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April 26, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

There is a great deal of controversy around the Intersegmental Curriculum Workgroup (ICW) decision to accept the CSU Chancellor's Office recommendation of adding a competency in intermediate algebra to nine Transfer Model Curricula (TMCs). Many of you have received email messages from the California Acceleration Project on this issue. The purpose of this message is to explain how such a decision was reached over the last three years and the ramifications of that decision.

The CSU General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) of the CSU Chancellor's Office originally permitted seven colleges, on a pilot basis, a waiver of the intermediate algebra prerequisite to statistics courses through a STATWAY model to study the impact of such a decision to meet general education requirements in CSU-GE-Breadth Area B4. During the November 2015 GEAC meeting, the conclusion of the study was mixed. There was concern expressed that alternative models were in use and the number of tracked students was inconclusively small to determine the success of such a model on upper division completion for the entire CSU system. In addition, there was concern that unconfirmed reports of wholesale prerequisite challenge processes were taking place at some colleges, thus undermining the integrity of the student data. To that end, the pilot waiver was expanded through 2019, the restriction to one model was lifted, and all California Community Colleges were invited to submit courses through the regular general education review processes. GEAC's intent was to collect a robust data set and to ensure transfer student course taking behavior was accurately reflected in the review process and track those students through baccalaureate completion. Please note: GEAC only makes recommendations regarding CSU-GE-Breadth requirements of transfer students. A summary of the 2015-16 GEAC notes can be found at:

<http://www.calstate.edu/app/GEAC/documents/2016/GEAC-annual-report-2015-16.pdf>.

At the same time, the CSU Academic Senate called together a Quantitative Reasoning Task Force with intersegmental and external representation to discuss the CSU expectation of quantitative reasoning skills for incoming first year students, transfer students, and baccalaureate earning students. This report provides a comprehensive overview of quantitative reasoning goals for higher education and a roadmap for implementation that involves high schools, community colleges, and the CSU colleges. The report acknowledges that intermediate algebra skills may not be necessary to complete general education statistics courses but some intermediate algebra skills are required for baccalaureate level success and competency expectations. The full report, unanimously adopted by the CSU Academic Senate, is available at <http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Records/Reports/documents/QRTF.FinalReport.KSSF.pdf>.

Again, at the same time (Fall 2015), the C-ID curricular 5-year review of mathematics descriptors was due. Because of the two factors listed above (GEAC's recommendation to California Community Colleges and the CSU Quantitative Reasoning report), the math faculty discipline review group (FDRG), which included both CSU and CCC faculty, reviewed and evaluated the MATH 110 C-ID descriptor prerequisite, intermediate algebra. There was intense dialog regarding the prerequisite for this descriptor and three iterations of surveys to determine the most appropriate prerequisite were sent to the math faculty at

April 26, 2017
Page Two

both the CSU and CCC. Eventually, in December 2016, the prerequisite for the descriptor was changed after approval by the FDRG. Once in place, the revised prerequisite was communicated widely to the field. The prerequisite for MATH 110 is:

Intermediate Algebra or

Any CSU accepted statistics pathway curriculum prerequisite.

The entire MATH110, Introduction to Statistics, descriptor can be found at https://c-id.net/descriptor_details.html?descriptor=365&submitbtn=Go .

At the October 2016 ICW meeting, the CSU Academic Senate and Chancellor's Office had serious concerns about the use of mathematics courses lacking an intermediate algebra prerequisite being used for both quantitative reasoning general education requirements as well as discipline major preparation. After the release of the C-ID Math 110 descriptor, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office received memos from the CSU Chancellor's Office asking for a delay in the implementation of the new descriptor. In January 2017, the CSU General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) also expressed concern and issued a separate memo to the Community College Chancellor's Office and the ASCCC requesting us to desist from using the new C-ID descriptor.

In February 2017, the Academic Senate leadership met with the CSU Academic Senate leadership and CSU GEAC members to discuss the memo issued by the CSU GEAC committee. In March 2017, the C-ID Advisory Committee met and heard from the CSU Chancellor's Office and CSU Academic Senate regarding their concerns about the mixing of general education quantitative reasoning requirements and major preparation requirements. In response, the C-ID Advisory Committee made a recommendation to the Intersegmental Curriculum Workgroup (ICW) to consult with the discipline faculty with affected Transfer Model Curricula (TMCs) to make a determination regarding the necessity intermediate algebra skills for success in the major. The C-ID workgroup surveyed FDRGs where MATH 110 was used for both major's preparation and general education and found that two disciplines – Business Administration and Economics - were concerned about students' ability to succeed upon transfer without intermediate algebra.

At the end of March 2017, ICW convened and again, the CSU Chancellor's Office and CSU Academic Senate expressed that their concern was so great about the MATH 110 descriptor that they would need to re-evaluate determinations of "similar" in affected disciplines. The proposal from the C-ID Advisory Committee to add a competency to two affected disciplines was discussed and the CSU representatives agreed that adding a competency was a reasonable compromise and then produced a list of eight affected TMCs. Ultimately, nine TMCs were identified by ICW:

Administration of Justice
Agriculture Animal Sciences
Agriculture Business
Agriculture Plant Science
Business Administration

Economics
Kinesiology
Psychology and
Public Health Science.

April 26, 2017
Page Three

ICW accepted the recommendation to include the intermediate algebra competency on the nine TMCs and drafted the following language to be added:

As a requirement of this TMC, students earning an ADT in _____ are required to demonstrate competency in mathematics at the level of intermediate algebra in addition to the coursework listed above. Students may demonstrate this competency through the college's assessment for placement process or through the completion of an intermediate algebra mathematics course. The inclusion of this requirement does not change the unit totals for the ADT as intermediate algebra is a pre-transfer level skill.

By the inclusion of a competency in the TMC, students and colleges can use assessment instruments or specialized courses that cover the content of intermediate algebra without specifying the class. This competency is a component of major preparation, not general education, and is consistent with the K-12 Common Core standards and CSU Quantitative Reasoning Task Force Recommendations.

We hope that gives you a clearer picture of what has transpired over the past three years. It is important to understand the intersegmental consultative processes in which the ASCCC has engaged to best serve our students. We anticipate that, as further implementation of CSU's Quantitative Reasoning report occurs, additional changes may be required. We will continue to provide updates as we work with our intersegmental partners to ensure access and opportunity to transfer institutions.



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