

Adopted May 27, 1986

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
OF  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, California**

**AS-213-86/CC**

**RESOLUTION ON DISTINCTION  
BETWEEN OPTIONS AND CONCENTRATIONS  
AT CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY**

WHEREAS, The distinction made in CAM 411 between options and concentrations appears primarily to be based on the number of units contained in the curricular alternative; and

WHEREAS, There appears to be confusion at California Polytechnic State University, at the Chancellor's Office, and on other campuses both within and outside of the CSUC system as to California Polytechnic State University's distinction between options and concentrations; and

WHEREAS, A survey by the Academic Senate Curriculum Committee of academic departments indicates no opposition to the concept of using only one such curricular alternative; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the following changes be made to CAM 411 and that these changes be implemented with the 1988-90 catalog:

411 Guidelines for Majors, Minors, and Concentrations

A. Recognized Categories of Curricular ~~Concentrations~~ Alternatives.

(Note: For the purpose of computing grade point average at graduation, "major" is defined as follows in 1. and 2. below.)

1. Major (B.S.)

- (a) For the B.S. degree, the major shall consist of no less than 54 or more than 70 quarter units of courses required for graduation in each curriculum.
  - (1) Of the units in courses designated as major, at least 27 must be in 300 or 400 series courses.
  - (2) Of the units in courses designated as major, at least six must be required in the freshman and at least nine in the sophomore year.
- (b) The courses in the major, designated as "M" courses, must be exclusive of those used to satisfy the general education requirement. The "M" courses generally are those with the major departmental prefix although others may be included.

2. Major (B.A.)

- (a) For the B.A. degree, the major shall consist of no less than 48 or more than 60 quarter units of courses required for graduation in each curriculum.
  - (1) Of the units in courses designated as major, at least 24 must be in 300 or 400 series courses.
  - (2) Of the total of 186 quarter units required for the degree, at least 60 must be in 300 or 400 series courses.

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(3) Of the units in courses designated as major, at least six must be required in the freshman year and at least six in the sophomore year.

(b) The courses in the major, designated as "M" courses, must be exclusive of those used to satisfy the general education requirement. The "M" courses generally are those with the major departmental prefix although others may be included.

3. Minor

No minor is required for the bachelor's degree.

A minor is a formal aggregate of classes in a specific subject area designed to give a student documented competency in a secondary course of study. In contrast to ~~options and~~ concentrations it stands alone and is distinct from and outside the student's degree major. It is intended that the minor will be completed along with the requirements for the bachelor's degree. The student's transcript will certify completion of the minor.

The minor consists of 24 to 30 quarter units, of which at least half must be upper division. Twelve or more of the units in the minor must be in specified courses with the remainder, if any, to be chosen from an approved list.

Minors require the same academic review process and justification in terms of purpose, resources, need, etc., as do ~~options and~~ concentrations.

4. --- Option

~~An option is a curricular alternative in a department having 30 or more quarter units of specified courses not common to other curricular alternatives and designed to give the student substantially different capabilities than the other alternatives.~~

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~~-5-~~     4.     Concentration

A concentration is a block of courses to be chosen with the approval of the student's adviser comprising from 18 to ~~29~~ 39 quarter units providing essentially different capabilities for the student. A minimum of 12 of these 18-~~29~~ 39 units must be in specified courses.

~~B.----~~ Guidelines Relating to Options --

- ~~1.----~~ The basic curriculum display in the catalog should show only those courses common to the two or more option alternatives.
- ~~2.----~~ Following the basic curriculum display, the courses required to complete the major in each option should be listed in the manner shown in the catalog.
- ~~3.----~~ In addition to courses offered by the major department, options may include required courses from other departments.
- ~~4.----~~ No maximum number of units are presently specified for options. However, it appears that 39 quarter units is a reasonable maximum. Although some existing options of over 39 quarter units have been allowed, strong justification will be required for approval of additional options of over 39 quarter units.

~~-C-~~     B.     Guidelines Relating to Concentrations

1.     The basic curriculum display in the catalog should show only those courses common to the concentration alternatives.
2.     Following the basic curriculum display, the courses required to complete the major in each concentration should be listed in the catalog.
- ~~2.-~~     3.     A footnote in the catalog should indicate the number of elective units which must be selected with the approval of the adviser to form the concentration.

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Example: "At least 18 quarter units shall be chosen with the approval of the adviser in one of the concentration areas of Production, Management, or Science-Teaching.

- 3- 4. Available concentrations should be named and may be described briefly in the departmental introductory material.
- 4- 5. A list of those courses which are required and eligible for use in a specific concentration must be provided to the Evaluation Technician and departmental advisers by the appropriate school dean.

~~D. --- Guidelines Relating to Both Options and Concentrations:~~

- ~~2. --- All units in an option must be specified. If the 30 or more quarter units cannot be specified, the concentration route should be used.~~
- 3- 6. A student must select one of the available ~~curricular alternatives~~ concentrations recognized and/or displayed in the catalog.
- 4- 7. "M" courses may appear in ~~an option or a~~ concentration as well as in the core or basic curriculum display.
- 5- 8. A concentration within ~~an option~~ a concentration is not appropriate.
- 6- 9. There must be a discrete bachelor's degree program. That is, ~~options~~ concentrations requiring a bachelor's degree program to run into the graduate year will not be approved.

Proposed By:  
Curriculum Committee  
April 8, 1986  
Revised May 27, 1986

## Memorandum


JUL 29 1986

To : Lloyd Lamouria, Chair  
Academic Senate

Academic Senate

Date : July 23, 1986

File No.:

Copies : M. Wilson  
G. Irvin  
G. Lewis  
S. SparlingFrom :   
Warren J. Baker  
PresidentSubject : Academic Senate Resolution AS-213-86/CC  
(Distinction Between Options and Concentrations at California  
Polytechnic State University)

The resolution is accepted with the following conditions:

1. Section D.3 (new section B.6): In my view, concentrations should not be required--they move toward excessive rigidity and specilization in the baccalaureate program.

Because the issue of overspecialization is a concern of the Trustees, the Chancellor's Office, and our campus, I request that the Academic Senate look into the issue of concentrations and recommend whether a student should be required to take a concentration in a major or should have available a more broadly-based curriculum, or both.

In addition, the Academic Senate should address the attendant issue of whether students outside the major should have access to a concentration, and if so, under what conditions.

2. Section D.4 (new section B.7). "M" courses should be clarified to read "Major" courses.
3. Section A.5 (new section A.4): This definition of the concentration should state that within a program, no single course should appear in every concentration. If this is the case, the course should be part of the major, not the concentration.

In addition, rather than requiring a minimum of 12 units of the 18 to 39 in specified courses, the section should read: one-half of the total units (18 to 39), but no fewer than 12 units shall be in specified courses.

4. The new CAM Language for implementation of this resolution will take into account the wording suggested by the Senate.