

Future Planning

Instruction as a Priority

M/S/U (Executive Committee)

The Academic Senate adopts the following position paper entitled
“Instruction as a Priority”

The state budget for 1982-83 required that the California Community Colleges reduce their apportionment by thirty million dollars by removing a vocational, recreational, and personal development courses, as defined by the Board of Governors, from their state-funded course offerings. Therefore, on July 16, 1982, the Board of Governors approved a list of courses to be deleted from the credit and non-credit program of the community colleges. The Chancellor was under a short notice legislative mandate to report to the Legislature by August 15, 1982.

Due to the speed with which the Legislature required the Chancellor and the Board of Governors to carry out its mandate, discussion of the courses to be eliminated was necessarily limited. No clearly stated educational philosophy was developed to guide the selection of courses for deletion.

As a result, decisions were made which in some cases, were educationally unsound and, in others, were biased. For example, the use of course titles, since they vary from one college to another, is not an effective way to identify like courses. A course titled “Conversational Spanish” at one college may be similar in content to the “Introduction to Spanish” at another. Further, the final list deleted many lifelong physical fitness courses, particularly those designed for women, while support for athletics, really an extracurricular activity, continued. The inclusion of some courses, such as real estate, made it difficult to derive even an implicit underlying educational philosophy from the list. Clearly, educationally sound criteria and process must be developed if further curriculum review, especially cutting back, is to take place.

Instruction is the first priority of the community colleges. It is, in fact, the only reason for their existence. Instruction has now taken a thirty million dollar cut. The Academic Senate recommends to the Legislature, CPEC, and the Board of Governors that, if further economics become necessary, alternatives to cutting the instructional program be given first priority. For example, the cost of extra-curricular activities and administrative services should be examined prior to additional cuts in the instructional program.