Academic Senate
Executive Committee & Instruction Committee

Credit/No Credit Grading
Policy for Semesters

Presentation to Executive Committee
11/4/2025

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Guiding Principles for Policy Review

Credit/No Credit Grading Policy for Semesters

✓ Focus on Student Success and Progress toward Degree.

✓ Semester conversion offers the opportunity to consider possibilities.

✓ Every choice/compromise has benefits and costs. Which choice is the greater offense?

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Current CR/NC Policy

Quarter Policy adopted in 1997 – AS-479-97

- There is no CSU Executive Order that informs CR/NC Policy

- Limited to 16 quarter units
  - ➢ No more than one course in major/support (if allowed)
  - ➢ No more than one course in GE
  - ➢ C minus for CREDIT for undergraduates
  - ➢ B minus for CREDIT for graduate students

- In 1997, most degree programs were 198 or more units.

- ✓ Students had many more free electives

- Policy amended in 2024 to extend the opt-in deadline to 80% of instruction.

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Outreach and Consultation

How does the current policy work? It's Complicated ...

- Consulted with University Advising Professionals.

- Collaborative Advising for Student Success(CASS) Work Group

- Office of the Registrar

  The automation and enforcement process.
  - ➢ Very complicated and labor intensive

- Outreach to Colleges, Graduate Programs, Teaching Credential Programs.

- Can a semester policy help mitigate challenges students caught on the "Q2S Bridge" might face.

- What will work for Cal Poly Maritime Academy programs?

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Why is it complicated?

Current policy is not well understood by students and others.

- Selection of CR/NC cannot be automated in the Student Center Registration System.

- Requires monitoring and correcting each quarter.

- This process is very labor intensive.

- Degree Progress Report enforces CR/NC policy in a way a student may not expect.

- Can be a problem for change of major students.

- 2024 Revision of deadline to 80% resulted in unintended consequences.

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Choices for a universal campus policy

Too Extreme or Too Complicated

- Keep it at 16 units.

- 12 units – no restrictions.

- 12 units – no major courses, no GE courses

Too Complicated:

✓ No major core courses
  ✓ (allows one support, concentration, advisor approved elective, or technical elective.

Possible Paths

✓ 12 units – one major course and one GE course
  ❖ Or one major and two GE

✓ 12 units – no major courses and one GE course
  ❖ Or no major courses and two GE

✓ 12 units – one GE and one major course if stated in the catalog that it is allowed by student's major program/department.

Course in the Major

What is a Major Course?

- Major Course includes all of the following:
  - ✓ Core
  - ✓ Advisor Approved Electives
  - ✓ Technical Electives
  - ✓ Concentration Courses
    - ✓ "choose from list"
  - ✓ Support courses

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GE Courses

It was suggested to allow up to two courses.

- More flexible for students.

- **Many more GE courses embedded in the major.**

  This may result in some confusion for students bridging quarter to semester.

- Students may be taking higher course loads during some semesters as we adjust to term typically offered, unable to enroll the previous semester, failed a pre-requisite.

- To move more quickly to degree.

- Could not reach consensus for 2 GE courses.

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Labs to meet GE 5C

Stand Alone 1-unit Life or Physical Science Labs

- The new GE template parses out the 1-unit laboratory to meet the requirement for GE area 5C.

- At Cal Poly nearly all of the courses that satisfy GE area 5 embed the 5C lab requirement in the course. (i.e.; the lecture and lab are linked together and though each may be graded separately, only one final grade is posted for the course.

- Very few students will not satisfy the GE 5C requirements when completing a GE Area 5 course. But there will be some.

- Question: Should a 1-unit stand alone lab count as the students' only allowable GE course?

Rationale for CR/NC Grading

Summary of WHEREAS Clauses

- Students should have the option to take a limited number of courses CR/NC.

- Semester curricula may now have more double-counting opportunities

- CR/NC policy may mitigate unforeseen complications with the launch of the semester curriculum.

- Students may take a higher course load during some semesters

- Support students managing unforeseen challenging circumstances

- Programs and Departments are best positioned to decide on CR/NC in the major

Where We Landed - Status Quo

Proposed Policy for Semesters – specific language for Graduate/Post-Bac Programs

- Maximum of 12 semester units with Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) grading – opt-in by 50% of instruction.

- Undergraduates

  - A C minus or better to earn credit
  - No more than one course in GE (3, 4, or 5 unit)
  - No more than one course in the Major, if allowed by the student's major program/department

- Graduate Students

  - No Courses required for graduate degree
  - A B minus or to earn credit

- Post-Bacc/Teaching Credential Students

  - No courses required for teaching credential or pre-requisites
  - A B minus to earn credit

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Likely Outcomes

The proposed policy

- Can support student success and allow the opportunity to explore unfamiliar or challenging subject areas

- Does give programs/departments the ability to choose the merit of CR/NC in the major.

- Does provide a reasonable timeline to opt-in to CR/NC that supports students to make informed decisions about their academic progress

- Does provide a policy that can help students make progress toward degree when managing unforeseen challenging circumstances.

- Does NOT result in a policy that is more easily understood by students and faculty.

- Does NOT result in a policy that is easier to implement and monitor.

- Not everyone likes it but almost nobody thinks its awful.

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End of Presentation

…Questions