

UPDATE ON STUDENT SUCCESS TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION 3.1 TO ESTABLISH SYSTEM-LEVEL ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES

May 7-8, 2012

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Presentation: Linda Michalowski, Vice Chancellor, Student Services and Special Programs

Item 4.4

Issue

This item provides information on the progress made to date to develop title 5 regulations to implement Student Success Task Force recommendation 3.1 to establish system-level enrollment priorities.

Background

Student Success Task Force (SSTF) Recommendation 3.1 calls for the California Community Colleges to adopt systemwide enrollment priorities that: (1) reflect the core mission of transfer, career technical education and basic skills development; (2) encourage students to identify their educational objective and follow a prescribed path most likely to lead to success; (3) ensure access and the opportunity for success for new students; and (4) incentivize students to make progress toward their educational goal.

Current law and regulations define four special populations for enrollment priority. The Education Code requires priority enrollment for active duty military and recent veterans and for current and emancipated foster youth. The Education Code and title 5 regulations also provide for and encourage districts to give priority registration to students with disabilities and disadvantaged students, including those served by Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) and Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). Community college districts have the authority to establish policies for all other students. Local policies have historically favored continuing students, based solely on their accrual of course units.

In the current budget environment, with community colleges having to cut significant numbers of course sections despite high student demand, many students are being denied access, including recent high school graduates and adults seeking job training or retraining in this volatile economy. The Student Success Task Force recognized that new students pursuing mission-central goals are potentially being displaced by avocational students and sought to bring a thoughtful approach to rationing the available space at community colleges. The Task Force also wanted to facilitate students moving through the college curriculum in an efficient manner and encourage students to take their enrollment opportunity seriously by incentivizing them to maintain good academic standing.

SSTF recommendation 3.1 calls for highest enrollment priority to be provided for:

- Continuing students in good standing who are making progress toward a certificate, degree, transfer, or career advancement objective. This would include displaced and incumbent workers who enroll in career-related courses and students who are actively pursuing credit or noncredit basic skills remediation.
- First-time students who participate in orientation and assessment and develop an informed education plan.
- Students who begin addressing any basic skills deficiencies in their first year, through either courses or other approaches.
- To address student equity goals, current statutory and regulatory provisions requiring or encouraging priority registration for special populations (active duty military and recent veterans, current and emancipated foster youth, students with disabilities, and disadvantaged students) should be retained. To the extent allowable by law, these students should be subject to all of the limitations below.

The SSTF further recommended that continuing students should lose enrollment priority if they:

- Do not follow their original or a revised education plan
- Are placed for two consecutive terms on Academic Probation (GPA below 2.0 after attempting 12 or more units) and/or Progress Probation (failure to successfully complete at least 50 percent of their classes)
- Fail to declare a program of study by the end of their third term
- Accrue 100 or more units, not including basic skills and ESL courses.

This recommendation has been approached with a sense of urgency because so many students are currently having great difficulty getting the classes they need. The Chancellor's Office convened an Enrollment Priorities Workgroup comprised of 17 members representing chief executive officers (1); chief student services officers (2); chief instructional officers (2); students (2); faculty (4); admissions and records officers (2); researchers (1); chief business officers (1); career technical education administrators (1); and EOPS directors (1).

The Enrollment Priorities Workgroup met four times during March and April with the intent of bringing proposed regulations to the Board for First Reading at this meeting. The workgroup produced draft regulations that have been widely circulated among constituent groups and were discussed by the Consultation Council on April 19. Most groups have agreed that the draft proposal provides a solid framework for implementing systemwide enrollment priorities. However, given the significance and complexity of this issue and the many technical and resource challenges involved,

virtually all constituencies requested additional time for input and refinement. As a result, this item is being presented for information only and it is expected that proposed regulations will be presented to the Board for a first reading at the July 2012 meeting.

The key elements of the draft regulation include:

- Enrollment priorities for existing student groups identified in Education Code (foster youth and former foster youth, and veterans and active duty military) and for students participating in EOPS and DSPS programs who have completed orientation, assessment, and developed student education plans would be maintained in the proposed regulations (first and second level of priority, respectively).
- Beyond those groups, districts would have flexibility in assigning enrollment priority among 1) new students who have completed orientation, assessment, and developed student education plans, and 2) continuing students in good standing, meaning they are not placed on academic and/or progress probation for two consecutive terms.
- Continuing students would lose enrollment priority if they earned more than 100 units (not including basic skills and ESL) or if placed on academic and/or progress probation for two consecutive terms.
- Districts would have the authority to establish policies for exempting categories of students from the 100 unit limit, such as students in high unit majors or programs.
- Colleges would be required to adopt an appeals policy and process for students who lose enrollment priority due to extenuating circumstances (verified cases of accidents, illnesses or other circumstances beyond the control of the student).

Conclusion

This item provides information to the Board about the implementation of Student Success Task Force recommendation 3.1. The Chancellor's Office anticipates bringing a title 5 regulatory proposal to the Board at its July meeting for a first reading.

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