THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES
Office of the Chancellor
400 Golden Shore
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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.

ITEM

Agenda Item 1
July 15-16, 1997

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Proposed Revision of New-Degree Program Review and Approval Process

Background on Current Process

In 1963, the system's Board of Trustees adopted planning policies that were designed to regularize curricular development and guide program distribution in the rapidly expanding system and to facilitate the progress of each individual campus in meeting it primary function as expressed in the California Master Plan for Higher Education (i.e., the provision of instruction for undergraduate and graduate students, through the master's degree, in the liberal arts and sciences, in applied fields and in the professions, including the teaching profession). These policies are summarized below.

The programs offered by the CSU are to meet the needs of the entire state. One of the trustees' guidelines explicitly states, "All universities cannot be all things to all people." While employer need and student demand are not the primary considerations in establishing programs in the liberal arts and sciences, curricula in the applied fields and professions are to be located in a systemwide pattern that will achieve an equitable and educationally sound distribution of programs throughout the state. Although all universities may wish to offer the same programs, the trustees are to exercise great selectivity in the final approval of new curricula. Specialized, high cost programs are to be allocated on the basis of review and study of the individual subject area. Therefore, all proposed new programs are to be reviewed by the trustees to ensure that the needs of the state, as well as of any individual campus, are taken into account. The priority order that the trustees are to consider is: (1) needs of the state, (2) needs of the campus service area, and (3) identification of employment opportunities. In some areas, program development is also limited or guided by system or California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) policy. Subjects for which there have been specific policy guidelines include architecture, computer science, engineering, performing arts, health professionals, home economics, industrial arts and technology.

Trustee policy requires a two-part program planning and implementation process. First, each campus submits an updated academic plan, which contains projections of programs to be established in the next five (or, in some cases, ten) years. New projections are reviewed by Chancellor's Office staff and, when campus and Chancellor's Office staff agree, the updated plan is submitted to the trustees for their approval in March of each year. Trustee approval allows the campus to incorporate projected programs in their capital outlay planning. Second, following trustee approval of that plan, detailed proposals for implementation of projected programs are submitted to the chancellor for approval. (The Board of Trustees has delegated to the chancellor review and approval of new degree programs when their projection has been endorsed by the board.)

California law charges CPEC with the responsibility to review proposals for new degree programs. CPEC staff have traditionally concentrated their activity at the end of the process, just before approval of the chancellor, but the commission has approved moving the primary focus of the CPEC staff review to the point just after trustee approval of the projection, so that key questions are raised at an earlier stage of planning.

Rationale for Revision

The board's planning policies were adopted 34 years ago, when the CSU was being formed from a mix of existing state colleges, colleges with the polytechnic emphasis, and newly established campuses. Existing campus curricula had developed largely independently, and there was great concern with program "duplication" across institutions. The first baby-boomers were entering college, and the state was focused on the needs of eighteen-to-twenty-four-year-old students, most of whom were expected to attend full time. The policies have been at least moderately successful in meeting the goals set in 1963 – especially in ensuring that academic program planning drives physical planning – but new needs have emerged that call for a review of trustee planning policies.

Although CSU will have to engage in careful planning during the next several decades if it is to accommodate Tidal Wave II, the emphasis will be on expanding access through such approaches as shared programs, greater reliance on distributed learning, and technological advances rather than development of traditional campuses. The rapid pace of change challenges our system to move more nimbly to improve responsiveness to the needs of students and the state. There is frustration with an approval process that requires all types of new programs to use a two-step process that was based on the assumption that virtually all new programs would require new facilities, and therefore have to move at the pace of facilities planning and approval processes. We are therefore proposing that the new-degree program review and approval process be modified.

Proposed Revision

Goal of Revised Process
The revised process should continue the shift of emphasis in academic planning from gatekeeping to facilitation, service, coordination, and support (especially support in the maintenance of quality).
　　The revision of the process is designed to meet the following objectives:
　　　• to create a true partnership between the campuses and academic planning
　　　• to promote more campus responsibility for new-degree program proposal quality
　　　• to speed up and simplify the new-degree program review process
　　　• to promote greater cooperation and collaboration among campuses and across segments
　　　• to promote greater attention to workforce and societal needs in program development
　　　• to enhance and strengthen our working relationship with CPEC
　　It is proposed that the new-degree program approval process be revised in four ways:

(1) Tailoring of approval processes to type of degree program proposed.

(2) Automatic approval if no questions are raised by specific date.

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

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

(1) Tailoring of approval processes to type of degree program proposed.
　　The current review process remains appropriate 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. 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;

(d) it is consistent with all existing state and federal law and trustee policy;

(e) it is a bachelor's or master's degree program;

(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

Campus activity
End of December	Proposal to Chancellor's Office
March	Board of Trustees' approval
July	CPEC endorsement
August	Implementation

and
Campus activity
Early June	Proposal to Chancellor's Office
September	Board of Trustees' approval
December	CPEC endorsement
February	Limited implementation
Spring	Program description in campus catalog
August	Full implementation

(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:

(i)   The campus committed the resources necessary to maintain the program beyond five years;

(ii)   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;

(iii) 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,

   (i) 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;

   (ii) 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;

   (iii) it requires no major capital outlay project to be adequately housed;

   (iv) it is consistent with all existing state and federal law and trustee policy;

   (v) it is a bachelor's or master's degree program;

   (vi) 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.

(e) 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.

Proposed Resolution

The proposed resolution refers to the revision of the new-degree review process. The following resolution is recommended for adoption.

RESOLVED, By the Board of Trustees of The California State University, that the current new-degree program review and approval process be revised to permit a semi-annual, fast-track review process and the establishment of a limited number of pilot programs. The revised new-degree program review and approval process will be reviewed and evaluated five years from implementation.