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Asst. Vice President, Acad. Services SDSU  
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES  
Office of the Chancellor  
400 Golden Shore  
Long Beach, California 90802-4275

Date: August 12, 1997

To: Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs

From: Charles W. Lindahl, Interim Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs

Subject: Procedures for Fast-Track and Pilot-Program Alternatives for Establishing New Degree Programs

Attached is a copy of the Board of Trustee agenda item addressing the revision of the process for reviewing and approving new degree programs. The resolution was adopted by the Board in July 1997. Three alternatives for establishing a new degree program are now authorized.

### 1. Existing Process

This alternative is the traditional process, involving first the update of the campus Academic Master Plan and subsequently the development of a proposal for implementing the degree program. It will continue to be available for any proposed program and must be used for new programs that would involve major capital outlay and other significant additional new resources. Programs that involve degrees in areas new to the CSU as well as most programs that would involve separate specialized accreditation would also benefit from the longer, two-step review process. We shall request proposed updates to the Academic Master Plans early in the fall term, with a response requested by January 5 1998.

### 2. Fast Track Process

A campus may submit an implementation proposal for a new degree program that is not already projected on the campus Academic Master Plan if it meets the criteria for the "fast track." (The criteria are detailed in the attached agenda item.) It will be reviewed just as if it were a second-phase implementation proposal in the two-phase process. We expect that fast-track proposals that are submitted to the Chancellor's Office, Office of Academic Planning, by the first Monday in January and which raise no major issues can be acted on by the Board of Trustees in March and receive full approval in July. Those that are submitted by the second Monday in June and raise no major issues can be acted on by the Board of September and receive full approval in December.

Fast-track proposals should, for the time being, follow the existing format for degree implementation proposals (Attachment 2). Table 1, however, will be optional. Campuses may instead provide a narrative statement describing which areas of the curriculum will contract or fail to expand as quickly if the proposed program is implemented.

Note: This is an opportune time to reconsider what information should be provided in a degree program implementation proposal. Please convey suggestions to Dr. Jo Service, Dean, Academic Program Planning (telephone: 562 / 985-2845; e-mail: jo@calstate.edu).

### 3. Pilot Programs

The Trustees have authorized a limited number of pilot programs which campuses may establish without prior approval of the Chancellor's Office or CPEC. A pilot program must meet the criteria listed in Attachment 1 and may enroll students for five years. Conversion of a pilot program to regular-program status would require campus commitment of resources, a thorough program evaluation, review and comment by the Chancellor's Office and CPEC, and approval by the Board and the Chancellor (these conditions are outlined in Attachment 1).

At this point, a campus is free to establish one pilot program in 1997-98 and one in either 1998-99 or 1999-2000. This guideline is consistent with the suggestion in Attachment 1.

Prior to implementing a pilot program, the campus must notify the Chancellor's Office, Office of Academic Planning, which will formally acknowledge the program, assign a HEGIS code, and inform CPEC. The notification should be accompanied by the catalog copy describing the pilot program.

## Procedures

### 1. Tailoring of approval processes to type of degree program proposed

Programs that involve degrees in areas new to the CSU as well as most programs that would involve separate specialized accreditation would also benefit from the longer, two- step review process. However, programs that involve no major capital outlay and which can be accommodated within the existing resource base of the campus could be handled more quickly while retaining the elements of the two-step review process. Such programs could be placed on a "fast track." Examples would be degree programs that are "elevations" of well-established options in fields for which there are existing degree programs elsewhere in the system, and degree programs that involve little more than the repackaging of existing courses and faculty. The ideal would be a fast-track program that could be approved and implemented within one year from the time a campus first proposed that program, instead of the current two- to three-year time lag between proposal and implementation.

A program could be placed on the fast track only if

- a. it could be offered at a high level of quality by the campus within the campus's existing resource base, or there is a demonstrated capacity to fund the program on a self-support basis;
- b. it is not subject to specialized accreditation by an agency that is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, or it is currently offered as an option or concentration that is already recognized and accredited by an appropriate specialized accrediting agency;
- c. it can be adequately housed without a major capital outlay project. Major capital outlay construction projects are those projects whose total cost is \$610,000 or more, as adjusted pursuant to Cal. Pub. Cont. Code 10705(a), 10105 and 10108;
- d. it is consistent with all existing state and federal law and trustee policy;
- e. it leads to a bachelor's or master's degree;
- f. the program has been subject to a thorough campus review and approval process.

Two approval cycles per year for fast-track are envisioned because program implementation might be limited by the short time between approval at the March Board of Trustees' meeting, subsequent July approval by CPEC, and fall implementation. A second, briefer agenda item at the September Board of Trustees' meeting would make it possible for a proposal to come in by June, have any concerns resolved by the time of the board meeting in September, be authorized by the board, go to CPEC directly after the meeting, be endorsed by CPEC by December, be incorporated in campus catalogs and other campus informational materials in the spring and perhaps be implemented in a limited manner in the spring term, and be ready for full implementation in August.

#### Timelines for Fast-Track Approval

- The first Monday in January—for July approval

- The second Monday in June—for December approval

2. Automatic approval if no questions are raised by specified date

Another proposal for speeding up approval of both traditional and fast-track programs would be to set firm deadlines for review by the Chancellor's Office and CPEC. Neither the Chancellor's Office nor CPEC reviewers could routinely ask for extra time. If no questions were forwarded to the campus by the end of the review deadline, then approval would be automatic. For at least some programs, review by the Chancellor's Office and CPEC could be concurrent.

3. Removal of projection from Academic Plan if not implemented with five years (or date originally projected for implementation)

For the traditionally traced new-program proposals, if the implementation proposal does not come in within five years or the date originally projected for implementation, whichever is later, the projection would be removed from the Academic Plan and would have to be resubmitted and/or revised. This proposal should improve the responsiveness of our program offerings. Many areas are changing so rapidly that five years could make a significant difference in the needs of students and of the state.

This provision would not apply to "foundation" liberal arts and science programs, for which employer need and student demand are not primary considerations. It is recommended, however, that the concept of foundation programs be reevaluated so that it is consistent with the current reconsideration of the baccalaureate degree by the Academic Senate and the Cornerstones project.

4. Development of post-authorization review process for limited number of "pilot" programs

Some experimentation in the planning and offering of academic programs is part of the CSU tradition (e.g., pilot external degree programs, MFA in Cinema). We propose that the trustees authorize the establishment of a limited number of degree programs (we suggest one or two per campus per three-year period) under the following conditions:

a. A pilot program would be authorized to operate only for five years. If no further action is taken by the end of the five years, no new students could be admitted to the program. (The campus would be obliged to make appropriate arrangements for students already enrolled in the program to complete it.)

b. A pilot program could be converted to regular-program status and approved to continue to operate indefinitely if the following conditions are met:

- The campus committed the resources necessary to maintain the program beyond five years;
- A thorough program evaluation (including an on-site review by one or more experts in the field) showed the program to be of high quality; to be attractive to students; and to produce graduates attractive to prospective employers and/or graduate programs, as appropriate;
- Approval by the board and the chancellor would be required after review and comment by the Chancellor's Office and CPEC.

c. A program could be established as a pilot program only if it met the criteria for fast-track programs; that is,

- it could be offered at a high level of quality by the campus within the campus's existing resource base, or there is a demonstrated capacity to fund the program on a self-support basis;
- it is not subject to specialized accreditation by an agency that is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, or it is currently offered as an option or concentration that is already recognized and accredited by an appropriate specialized accrediting agency;
- it requires no major capital outlay project to be adequately housed;
- it is consistent with all existing state and federal law and trustee policy;
- it is a bachelor's or master's degree program;
- the campus has a thorough review and approval process for pilot degree programs, through which the program has passed.

d. The campus would be obliged to notify the Chancellor's Office of the establishment of the program and its curricular requirements prior to program implementation.

A pilot program could be implemented without its having been projected on the campus Academic Plan. It would require the acknowledgment, but not the prior approval of, the Chancellor's Office and CPEC, and it would be identified as a pilot program in the next annual update of the campus Academic Plan.

Service Learning (SL) Designation and Approval of New SL Courses, Curriculum Policy

The new Service Learning (SL) course proposal is reviewed by a University-level Service Learning Committee. If the proposal is deemed to meet the learning outcomes for Service Learning (SL), it receives the SL designation. Designation as a SL course requires that the following criteria be met. These elements must be addressed in writing as part of the SL designation curriculum proposal and should be clearly reflected in the proposed syllabus:

1. Justification that the SL component is integral to and supportive of the academic focus of the course. In the syllabus, this can be communicated in the course description, in a separate description of the SL component of the course, and/or in the learning outcomes.

2. Description of the mechanism(s) used to introduce the SL component to the students. This may be done through various methods including, but not limited to: class discussions, guided readings, experiential class periods, or utilizing the Service Learning and Community Engagement Programs (SLCEP) webpage as a resource.

3. Description of the: a. community partner(s) and location(s) where the SL assignment will be completed; b. community partner needs and their relationship to the course learning outcomes; c. expected professional skills and civic learning goals; d. activities that will meet the service requirement; e. length of time students will be required to serve (minimum of 15 hours during the semester, with 20 hours being optimal, regardless of the unit value of the course); f. process for verification of service hours.

4. Description of the mechanisms and opportunities for ongoing student reflection on the integration of the SL component with course content (e.g., class discussions, journals, papers, presentations).

5. The grading standards of the course must reflect that the weight assigned to the service-learning component accounts for a significant portion of the total course grade (minimum of 15%, with 20% or more being optimal).