



INTERSEGMENTAL COMMITTEE OF ACADEMIC SENATES

June 21, 2011

To CSU/UC department chairs and faculty involved with community college articulation:

This memo will address considerations for determining placement for CCC transfer students based on the CCC courses they have completed.

For many CSU and UC campuses, articulation agreements already exist that delineate course equivalencies or placement eligibility at CSU/UC for students who have completed particular courses at a particular CCC. These articulation agreements are based on the Course Outline of Record (COR), the official document that describes the course and applies to every offering of that course by any instructor.

On occasion, however, a student requests placement based on having completed a course for which there is no articulation agreement in place. Of course the fundamental question is whether the student's background prepares him or her for success in the advanced course. We typically determine this by examining information about the CCC course(s) the student has taken. The preferred source for this information is the CCC COR. Determinations made on the basis of a course outline can be long-lasting and should not require re-examination for every subsequent student who has taken the same course.

If the COR does not provide enough information to determine that the student is likely to succeed in the advanced course, CSU/UC faculty sometimes request the syllabus for the specific offering of the course that the student completed. This is much less effective, since the syllabus applies only to a single offering of a course; determinations made on the basis of a syllabus would not apply to other offerings of the same course.

Thus, we encourage CSU/UC faculty to make articulation and placement determinations based on CORs rather than individual syllabi, and to communicate with CCCs about the nature and depth of information those outlines should contain. In particular, as the CCCs progress with the uniform course numbering (C-ID) project, we encourage CSU and UC faculty to collaborate with the CCCs as they develop C-ID descriptors for courses in their fields; the C-ID descriptors are designed to include comprehensive course information, such as methods of evaluation, course content and course objectives. (See www.c-id.net)

More generally, we note that there are strong reasons to be flexible in awarding CSU/UC placement based on CCC courses. The criterion should not be course equivalence per se, but rather whether the CCC course(s) prepare the transfer student to succeed in the advanced course(s) at CSU/UC. Flexibility in these determinations helps students achieve their educational goals in a timely way. In addition, the Legislature has a strong interest in streamlining the transfer process and has already enacted legislation intended to facilitate this. Especially for UC, which is insulated from direct legislative control by the Regents, a perceived intransigence may result in a move for more direct legislative control.

Respectfully,



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