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January 25, 2013

MEMORANDUM

CODE: AA-2013-02

Send Campus Reports to 120units@calstate.edu

TO: Presidents
Provosts and Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith 
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Implementation of Trustees Title 5 Changes to Baccalaureate Degrees

Update

The California State University Board of Trustees at this week's meeting approved amendments to Title 5, instituting a 120-unit maximum units for most baccalaureate degrees. A forthcoming executive order will stipulate the processes for reporting programs over the allowed limits, as well as for requesting and granting exceptions to the newly established limits.

All CSU bachelor's degree programs retain the 120-unit minimum requirement, and campuses remain obligated to report and justify all baccalaureate programs that exceed the minimum requirement (Title 5 section 40508). The following programs remain defined separately in Title 5, retain the 120-unit minimum requirement, and are subject to the unit maxima specified below:

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) | 150 semester units |
| Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (BLA) | 150 semester units |
| Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) | 132 semester units |
| Bachelor of Music (BM) | 132 semester units |

Background

The issue of baccalaureate unit counts has been discussed for many years, and in 1998 the *Cornerstones Report* strategic plan specified that the trustees would amend Title 5 to reduce the minimum number of units from 124 to 120. That change was approved in 2000. The percentage of programs at 120 rose from 67 percent in 2000 to 77 percent in 2007. For the next five years, the proportion 120 fluctuated between 78 and 81 percent. As of fall 2012, campus data indicated that 504 bachelor's programs and concentrations exceeded the 120 minimum. In discussions about how to improve the plateaued rates, a proposal to eliminate the nine units of upper-division general education was brought forward. The statewide academic senate voiced its objection, and an alternative proposal to limit all bachelor's programs to 120 units emerged from the San José State University academic senate, in conversation with their president.

CSU Campuses
Bakersfield
Channel Islands
Chico
Dominguez Hills
East Bay

Fresno
Fullerton
Humboldt
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego

San Francisco
San José
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus

Discussions with the Academic Senate CSU between September 2012 and January 2013 achieved the following changes in proposed policy: (1) removal of the agenda item to eliminate the nine-unit upper-division general education requirement; (2) maintenance of separate definitions and maximum unit counts for the BArch, BLA, BFA, and BM degrees; (3) the implementation deadline for programs requiring more than 130 units extended from fall 2013 to fall 2014; (4) the addition of a faculty consultation requirement prior to the chancellor's action to adjust degree requirements; and (5) creation and modifications to documents to be used for reviewing programs, reporting excess units, and requesting exceptions for higher-unit degree requirements.

A collection of related approved Title 5 regulations is attached. Section 40508 relates to minimum and maximum units for CSU bachelor's degrees and appears below, for your convenience.

Title 5 § 40508. The Bachelor's Degree: Total Units.

Each campus shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to ensure that justification is provided for all program requirements that extend the baccalaureate unit requirement beyond 120 semester units. As of the fall term of the 2014-15 academic year, no baccalaureate degree programs shall extend the unit requirement beyond 120 semester units, with the exception of the Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees. The Chancellor may authorize exceptions to system or campus requirements for degree programs. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120 semester unit maximum. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor after consultation with discipline faculty and other appropriate individuals may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120-unit maximum.

Implementation Timeline

Campuses already have begun reporting that degree programs are under review and that unit reductions have been approved. Any changes to unit requirement totals may be submitted to the CSU Degrees Database at any time. Program unit requirements now appear on the [CSU Search Degrees website](#) and will be updated at the beginning of each month. In response to campus and Academic Senate CSU requests, the following documents are provided with this memorandum (1) a "toolkit" or guidance for the review and possible revision process and (2) a form to report excess units and request exceptions to the proposed baccalaureate unit totals.

April 30, 2013 Campuses shall submit program-by-program confirmations that each combination of degree and concentration shall be reduced from 121-129 (181-192) to no more than 120/180 by fall 2014. Reports are due April 2013, ideally, and reductions are to be in place by no later than fall 2014.

Campuses shall report to the chancellor a listing of each degree program and concentration that requires from 121 to 129 (181 to 192) units, that for demonstrated academic, licensure, or accreditation reasons cannot be reduced to 120/180. The program's unit requirements, both before and after campus review, shall be specified, and the specific reasons for exceeding the maximum unit count shall be explained.

Campuses with programs requiring from 121 to 129 units (181 to 192) and unable to reduce counts to the maximum number of units shall submit requests for the chancellor's exception to each program's the established unit maximum.

Programs that have not been reduced to 120/180 units and have not been granted the chancellor's exception allowing higher unit counts shall be subject to chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements, including:

1. double counting requirements;
2. adjusting the number of required major courses and units to achieve consistency with comparable CSU programs;
3. adjusting campus-specific degree requirements (such as languages other than English, among others); and
4. adjusting course and unit requirements for upper-division GE courses.

Fall 2014

Programs reduced from 121-129 (181-192) units and adjusted to approved new limits shall be published in the 2014-2015 campus catalogs.

Degrees and Concentrations Requiring 130 Units or More (220 programs)

January 2014

Campuses shall submit program-by-program confirmations that the remaining high-unit combinations of degrees and concentrations have been approved on campus to be reduced to the required number of units by fall 2014.

Programs that have not been campus-approved for reduction to 120/180 units and that have not been granted the chancellor's exception (allowing higher unit counts) shall be subject to the chancellor's action to reduce unit requirements, including:

1. double counting requirements;
2. adjusting the number of required major courses and units to achieve consistency with comparable CSU programs;
3. adjusting campus-specific degree requirements (such as languages other than English, among others); and
4. adjusting course and unit requirements for upper-division GE courses.

Fall 2014

All programs that are subject to the new unit-maxima shall have been reduced to approved limits and shall appear in 2014-2015 campus catalogs.

Please use the enclosed review toolkit and reporting documents for the process of complying with the new Title 5 amendments. Completed forms should be sent to 120units@calstate.edu. The executive order governing implementation will be issued soon.

Presidents
Provosts
January 25, 2013
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Please direct any questions to Dr. Christine Mallon, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Programs and Faculty Development. Chris may be reached at cmallon@calstate.edu or (562) 951-4672.

ES/clm

Attachments

c: Mr. Bob Linscheid, Chair, Board of Trustees
Dr. Debra S. Farar, Chair, Trustees Educational Policy Committee
Dr. Timothy P. White, Chancellor
Dr. Diana Guerin, Chair, Academic Senate, CSU
Campus Academic Senate Chairs
Mr. Eric Forbes, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Academic Support
Associate Provosts/Assistant Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs
Directors of Admission and Records

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 5. General Requirements for Graduation
§ 40405.1. California State University General Education - Breadth Requirements.

(a) Each recipient of the bachelor's degree completing the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements pursuant to this subdivision (a) shall have completed a program which includes a minimum of 48 semester units or 72 quarter units of which 9 semester units or 12 quarter units shall be upper division level and shall be taken no sooner than the term in which the candidate achieves upper division status. At least 9 of the 48 semester units or 12 of the 72 quarter units shall be earned at the campus granting the degree. The 48 semester units or 72 quarter units shall be distributed as follows:

(1) A minimum of 9 semester units or 12 quarter units in communication in the English language, to include both oral communication and written communication, and in critical thinking, to include consideration of common fallacies in reasoning.

(2) A minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units to include inquiry into the physical universe and its life forms, with some immediate participation in laboratory activity, and into mathematical concepts and quantitative reasoning and their applications.

(3) A minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units among the arts, literature, philosophy and foreign languages.

(4) A minimum of 12 semester units or 18 quarter units dealing with human social, political, and economic institutions and behavior and their historical background.

(5) A minimum of 3 semester units or 4 quarter units in study designed to equip human beings for lifelong understanding and development of themselves as integrated physiological, social, and psychological entities.

The specification of numbers of units implies the right of discretion on each campus to adjust reasonably the proportions among the categories in order that the conjunction of campus courses, credit unit configurations and these requirements will not unduly exceed any of the prescribed semester or quarter unit minima. However, the total number of units in General Education-Breadth accepted for the bachelor's degree under the provisions of this subdivision (a) ~~should~~ shall not be less than 48 semester units or 72 quarter units unless the Chancellor grants an exception.

(b) The president or an officially authorized representative of a college which is accredited in a manner stated in Section 40601 (d) (1) may certify the extent to which the requirements of subdivision (a) of this section have been met up to a maximum of 39 semester units (or 58 quarter units). Such certification shall be in terms of explicit objectives and procedures issued by the Chancellor.

(c) In the case of a baccalaureate degree being pursued by a post-baccalaureate student, the requirements of this section shall be satisfied if:

(1) The student has previously earned a baccalaureate or higher degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association; or

(2) The student has completed equivalent academic preparation, as determined by the appropriate campus authority.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66055.8 and 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 5. General Requirements for Graduation
§ 40405.4. Procedures for Implementing Programs to Meet General Education
Requirements.

(a) The Chancellor shall establish procedures to implement the objectives and requirements of Section 40405.1-40405.3, including provision for exceptions in individual cases of demonstrable hardship, and including periodic review of the extent to which the objectives and requirement are being met.

(b) The Chancellor may grant exceptions to the requirements of subdivision (a) of Section 40405.1 for high unit ~~professional~~ degree major programs on a program-by-program basis.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Full text of all sections at this level Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40500. Bachelor of Arts Degree: Required Curriculum.

To be eligible for the Bachelor of Arts degree, the candidate shall have completed the following requirements:

(a) General Education-Breadth Requirements. The courses in General Education-Breadth Requirements shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in Sections 40405-40405.4.

(b) Major 24 semester units (36 quarter units).

There shall be one major with a minimum of 24 semester units (36 quarter units). At least 12 semester units (18 quarter units) in the major shall be upper division courses or their equivalent. The maximum number of units shall be determined by the campus.

(c) Additional Units. Units to complete the total required for the degree may be used as electives or to meet other requirements.

(d) Total. For candidates electing, pursuant to Section 40401, to meet graduation requirements established prior to the 2000-01 academic year, the total semester units required for the Bachelor of Arts Degree, of which at least 40 (60 quarter units) shall be in the upper division credit, shall be 124 semester units (186 quarter units). For candidates for the Bachelor of Arts degree who are meeting graduation requirements established ~~during or after~~ from the 2000-01 and through the 2013-14 academic years, a minimum of 120 semester units (180 quarter units) shall be required, including at least 40 semester units (60 quarter units) in upper-division courses or their equivalent. For candidates for the Bachelor of Arts degree who are meeting graduation requirements established during or after the 2014-15 academic year, no fewer and no more than 120 semester units shall be required, including at least 40 semester units in upper-division courses or their equivalent, unless the Chancellor grants an exception.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40501. Bachelor of Science Degree: Required Curriculum.

To be eligible for the Bachelor of Science degree, the candidate shall have completed the following requirements:

- (a) General Education-Breadth Requirements. The courses in General Education-Breadth Requirements shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in Sections 40405-40405.4.
- (b) Major 36 semester units.

There shall be one major with a minimum of 36 semester units. At least 18 semester units in this major shall be upper division courses or their equivalent. The maximum number of units shall be determined by the campus.

- (c) Total. For candidates electing, pursuant to Section 40401, to meet graduation requirements established prior to the 2000-01 academic year, the total semester units required for the Bachelor of Science degree shall be 124 to 132 semester units, as determined by each campus, except that 140 semester units may be required in engineering. For candidates for the Bachelor of Science degree who are meeting graduation requirements established ~~during or after~~ from the 2000-01 and through the 2013-14 academic years, a minimum of 120 semester units shall be required. ~~The number of semester units for each curriculum shall be determined by each campus. For candidates for the Bachelor of Science degree who are meeting graduation requirements established during or after the 2014-15 academic year, no fewer and no more than 120 semester units shall be required, unless the Chancellor grants an exception.~~

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40505. Bachelor of Architecture Degree: Required Curriculum.

To be eligible for the Bachelor of Architecture degree, the candidate shall have completed the following requirements:

(a) General Education-Breadth Requirements. The courses in General Education-Breadth Requirements shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in Sections 40405-40405.4.

(b) Major 45 semester units.

The major shall consist of a minimum of 45 semester units. At least 27 semester units in the major shall be in upper division courses or their equivalent. The maximum number of units shall be determined by each campus.

(c) Total. For candidates electing, pursuant to Section 40401, to meet graduation requirements established prior to the 2000-01 academic year, the total semester units required for the Bachelor of Architecture degree shall be 165 to 175 semester units. For candidates for the Bachelor of Architecture degree who are meeting graduation requirements established ~~during or after~~ from the 2000-01 and through the 2013-14 academic years, a minimum of 120 semester units shall be required. For candidates for the Bachelor of Architecture degree who are meeting graduation requirements established during or after the 2014-15 academic year, no fewer than 120 semester units and no more than 150 semester units shall be required, unless the Chancellor grants an exception. The total number of units required for the Bachelor of Architecture degree shall be distributed over a ten-semester period or equivalent.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40506. Bachelor of Music Degree and Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree: Required Curriculum.

To be eligible for either the Bachelor of Music degree or the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, the candidate shall have completed the following requirements:

(a) General Education-Breadth Requirements. The courses in General Education-Breadth Requirements shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in Sections 40405-40405.4.

(b) Major -70 semester units. The major shall consist of a maximum of 70 semester units with at least one-fourth of these units devoted to theory and content as distinguished from studio, production, and performance.

(c) Total. For candidates electing, pursuant to Section 40401, to meet graduation requirements established prior to the 2000-01 academic year, the total semester units required for the Bachelor of Music degree and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree shall be 132 semester units. For candidates for the Bachelor of Music degree and the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree who are meeting graduation requirements established ~~during or after~~ from the 2000-01 and through the 2013-14 academic years, a minimum of 120 semester units shall be required. For candidates for the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree or Bachelor of Music degree who are meeting graduation requirements established during or after the 2014-15 academic year, no fewer than 120 semester units and no more than 132 semester units shall be required, unless the Chancellor grants an exception.

Note: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40507. Bachelor of Landscape Architecture: Required Curriculum.

To be eligible for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree, the candidate shall have completed the following requirements:

(a) General Education-Breadth Requirements. The courses in General Education-Breadth Requirements shall be distributed in the manner prescribed in Sections 40405-40405.4.

(b) Major:..... 45 semester units.

The major shall consist of a minimum of 45 semester units, exclusive of those courses used to meet the General Education-Breadth Requirements. At least 27 units in the major shall be in upper division courses or their equivalent. The maximum number of units shall ~~be determined by each campus~~ not exceed 150 semester units.

(c) Total. For candidates electing, pursuant to Section 40401, to meet graduation requirements established prior to the 2000-01 academic year, the total semester units required for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree shall be 155 to 165 semester units. For candidates for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree who are meeting graduation requirements established ~~during or after~~ from the 2000-01 and through the 2013-14 academic years, a minimum of 120 semester units shall be required. For candidates for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree who are meeting graduation requirements established during or after the 2014-15 academic year, no fewer than 120 semester units and no more than 150 semester units shall be required, unless the Chancellor grants an exception. The total number of units required for the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree shall be distributed over a ten-semester period or equivalent.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Title 5. Education
Division 5. Board of Trustees of the California State Universities
Chapter 1. California State University
Subchapter 2. Educational Program
Article 6. Undergraduate Degrees
§ 40508. The Bachelor's Degree: Total Units.

Each campus shall establish and maintain a monitoring system to ensure that justification is provided for all program requirements that extend the baccalaureate unit requirement beyond 120 semester units. As of the fall term of the 2014-15 academic year, no baccalaureate degree programs shall extend the unit requirement beyond 120 semester units, with the exception of the Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees. The Chancellor may authorize exceptions to system or campus requirements for degree programs. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120 semester unit maximum. In fulfillment of this regulation, the Chancellor after consultation with discipline faculty and other appropriate individuals may require adjustments to program requirements in order to achieve the 120-unit maximum.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 89030, Education Code. Reference: Section 89030, Education Code.

Request for Exception to Baccalaureate Unit Limits

CSU Campus _____

Degree Program and "Concentration" _____ (ex: BA in History, Concentration in US History)

Date Submitted to CO _____

Submit to the CSU Office of the Chancellor via e-mail: 120Units@calstate.edu

The faculty at [CSU campus name] have evaluated this program's degree requirements and request a chancellor's exception to the Title 5 maximum for this baccalaureate degree program.

Request and Rationale for Exception to 120/180 Unit Limit

We request the following exception, for the following reasons:

(A separate rationale document may be submitted. Excerpts from annual or regular program review may be included.)

Please include an itemization of units reduced.

| Number of Similar CSU Programs | Systemwide Range of Max Units (lower end) | Systemwide Range of Max Units (upper end) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>(example) 11</i> | 124 | 136 |

| External requirements | Source of externally imposed requirements | Number of units required externally | Number required in campus degree program | Number of related units reduced in this effort |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Professional accreditation requirements | | | | |
| Licensure/certification requirements | | | | |
| Units required to sit for professional exam | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-------|--|--|--|--|
| Other | | | | |
|-------|--|--|--|--|

| Options for reducing bachelor's degree unit requirements | Number of units reduced and date on which reductions were approved | Date on which campus faculty concluded each option was not viable |
|--|--|---|
| Reduce the number of major core units | | |
| Reduce the number of required major elective units | | |
| Reduce the number of prerequisite units | | |
| Reduce the number of co-requisite units | | |
| Reduce number of units in concentration ("option") | | |
| Eliminate required minor | | |
| Double count American Institutions with major course requirements | | |
| Double count American Institutions with general education requirements | | |
| Double count GE with campus-specific requirements (satisfy GE requirements through other courses) | | |
| Reduce the number of campus-specific graduation requirements (e.g. technological proficiency, cross-cultural competence, or language other than English) | | |
| Reduce one or more GE requirements (per EO 1065). This requires campus approval. | | |
| Other reductions | | |

Campus approvals, signifying that local curricular processes have been followed.

Campus Academic Chair _____
Date

President or Provost _____
Date

 **Submit to the CSU Office of the Chancellor via e-mail: 120Units@calstate.edu**

Toolkit for 120-Unit Baccalaureate Review

The following curriculum design strategies are shared for campus consideration as department faculty and campus governance bodies collaborate on the review and revision process. In support of student access and affordable baccalaureate education, campuses are asked to review and reduce to 120 semester (180 quarter) units, as appropriate, (plus concentration) the requirements in bachelor’s degree programs. This effort aims to improve student access and reduce total costs to students. With fewer units required, more students will graduate sooner, thereby creating access for new students who have been waiting to enter the university as freshmen or community college transfers. Additionally, as more CSU programs will qualify for the 60 + 60 unit “Associate Degree for Transfer” degree pathways, which improve community college student transfer and CSU degree completion.

Reducing to 120/180 units could lower student debt levels and reduce student reliance on financial aid, and students in reduced-unit programs are less likely to be assessed the proposed Third-Tier Tuition Fees (if that policy is adopted). Shortening the time to degree would be especially valuable for students entering the CSU with required remediation work ahead of them, as those students are already obligated to take more courses than are their college-ready counterparts.

The Chancellor’s Office thanks the Academic Senate CSU for contributions to this document.

Comparing Similar CSU Programs

A review of the number of similar programs in the system will show a range of required units and may reveal patterns that could be helpful in considering where changes to unit counts may be appropriate.

| Number of Similar CSU Programs | Systemwide Range of Max Units (lower end) | Systemwide Range of Max Units (upper end) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>(example) 11</i> | <i>124</i> | <i>136</i> |

Responding to External Pressures

Campuses are asked to review current requirements in place for accreditation, licensing, examinations, etc., if external pressures have caused programs to exceed 120/180 units. In recent years, accreditation processes have shifted focus from unit requirements to learning outcomes or educational content, which may give programs new latitude in curriculum design.

| External Requirements | Source of Externally Imposed Requirements | Number of Units Required Externally | Number Required in Campus Degree Program |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Professional accreditation requirements | | | |
| Licensure/certification requirements | | | |
| Units required to sit for professional exam | | | |
| Other | | | |

Suggested Strategies for Reducing Total Required Units.

Campuses may find many other strategies helpful, as well.

| Options for reducing bachelor's degree unit requirements |
|--|
| Reduce the number of major core units. |
| Reduce the number of required major elective units. |
| Reduce the number of prerequisite units. |
| Reduce the number of co-requisite units. |
| Reduce number of units in concentration ("option"). |
| Reduce units associated with a course or courses. |
| Eliminate required minor. |
| Double count American Institutions with major course requirements. |
| Double count American Institutions with general education requirements. |
| Double count GE with campus-specific requirements (satisfy GE requirements through other courses). |
| Reduce the number of campus-specific graduation requirements (e.g. technological proficiency, cross-cultural competence, or language other than English, which may be addressed across the curriculum instead of only through a dedicated course). |
| Reduce one or more GE requirements (per EO 1065). This requires campus approval. |