

**The Top Ten  
Undergraduate  
Policies and  
Procedures  
Every First-Year  
Professor Should  
Know**

**New Faculty Orientation  
August, 2007**

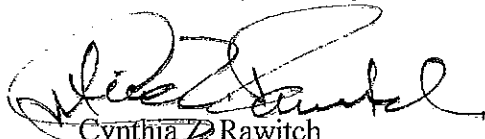
## Introduction

California State University, Northridge is a great place to work, learn, play, grow and make lifelong connections to colleagues and students. When we were new faculty, too long ago to publicly admit, no one explained the nitty-gritty ins and outs about policies, procedures, vocabulary and CSUN “culture” that would have helped us get through the initial demands of everyday life as faculty. As a result, when students came to us in class or during office hours and asked us to sign something, or allow them to do or not do something, we were often clueless about how to respond. We were caught between wanting to help and not knowing whether the decision about granting their wishes was even within our power. Was our signature required as a means of giving us notice, or did some mysterious decisionmaker somewhere want our input before making a decision? And we never understood whose rule it was anyway. Was it the department, college, administration, Faculty Senate, Cal State System, State of California, Federal government or another mysterious entity?

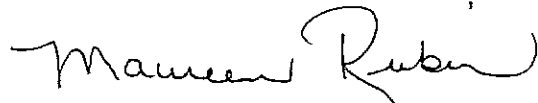
This little booklet, while by no means comprehensive, provides the *Top Ten Undergraduate Policies and Practices Every First Year Professor Should Know*, with apologies to David Letterman. It also contains a glossary of “CSUNspeak,” the strange language that your students and colleagues will use every day and expect you to understand. Finally, it includes an appendix of forms you might very well encounter in your first few weeks of teaching. Full texts of most of the policies that are summarized here are located in CSUN’s *Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog* and this booklet is not intended to replace them. It’s just designed to give you a heads up on the main policies and procedures you are likely to meet very soon.

CSUN is a special place; it’s what our accrediting agency termed “a model to other public urban institutions of higher education that have the mission of establishing a learning-centered institution.” It’s home to a diverse population that reflects our region and offers opportunity to many motivated first-generation college students, a growing international community of scholars and some of the best young and not-so-young people in the country who are attracted here by hundreds of programs that are widely recognized for their quality, competence and results. You can learn more about our students at CSUN by the Numbers, a new web resource from Institutional Research at <http://www.csun.edu/~instrsch/index.html>. You will come to realize what a gift it is to teach at this unique, public university.

We also want to let you know that the Office of Undergraduate Studies, located in University Hall 215 is always here to answer questions or help you figure out what to do next. If we don’t know the answer, we most likely can direct you to someone who does. We look forward to meeting you and working with you and wish you every success in your first year on our faculty.



Cynthia Rawitch  
Associate Vice President  
Undergraduate Studies



Maureen Rubin  
Director  
Undergraduate Studies

## **The Top Ten Undergraduate Policies and Procedures Every First-Year Professor Should Know**

Throughout this booklet, you will see terms highlighted in blue. These blue terms are explained in a handy Glossary that follows the Top Ten section. Glossary explanations will help you with “CSUN Speak,” an esoteric language full of acronyms, policy wonkisms, and abbreviations that may make you wonder if you have accepted a job to teach on another planet. Once you learn CSUNSpeak, you will be more likely to understand your colleagues and students and when you volunteer to be a member of some committee, you will know more about it than the fact that it is referred to by three or four mysterious initials.

### **1) The Calendar Rules**

Important dates are listed in the *Schedule of Classes*. For the full Fall 2007 Calendar and a Chart about the what you are allowed to do and when they are allowed to do it, see Appendices A and B. The most important dates for you to know for Fall 2007 are:

August 23	First official day of class
August 23-September 14	Students can Add Classes on SOLAR if you give them a Permission Number. You can download Permission Numbers from the Class Roster page on your portal. This semester, for the first time, a student may use a permission number repeatedly until Census Day. It won't expire when a student successfully tries to use or unsuccessfully tries to use it. Students can Drop some of their classes or Change the Basis or grading (CR/NC to letter grade) without a permission number or any other approval from you during this time period.
September 3	Labor Day
September 17-20	The week before Census Day is the last week students can make changes in their schedules or program without providing a “serious and compelling reason” along with supporting documentation. This year, Week 4 is only 4 days long. Why? The CSU's Census Day has always been the 20 <sup>th</sup> day of instruction. Before this year, Census Day has always been on a Friday. But this year, because the campus will be closed for Veterans' Day, the 20 <sup>th</sup> day of instruction falls on Thursday, September 20. You might want to put this day in your syllabus, write it on the whiteboard or post some signs around the classroom, because your signature is required to allow a student to drop, add or

change the basis of grading during this week. After this week, see below.

September 24 to November 30

Students are not permitted to drop, add or change the basis of grading during Weeks 5 through 14 unless they show extraordinary circumstances, such as being required to report for military duty or a serious health issue. Still, many students will ask you to sign their forms requesting late actions. (See Appendix A and B). **YOUR SIGNATURE DOES NOT GIVE THEM PERMISSION TO COMPLETE THE REQUESTED ACTION.** Obtaining your signature is required to give you notice that the student is seeking permission to make a schedule change. Department chairs, associate deans and the director of Undergraduate Studies make the final decision. Your input on the form allows you to provide these decision makers with useful information about whether the student is passing the course and whether you approve or disapprove of the student's requested action.

November 12

Veterans' Day. Campus closed. You will appreciate a three-day weekend by now. And, yes, this is the same Veterans' Day that caused all that confusion way back in Week 4.

November 22-24

Thanksgiving Recess. Campus closed again. You will really like November.

November 16 to December 8

During the last three weeks of class, withdrawals are only permitted in cases such as accident or the onset of sudden change in condition related to a serious illness. Requests for withdrawals due to problems that have been ongoing throughout the semester will not be approved. Again, students will ask you to sign their late-request forms and again, your signature will not give them permission to drop. Sometimes, too, students will just have received notice that they are not on your roster. You cannot add them this late in the year. But they will not understand this and will ask for your signature so they can cite your approval to other decision makers. One thing you can do during this time period is suggest that a student fill out papers requesting an Incomplete.

## 2) **A Bit More about Adding Classes – OK, Quite a Bit More**

As soon as the semester begins, students will start asking you if they can add your class. After the first day of class, they cannot add classes online anymore unless they obtain a Permission Number. If you have space in the class, you may provide them with a Permission Number that you obtain from your portal when you download your roster. Students receiving these numbers must go online to SOLAR, through the University portal and enter this permission number in order to add their classes. **Adding class is not your responsibility; it is theirs.** Just because you give a Permission Number does not mean the class has been added. During each class meeting for the first three weeks, you should urge students to enter their Portal and click on “View My Class Schedule” to make sure they are registered for every class they are attending. If they are not on your roster and want to add after September 17, students will not be allowed to add your class.

Thus, you should take roll. If students do not hear their names, they are more likely to go to the portal and check their enrollment status. If you are teaching a large class and don't want to waste half of it taking roll, the announcement about schedule checks is even more important. In large classes, you may want to pass around an attendance sheet. It's a good idea to cross-reference the names on this attendance sheet with the roster of your class that is available on your portal page. Missing persons can then be alerted about their non-registration by announcing their names in class or emailing them.

Similarly, if students do not attend the first two meetings of a course that meets more than once a week, or miss the first meeting of a class that meets only once a week, they will lose the right to remain on the class roll unless they have notified you of the need to miss. You may issue another student a permission number for that space. The absent student will receive a U, which counts as an F in computing Grade Point Averages (GPA). Students who do not show up are still responsible for dropping classes even if you have given their seat away. You do not have to allow student to stay in class if they arrive after the first two meetings without notifying you of the reason for their late arrival.

After the 20<sup>th</sup> day of class, September 20 in Fall 2007, students may no longer use permission numbers to add classes.

If students come to you after Census Day and ask you to “add” them because they just learned they were not on your roster, you should not “add” them. It is their responsibility to check the status of their enrollment well before Census Day. Even if they submit a perfect final exam or write the best term paper you ever read and then beg you to “add” them because they have passed the class and attended every session, you can not do so. Enrollment matters must be settled by Census Day. Do not allow yourself to feel guilty. Students, not you, are responsible for timely enrollment in classes. Your decision to “add” late will be overruled by chairs, associate deans and Undergraduate Studies anyway.

## 3) **And Now, Equal Time Devoted to the Rules about Dropping Classes After the First Day of Class**

Because the University wants students to “drop” classes early so other students can take their place in classes, it is easier to “drop” classes than to “add” them. Thus, students can drop classes on SOLAR without any approval up to Census Day, September 20 in Fall 2007. They may drop one or all of their classes through this procedure. Please urge them to drop early so other students, waiting for class openings, can enroll. After Census Day, students may only drop by filing Change of Schedule (A) requests with Associate Deans. Like adds, students must obtain your signature first, so you have notice of the drop, and you can indicate whether the student is passing the class and whether you approve or disapprove of the requested “drop” by checking the appropriate box. Drops will only be granted for serious and compelling reasons, which do not include failing the class due to job or personal obligations, deciding to change majors, or receiving less than the desired grade.

Similarly, students seeking Partial Medical Withdrawals will be required to obtain signatures. Your signature on this form also provides notice and allows for your input. It is provided in Appendix B. Students seeking Complete Medical Withdrawals must apply for them at the Student Health Center. Faculty are not required to sign Complete Medical Withdrawals, but department chairs will receive notice from the Students Health Center.

#### **4) Making (and Keeping) the Grade**

The University uses A through F letter grades that adhere to traditional meanings of A for Outstanding, B for Very Good, C for Average, D for barely passing and F for failure. Plus and minus are optional and left to the discretion of the instructor. In the past several years, department chairs, faculty members and administrators have been concerned about grade inflation as well as excessive numbers of failures in lower-division courses. Each faculty member determines his or her own grading criteria. A maximum of 18 units may be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis, but this grading option is not allowed for courses in General Education, Title V, the major or the minor. It would help if you could announce this policy in class, so students do not have to find you when they are ready to graduate and beg you to change their CR into the grade they actually would have earned four years ago.

In general, the University also requires faculty members to keep materials from one semester until the end of the first week of the same semester one year later. That means keep final exams and other written or electronic materials that you did not return to the student and which contribute to the student’s final grade until one week into Fall 08. After that, you should destroy these materials.

All grades are submitted online, through the SOLAR grade roster, within five working days after the date of the class final. Failure to meet this deadline impacts the entire university since student records cannot be processed until all grades are entered.

#### **5) Incomplete “I” Grades Are for Exceptional, Late-Occurring Events**

Grades of Incomplete or “I” are only to be given in the rare instance where the student is passing the class but a small portion of the required coursework has not been completed and evaluated during the regular semester. You may give an “I” grades are for reasons that you

determine are serious and unforeseen. Do not volunteer to give a student an Incomplete. It is the student's responsibility to bring pertinent information related to the circumstances that give rise to the "I" to the instructor's attention.

Upon learning of such circumstances, the instructor and student must both complete and sign a "Request for an Incomplete" form and they must decide on the time frame in which the "I" must be completed. This time may be one semester or one year. If the "I" is not completed precisely within this time frame, the "I" grade will be replaced by an "F" and no late Changes in Grade will be approved by Undergraduate Studies unless a "Request for Extension of Time to Remove Incomplete" form has been filed with Admissions and Records before the "I" has lapsed. Instructors should not initiate "I" grades on their own. The remaining assignments should be of such a nature that they can be completed independently.

**6) It's Probably too Late to Revise Them, but Syllabuses (this is the preferred plural, really) are Your Contract with Students and Should be Treated Accordingly**

Syllabuses must be written or posted online for all undergraduate courses. They inform students about requirements, grade standards, content, methodology, dates, classroom conduct and any other policies you want disseminated and intend to enforce. A good syllabus contains clear explanations of course policies and expectations and will protect you in the event of a grade appeal, grievance or misunderstanding. Copies of your course syllabuses must be kept on file in your department office.

Syllabuses should contain:

- Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's) You might know these as course objectives. but here at CSUN, we're "assessment driven" so the syllabus should state what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they complete your class. These may be stated in terms of expected knowledge, skills or attitudes.
- Description of topics to be covered
- Course requirements
- Methods of evaluation
- Grading Criteria and whether plus and minus will be used
- Your contact information (name, office hours, office location, campus phone number, email, website)
- For a General Education course, describe how your course meets the currently approved goals of its GE section.
- A statement about Academic Dishonesty.

Also, as you prepare your courses, you should take the University's Standardized Break Policy into account.

**7) Office Hours: Be There or Beware**

All instructors must identify day(s) and time(s) that they will be available to meet with students. The required number of office hours you are required to hold will vary with the

number of units you teach. Your department chair will provide you with your department policies. Office hours should be listed on syllabuses, submitted to department offices for posting and inclusion on websites and directories and posted outside your office door. Once posted, they can't be changed without permission of your department chair. If you have an emergency or are out of town, announce this to your classes in advance, post signs on your office doors and inform your department chair..

If a student comes to your office, accompanied by a parent or guardian, you are not allowed to talk to anyone but the student about his or her academic career without obtaining a signed release from the student. This regulation is part of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974.

## **8) Attendance**

Other than students losing the right to remain in class if they are absent without notice from the first two class meetings, (see Adding a Class, Policy #2), the Faculty Senate has not enacted official attendance policies. Some professors lower student grades for excess missed classes or assignments and define excess in differing ways. It's best to consult with your chair for advice on setting attendance policy.

If students miss classes while representing the University in official curriculum-related, University-approved activities (i.e. athletics or performances), you are expected to provide, within reason, opportunities to make up any work or exams that are missed. Students are expected to supply details and written documentation signed by the supervisor of the activity. You should receive this information from the student either the first week of class or as soon as the information becomes available.

CSUN policy forbids the imposition of penalties on students who miss examinations as a result of religious holidays. Faculty must administer tests at alternate times that would not violate students' religious creeds. Faculty are also encouraged to make alternate arrangements for the completion of course work that is due on religious holidays.

## **9) HELP, they may need somebody!**

Many students will need extra help with a class to improve their academic performance. Please let them know about these resources at the beginning of the semester and throughout the semester if you sense that they are falling behind or sending out other distress signals.

The Learning Resource Center (LRC), located in 408 Bayramian Hall or 677-2033 provides:

- A Writing Center, which helps students with written work and offers workshops in such areas as time management, reading, note taking and test taking, including preparation for the Upper Division Writing Proficiency Exam, the passage of which is a CSU graduation requirement;
- A Writing Lab for students taking developmental or freshman writing classes or University 100, the Freshmen Seminar;

- Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that helps students master material in historically challenging classes such as chemistry, economics, math, philosophy and the physical sciences. Students taking SI attend small group study sessions and receive one unit of credit. Some sections of courses includes mandatory SI sessions, while other sections offer them as a voluntary support service;
- Subject Area Tutoring Labs – Individual and small group tutoring is available for subjects such as math, biology, chemistry, economics, physics and philosophy;
- Self-Instruction Media Lab – Supplemental materials across the disciplines are available online or through lab software;
- Developmental Math Lab – Offers tutors for students enrolled in Math 092 and 093. Hours are posted.

## **10. More holistic help for your students**

CSUN has a host of specialty services available that might help your students succeed in class because of their impact on academic performance. All are excellent referrals for appropriate students. They include:

- The Center on Disabilities (110 Bayramian Hall, 677-2684) provides this population with a variety of support services. Most pertinent, the Center will provide disabled students with forms that ask you to allow them to make alternative testing accommodations.
- The National Center on Deafness (Jean M. Chisholm Hall, 677-2614) coordinates CSUN's internationally-recognized program for deaf and hard of hearing students. Each semester, CSUN enrolls approximately 250 NCOD-assisted students, so there is a good chance that some and their interpreters will be in your classes. You will enjoy learning about this population and the NCOD is very willing to help if you need assistance.
- The Student Health Center (Klotz Student Health Center, 677-3666) offers a wide variety of services including medical exams, immunizations, alcohol and drug counseling, health education, nutrition counseling and smoking cessation.
- University Counseling Services (250 Bayramian Hall) offers confidential/crisis counseling and a variety of psychological services and programs to assist students. They are a great resource that you should not hesitate to refer students to or consult for advice.
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) (University Hall 215, 677-4151) Established in 1969 by a legislative mandate, the EOP supports highly motivated, low-income, first generation college students and provides them with modest grants and opportunities to participate in several, highly successful transition programs.

## Glossary

**Academic Dishonesty** – Cheating or plagiarism in connection with any academic program is an offense for which a student may be expelled, suspended or given a less severe disciplinary action. Cheating is defined as attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Students are sometimes ingenious in their cheating strategies. Beside the usual ink-in-the-palm of the hand trick, they will write small notes in bluebooks or on pens or pencils, visit websites or use earphones connected to ipods with answer recordings or even ask to go to the restroom where they can retrieve the notes they have hidden in stalls. Make the policy and consequences of cheating clear to them and proctor exams vigilantly.

Another major area of concern is plagiarism, which is intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise. There is a great PowerPoint by Professors Linda Bowen and Bobbi Eisenstock available at [www.csun.edu/facdev/plagiarism.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/facdev/plagiarism.pdf) that will help you explain plagiarism to your students, understand the epidemic, detect it and protect against it by having students submit assignments through Turn It In and similar websites. The University has paid for all faculty members to have access to Turn It In. Please don't hesitate to report academic dishonesty to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and/or request disciplinary action. Students may be engaging in such behavior in other classes and the University needs to know about it.

**Academic Year (AY)** – How we refer to the current work calendar. We are entering the 2007-2008 AY. You will receive 12 paychecks as your salary is spread out over the AY.

**Assessment** – The systematic collection, review and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving student learning and development. (T. Marchese, 1987). CSUN is a learning-centered university. From the 100-level course to the graduate degree, each curricular decision is deliberate and fostered to achieve Student Learning Outcomes. Assessment measures indicate how well faculty and departments align curriculum with student learning objectives. Assessment can be embedded, direct or indirect, and holistically scored or evaluated by portfolio, rubric, triangulation or value-added. It can also be scaffolded. Trust us, you'll soon learn all about assessment because it's the foundation of CSUN's WASC accreditation.

**Associated Students (AS)** – CSUN's student government.

**Campus Directory** – Useful compendium that includes phone, fax, email and location information on all people and places on campus. Information is listed alphabetically by program, alphabetically by program with personnel included, and alphabetically by last name of staff and faculty. One of those should work for you. A personnel locator is available online from [www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu) and click on People Finder.

**Catalog** – The 2006-2008 *Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog* is a must-have. In a mere 592 pages it provides the full texts of all the policies that are presented here in much-condensed versions. It also describes all programs, campus services, courses of study and has helpful appendices. Your department should provide you a copy.

**Census Day** – Census Day is the day the CSU does a headcount of all the enrolled students. CSUN gets its funds, in fact all the campuses get their budget allocations, from the CSU, according to their census headcounts, which are based on Fulltime Equivalent Students (FTEs).

**Center for Innovative & Engaged Learning Opportunities (CIELO)** – Located in Sierra Hall 422-443, CIELO supports a variety of activities to help student and faculty share knowledge skills and values. CIELO includes: The Academic First Year Experience Program, Community Service-Learning, Faculty Development, New Faculty programs and Online Instruction. Learn more about them at [www.csun.edu/~cielo](http://www.csun.edu/~cielo).

**CSU** – The 23-campus California State University system. It has campuses throughout California from Humboldt to San Diego State. The Chancellor's Office is often referred to as the CO.

**Daily Sundial** – The campus newspaper. Read it everyday to find out what's going on, and what's on the minds of our students. Kiosks are located throughout campus.

**Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP)** - It's way too early to talk about this one, but if you're really into long-term planning, it's nice to know that way off in the horizon, FERP may provide a transition from full-time teaching to full-time retirement. Under the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) FERP allows a faculty member to receive his/her retirement income plus receive one-half of a year's salary for teaching one semester each year or half-time both semesters each year. The program allows a faculty member to work a maximum of ninety (90) days per year (or 50% of the faculty member's regular timebase in the year preceding retirement) while receiving full retirement income from the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS).

**Faculty Senate** – CSUN operates under a philosophy of shared governance summed up in the following quote, "Collegial governance assigns primary responsibility to the faculty for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the Board of Trustees." (CSU Board of Trustees, 1985). Senate members and officers are elected every year and meetings are held on the first Thursday afternoon of each month. The Faculty Senate has eight standing committees that you might want to explore as they may provide opportunities for you to influence policy and procedure in your area of interest: Academic Technology, Extended Learning, Educational Equity, Educational Policies (EPC), Educational Resources (ERC), Graduate Studies, Library, Personnel Planning and Review (PP&R) and Research and Grants.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** – FERPA gives students certain rights concerning their educational records, defined as any records containing information in which a student is identifiable. The Act basically forbids any faculty member from disclosing anything about a student without the consent of the student. There are exceptions, including University employees with legitimate needs to know. More and more, parents are accompanying their college students to faculty office hours and meetings. Be sure you do not discuss anything with them until you obtain a Verbal Release form signed by the student. This form should be available in your department office. For more information on FERPA, contact Terry Piper, Vice President for

Student Affairs at (818) 677-2391 or visit the website at:  
<http://www.csun.edu/anr/soc/legalnotices.html>

**Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTES)** – The basis of funding from the CSU to the campuses. One FTE is equal to 15 course units; so the FTE is always less than the number of students who are actually here, since they don't all take 15 units.

**Full-Time Equivalent Faculty (FTEF)** – This unit of measure is used for budget and planning purposes. Essentially, one FTEF is equal to one full-time faculty position.

**General Education (GE)** – All undergraduate students must take a total of 48 units in General Education. These units are designed to give students a broad background in disciplines at the University level in order for them to appreciate the breadth of human knowledge and the responsibilities of concerned and engaged citizens of the world. GE requires 12 units of basic subjects, 29 units of subject exploration in Natural Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Lifelong Learning, Comparative Cultural Studies/Gender, Race, Class and Ethnicity Studies and Foreign Languages and 6 units of U.S. History and Government. Nine of these 48 units must be in upper division courses.

**Permission Numbers** - SOLAR randomly generates permission numbers and provides you about 10 of them with your class roster. You should give students these numbers as you learn you have space available in class. These numbers are the students' only authority to add classes. Like credit cards, they are valuable. Lost or stolen permission numbers can be used by anyone who has access to SOLAR. Protect your permission numbers by concealing them under an Invisibility Cloak (oops, too much Harry Potter this summer). Kidding.

**Personnel Action File (PAF)**, - Your official personnel file maintained by the University.

**Personnel Information File (PIF)** - Your record of professional information that you compile and maintain for evaluation purposes. In order to keep this up to date, keep a personal file where you can keep notifications of grants, awards, publications or notices of acceptance of publications and copies of most recent course syllabuses. For more information, consult the Personnel Policies and Review Committee guidelines published each year.

**PeopleSoft**- The University's Information Management System (software program) used to manage most employee, student and financial information.

**Portal** – CSUN's web central is accessed from our homepage [www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu). It links you to just about everything you need including class rosters, grade rosters, forms, information about benefits, calendars of events and beyond. Learning to navigate the portal should be a priority and there is a handy tutorial to help that you can find at [www.csun.edu/itr/solar](http://www.csun.edu/itr/solar).

**Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP)** – Personnel actions for tenure-track faculty members are guided by a set of policies detailed in Section 600 of the *Academic Personnel Policies*

*and Procedures Manual*. Your department chair will give you a copy and you should not hesitate to review it as well as departmental and college personnel procedures. For clarification, be sure to ask questions and attend workshops to help you understand policies, contracts, file requirements and other rules and regulations. When you go up for retention review at the during your second year of tenure track, you will have a Personnel Action File (PAF), which is the official personnel file and a Personnel Information File (PIF), which is a record of professional information that you compile and maintain for evaluation purposes.

***Schedule of Classes*** – Both online and in print versions, the *Schedule of Classes* is created each semester to describe pertinent policies, registration and enrollment procedures, financial information, testing information, calendars, worksheets, final exam schedules, parking information, public safety contacts and updated academic policies and requirements that have occurred since the Catalog was last published. Its primary purpose is a listing of all courses and sections being offered in that semester.

**SOLAR** - SOLAR is described as the University's online one-stop shop to view and manage your academic, financial and personal information. By now you should have a login code and a password. Spend some time learning to navigate and don't hesitate to ask an experienced SOLAR system user for help. The *SOLAR Services for Faculty Quick Guide* provides step-by-step instructions about how to use grading-related SOLAR Services for Faculty. It is available on the Documentation page at [www.csun.edu/itr/solar](http://www.csun.edu/itr/solar) . It will be fine once you get used to it!

**Standardized Breaks** – You are required to provide 10-minute breaks at predetermined times if you are teaching a lecture classes that meet for two hours or more. Two-hour classes require 10 minute breaks during the first and second hour. For courses that last 2 ½ or 3 hours, you have the option of giving one 15-minutes break during the middle of the class or two breaks of 10 minutes each. Courses longer than 3 hours must provide 10 minutes for each class hour. Use your best judgment on scheduling breaks for laboratory or classes requiring independent work. Also consult your department chair for additional department policy.

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**, which are written and then assessed, are part of a master plan through which faculty decide what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they complete the major. Each course must have SLO's that match department and College SLOs.

**WASC** – CSUN is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The University is beginning work on its next WASC accreditation. that will culminate in 2010. WASC reaccreditation calls for campuses to focus on its mechanisms for insuring appropriate student achievement and for enhancing educational effectiveness. One of WASC's aims is to foster the development of "Cultures of Evidence" on individual campuses. In the future, department chairs or administrators may be asking you to carry out and/or assess certain activities for the current reaccreditation cycle. In 2000, at out last reaccreditation, CSUN was applauded "as a model to other public urban institutions of higher education who have the mission of establishing a learning-centered institution." We are confident you will share in the many rewards that come while pursuing this mission.