commission. Requests to add degree programs to the Plan should be made to the appropriate college dean and the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs.

2. Format.

The format of the new degree proposal should correspond to that outlined on the special Program Planning Form(s) available from the Scheduling Office. In addition, groups developing new programs should be aware of the Procedures for Submitting Degree Proposals (The California State University, Office of the Chancellor, Division of Educational Programs and Resources, Revised April 1985). Much of the information required by the Procedures can be used for on-campus review as well.

3. Need for the Program; Students Served.

The kinds of students for whom the program is designed and any special requirements for admission to the program should be noted. A needs assessment is also required. Generally this minimally involves a survey of potential students, endorsements by appropriate community officials and an indication of job market and societal demand for graduates.

4. Facilities, Equipment and Staffing.

Approval of a degree program by the Chancellor's Office is subject to assurances that financial support, qualified faculty, physical facilities and library holdings sufficient to establish and maintain the program will be available. Similar assurances should be provided for on-campus approval. This should take the form of specific statements addressed to faculty needs, staffing arrangements, physical facilities, capital equipment, operating expenses, library holdings, and special requirements for internship, clinical or

other off-campus facilities. For programs of a complex nature, supporting statements from the Associate Vice President, Academic Resources, the University Librarian or other appropriate administrators are advisable.

5. Consultation.

Upon submission of a new degree proposal, evidence should be provided that consultations have occurred among appropriate segments of the University.

6. Size of the Major; B.A./B.S. Options.

Certain minimum requirements for degree programs are specified in Title 5 of the California Administrative Code. Although there is no specification of a maximum requirement, this should not ordinarily exceed 12 courses (60 units) for the B.A. The principal exception to this upper limit is anticipated in interdisciplinary majors where a greater than usual proportion of the course work may need to be at an introductory level. In any case, the new degree proposal should address itself squarely to the question of the size of the major program.

In certain disciplines where undergraduate preparation is of a professional type, it is appropriate to consider a B.S. degree or B.S./B.S. options. In general, the B.S. degree tends to be more structured and the B.A. degree more flexible. Also, the B.S. degree may require additional units for graduation.

Regardless of size, structure of curriculum, or number of options, all students in a given major must have at least 5 undergraduate courses.

Title V Requirements

Common Core

B.A.: 186 units; 60 units (minimum) at upper-division; 36 units (minimum) in the major; 18 units (minimum) upper-division in the major.

B.S.: 186 (minimum) to 198 units (maximum); 60 units (minimum) at upper-division; 54 units (minimum) in the major; 27 units (minimum) upper-division in the major.

M.A./M.S.: 45 unit minimum.

7. General Education.

Although courses taken to satisfy General Education requirements are not ordinarily appropriate to the needs of a major program, there are instances in which certain courses may serve this dual purpose. If General Education courses are specified as

part of a major, the major program must still provide for at least 36 units outside of General Education for the B.A. and 54 units for the B.S. The new degree proposal should explain the relationship, if any, of course work in General Education to that in the major.

8. Prerequisites.

Many degree programs require prerequisites outside of the discipline itself. If a given course or series of courses is to be specified as a "prerequisite" to the degree program, justification must be provided regarding:

- (a) why the proposed prerequisite is necessary,
- (b) how the prerequisite relates to required or elective courses in the degree program,
- (c) at what point in the undergraduate program the prerequisite to be completed, and
- (d) what mechanism will be employed to insure this completion?

9. Free Electives.

Although the number of "free" electives will be variable from one degree program to another, typically this number should be six or more. Degree proposals which permit substantially fewer free electives should include a specific justification of this fact.

10. Options, Concentrations, Special Emphasis and Minors.

An option, a concentration and a special emphasis are all defined as an aggregate of courses designed to give a student specialized knowledge, competence or skill usually with a degree major. All majors must have common core of 5 undergraduate or 3 graduate courses. A minor is a formal aggregate of courses in a designated subject area distinct from and outside the student's degree major. The information required for implementing an option, concentration, special emphasis or minor is less detailed than for a full degree program, both at the campus level and in the Chancellor's Office. All of the preceding guidelines that are appropriate to the submission of an option, concentration, special emphasis, or minor should be followed. In addition, the proposal should demonstrate specifically that the aggregate of courses had the type of coherence that will lead to the acquisition of "specialized knowledge, competence or skill." As a minimum, options within an undergraduate degree program must share five courses in a common core, and options within a graduate degree program, three.

11. Changes in Programs.

Ordinarily, changes in existing program do not need to be justified in as much detail as new programs. Those of the preceding guidelines which are applicable to the proposed change should be followed.

II. New Course, Course Changes

1. Format.

The format for course proposals should correspond to that outlined in the special Course Planning Forms available from the Scheduling Office.

2. Course Number, Title and Description.

The course proposal indicates, through the course number, whether the course is degree applicable and whether it is to be lower-division, upper-division or graduate level. In some cases it may be necessary to justify why the indicated course level is most appropriate. Both the course title and course description should be as clear and concise as possible. Also, consideration should be given to potential articulation problems with community colleges when considering an appropriate course level and content.

3. Need.

The specific needs to be served by the new course should be indicated. Is the course to serve as part of a required core in the major, an elective in the major, a service course for non-majors? How will the curriculum be improved by the addition of the new course?

4. Student Interest.

The approval of a new course by the Curriculum Committee does not guarantee that the course can in fact be added to the schedule of classes; this is contingent upon sufficient student interest. What evidence is there that this interest exists? What has been the pattern of enrollments for similar courses? Are there a sufficient number of students majoring in discipline to support the new course? What are the prospects that the course will be attractive to non-majors (perhaps as indicated by consultations with appropriate department chairmen)? Is there enough student interest to suggest that the course can be offered at least once every two years?

5. Staffing, facilities, Equipment.

A new course proposal must indicate either that the course can be staffed by existing faculty or that appropriate arrangements have been made to secure qualified faculty.

Similarly, the facilities and equipment necessary for a new course must either be available or the means for their acquisition must be indicated. In no case can approval of a new Course by the Curriculum Committee be used as sufficient justification for a subsequent request for faculty, facilities or equipment.

6. Proliferation.

Course proliferation is impossible to define in precise terms, yet it should be a matter of concern to all who are engaged in curriculum construction. Two measures that are especially significant are these:

- (a) What is the ratio of the number courses to the number of faculty in a given department?
- (b) What is the relationship of a given course to the long range of the department?

In considering factor (a), the ratio should not be so small as to severely limit choices available to students; but neither should it be so large to require faculty members to engage in an unusually heavy course preparation schedule not to reduce the frequency with which individual courses can be offered no less than once every two years. At the current stage of development of the University, a ratio of about 3:1 or 4:1 appears optimum.

Finally, these questions should be considered: Are the objective of the course sufficiently broad to warrant its inclusion in an undergraduate curriculum with a strong emphasis in the liberal arts? Does the course serve primarily the needs and interest of the student? Is there enough student interest to suggest that the course can be offered at least once every two years?

7. Consultation.

Course proposals in areas in which the interests of two or more departments overlap should include an indication that appropriate consultations have taken place. Issues should be resolved prior to discussion of proposal by University Curriculum Committee if possible.

8. Units of Credit.

The standard course at the University meets four hours per week and carries five (5) quarter units of student credit. This nontraditional relationship between number of contact hours and number of credit hours requires that courses include special out-of-class components to justify the additional credit awarded. A description of the out-of-class components must be included in the justification for each course.

Course formats other than that of 4 class hours/5 credit hours are permissible, but where an alternative format is used, specific justification is required. Among the alternative formats are:

- (a) Six (6) units credit. Lecture-laboratory courses meeting four hours per week for lecture and six hours per week in laboratory.
- (b) Two-and-one half (2 ½) units credit. It is appropriate to propose, with justification, a "half-course." This might be a course which, only two hours per week for the full term or four hours per week for one-half term. The course should have a special out-of-class component, and for reason should carry one-half the credit of a "standard" course.
- (c) Two (2) units credit. This is the standard credit awarded Activity courses with no independent study features, e.g., physical education.
- (d) One (1) unit credit. This is the smallest unit of credit that can be awarded.
- (e) Variable credit. It is appropriate that variable credit (one to six units) be used for project work (e.g., independent study, special projects) that cannot always be defined in five-unit modules. In such cases the amount of credit to be awarded for a specific offering of the course must be clearly indicated in the class schedule.

9. Class Size.

Historically, the campus has attempted to foster small classes by teaching a large majority of courses in a seminar or lecture/discussion format. This resulted in most sections having from 10-30 students with an average of around 16 students. A few classes, because of the demands of the subject matter, must be held to a maximum of 20 students. And, of necessity, to maintain the requisite student/faculty ratio university-wide, some classes must be of intermediate (up to 100) or large-lecture (up to 250) size. Careful consideration should be given in each course proposal to specify a class size that is optimum for students and faculty yet responsive to the needs of the college as a whole.

10. Prerequisites.

If prerequisites are listed for a course, it is assumed that normally a student cannot complete the course satisfactorily unless the specific prerequisites have been met. Where this assumption does not hold, prerequisites should not be listed. No checking is

done in the registration process to ensure that students have met prerequisites to a course.

11. Consent of Instructor.

If consent of instructor is to be a requirement for admission to a course, the course proposal must indicate the criteria that will be used in granting consent. To comply with government regulations (e.g., Title IX), these criteria made available to students through departmental offices.

12. Courses with Changing Subject Matter.

A number of courses in the curriculum, e.g. seminars, area studies and genre courses deal with subject matter that may change from time to time as the course is offered. The following guidelines should be followed in proposing such courses.

- (a) The course proposal should include a list of representative topics to be covered. If any of these topics are likely to overlap or conflict with the interest of another department/school, consultation should occur in the same manner as for other course proposals.
- (b) To introduce a new topic, the faculty member teaching the course should have the approval of his/her department/school. Where overlap or conflict of interest with another department/school is likely to exist, appropriate consultation should occur.
- (c) If a particular topic is to be repeated frequently, it is generally more appropriate for that topic to be proposed as a separate course than as one of a number of topics under a more general heading.

13. Repeat of Courses for Credit.

At times, it is appropriate for a student to repeat a course for credit, but the catalog description must always include a statement to this effect to ensure that credit will be awarded.

- (a) For courses in which the subject matter changes, the course description should include the statement, "May be repeated for credit as subject matter changes and with consent of instructor." Moreover, where possible, the class schedule should reflect the course content. Departments/Schools should give consideration to any limitations that seem advisable on the

number of times a course may be repeated and so indicate the course description, e.g., "May be repeated once for credit as subject matter changes and with consent of instructor.

- (b) Certain advanced courses, particularly those involving independent study, special projects or creative activities, may also be repeated for credit. In these cases, a catalog statement such as, "May be repeated for credit with consent of instructor," is sufficient.

14. Cross-listing of Courses.

If two departments have a need to present courses of substantially the same content, this means that whenever the course is scheduled, students will enroll through the department/school offering the course. Justification for the cross-listing should be provided in the course proposal, and the course description should carry the statement, "This course is also offered as _____ Credit for the course may be received only once.

15. Restricted Credit.

- (a) Occasionally, a department may wish to offer a course for the benefit of certain groups of students but deny credit toward major requirements. The reasons for limiting credit should be stated in the justification and the course description should carry a designation such as, "May not be counted toward fulfilling requirements in the major."
- (b) At times, a single department/school or two related departments may offer courses that are not identical but yet are similar enough that credit should not be awarded for each. An appropriate designation should be included in the course description such as "May not be counted for credit by students who have received credit for _____".

16. General Education.

Courses that are proposed to meet general education requirements need a special justification. Contact the Committee on General Education for applicable guidelines. Since general education courses are, for the most part, to be offered in large lecture sections, some indication should be given that sufficient student interest exists to produce the required enrollment.

17. Course Changes.

For course changes the amount of information required is generally less than for new courses. Proposals for course changes need to reflect only those of the preceding guidelines which are applicable.

18. Course Number Changes.

If the course content is revised substantially, or if the number of units is change, the number of a course must also be changed. For minor changes in title or description, a course number change is not required.