



CALIFORNIA
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Faculty Senate Office

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Recommending the adoption of Cal-GETC solely as a legislatively mandated successor to IGETC

RESOLVED, that the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) Faculty recommend the adoption of the Cal-GETC framework as a successor transfer pathway to IGETC pursuant to AB928; and be it

RESOLVED, that the CSUN Faculty recognize that AB928 is silent on CSU first-time freshmen GE/campus GE (CSU GE) and oppose any conflation of discretionary CSU GE changes with the requirements of the law; and be it

RESOLVED, that the CSUN Faculty recognize that AB928 intentionally requires the creation of a singular pathway to facilitate access to both the CSU and UC rather than an inflexible single pathway which would have the opposite effect; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the CSUN Faculty distribute this resolution to:

Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU)

Council of CSU Senate Chairs

President Erika Beck

Provost Mary-Beth Walker

Interim Chancellor Jolene Koester

Executive Vice Chancellor Sylvia Alva

Rationale

Assembly Bill 928¹ requires a straightforward set of lower division GE courses which allow a community college student the option of transferring to either the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU). The law tasks the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS)² with approving such a pathway by May 2023.

¹ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB928

² The executive committees of the systemwide academic senates of the University of California, California Community Colleges (CCC), and the California State University comprise ICAS.

Should the faculty be unable to agree, the law requires the systems' administrations to develop the pathway.

Basis of approval

The proposed Cal-GETC pathway is the best ICAS could negotiate given legislatively imposed constraints and under threat of faculty losing control of the curriculum. It is not a curriculum based in our students' educational needs. It was not created with attention to the diversity of our students or geographical variations in their needs. Though it is a subset of the current transfer curriculum and thus provides some of what our students need. Therefore, we do not recommend approval on the basis of Cal-GETC's curricular merits. We recommend approval under duress, as the least bad option.

Opposition to grafting Chancellor's Office desires onto legislative requirements

The law explicitly only applies to GE requirements for transfer students. As it states,

This bill would express findings and declarations of the Legislature related to the process of transfer from community colleges to 4-year postsecondary educational institutions. The bill would express the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation related to a student-centered transfer process. [AB928; Legislative Counsel's Digest]

Unfortunately, in a webinar on March 8th 2022 and in subsequent communications, Chancellor's Office staff have attempted to graft a desire to reduce and standardize CSU GE onto what AB928 requires by misreading the law as mandating that CSU GE be replaced with the negotiated pathway.

Extending the law beyond transfer GE requires an impressive blindness to the plain language of the law. It also requires swallowing some alarming implications. One must accept, *inter alia*, that the legislature silently intended to make CSU GE the joint responsibility of the UC, CSU, and CCC (without similarly usurping UC GE). After all, ICAS controls Cal-GETC and may revise it at any time.

Fortunately, Interim Chancellor Koester and Executive Vice Chancellor Alva have recently affirmed to the ASCSU Executive Committee that the law does not require changes to CSU GE and agreed that any such changes must involve a completely separate shared governance process which is not underway.³

³ EVC Alva memorialized this in a letter to ASCSU Chair Steffel on October 7th 2022.

We are only able to recommend approval of Cal-GETC given this assurance. Our recommendation thus must not to be construed as in any way supporting further changes to CSU GE.

Singular pathway versus single pathway

AB928 attempts to create a clear and attractive pathway for students who may wish to transfer to either the UC or the CSU without the choice of system affecting which courses they must take. It does not require such pathway to be the only way transfer students may satisfy lower division GE. However, there are two ways the law may be misunderstood as attempting to reduce access by removing other transfer pathways.

First, nearly every description of the pathway describes it as ‘singular’. For example, [ICAS] shall establish *a singular* lower division general education pathway that meets the academic requirements necessary for transfer admission to both the California State University and University of California. [66749.8(b)(1); emphasis added]

It is possible that the law’s authors were unintentionally demonstrating the need for expanded general education by writing ‘singular’ (remarkable or exceptionally good/clear/attractive) when they meant ‘single’ (exactly one).

But the intent of the law shows that ‘singular’ is apposite. There are presently several ways of transferring to the UC and CSU; discarding these in favor of a single inflexible pathway is anathema to access. In the UC alone there are at least 18 different GE patterns which the UC has no intention of aligning with Cal-GETC. Requiring a single pathway would substantially complicate transfer to the UC, reduce access and, in some cases, increase the number of units a transferring student must take. Similarly, under current CSU policy, a student who has met GE lower division requirements at a UC is presently able to transfer to the CSU without being required to take additional lower division GE.⁴ A single pathway would discard this option and increase the units required. This again clearly violates the law’s intent.⁵

Second, when some aspect of the pathway is in fact intended to be unique, the law’s language is clear but subject to a different misreading. For example, it provides that the singular lower division pathway...shall be the only lower division general education pathway used to determine academic eligibility and sufficient

⁴ See EO1100 Article 2(1)(c) <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/8919100/latest/#autoid-n2drk>

⁵ For example, “The singular lower division general education pathway established pursuant to paragraph (1) shall not lengthen the time-to-degree” [66749.8(b)(3)]

academic preparation for transfer admission to the [CSU] and the [UC].
[66749.8(b)(2)]

If the reader stops after 'transfer admission', this and similar provisions would mandate that there be no more than one pathway.

However, if the reader continues to the end of the sentence, the 'and' between CSU and UC is important. The sentence is saying that there will be one pathway which has the distinctive feature of making one eligible for both the CSU and UC. This means, *inter alia*, that Cal-GETC will be the successor to IGETC. Obviously, if one has forgotten what they learned in GE critical reasoning courses and replaces 'CSU and UC' with 'CSU or UC', the sentence would again be mandating exactly one pathway. But that is not what the law says; conjunction is not disjunction.

In short, we understand the law as requiring a pathway that is single in making one eligible for both CSU and UC which does not rule out other paths to transfer into the CSU or UC, and singular in its navigability and attractiveness to students, especially those wishing to pursue Associate Degrees for Transfer. This reading respects both the intent to increase access and the plain language of the law when the reader does not truncate its provisions.