

Academic Senate Instruction Committee

Credit/No Credit Grading Policy for Semesters

First Reading Presentation to
Academic Senate
11/18/2025



CAL POLY

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?

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

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 and Instructional Department Heads/ Chairs (IDHC)
- Can a semester policy help mitigate challenges students caught on the “Q2S Bridge” might face.
- What will work for Cal Poly Maritime Academy programs?

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.

Choices the Instruction Committee vetted 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

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.**

Labs to meet GE 5C

Stand Alone 1 unit Life of 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 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

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.



End of Presentation
...Questions