

September 19, 2012

To: Academic Affairs Faculty and Staff
From: Donald J. Para, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Subject: Curriculum guidelines in context

Dear Colleagues:

At a recent meeting of the Academic Senate, there was discussion of guidelines for curriculum process. I am writing to provide some context for discussion.

We are facing an unprecedented fiscal shortfall that has created workload challenges for us all. Curriculum guidelines are intended to help us adapt to challenging circumstances while keeping our focus on our mission: graduating students with highly valued degrees

I want to offer three points: first, our complex curriculum contributes to delays in graduation. Second, workload associated with curricular revision is burdensome. Third, the content of the curriculum is and will remain under the supervision of the faculty, but the size of the curriculum is constrained by several factors including national norms, Title 5 system guidelines, campus needs, and accreditation. I will conclude with a note about anticipated policy directives from the Chancellor's Office.

Student Success and Curricular Complexity

We may think of our degree programs as comprised of 120 units that can be completed in four or five full-time study. In reality, only 14% of CSULB freshmen graduate within four years. On average, CSULB students who began as freshmen take over

from course sequencing or scheduling that force students to add units to achieve full status for financial aid eligibility

Curricular complexity and high unit major requirements are barriers to timely degree completion. The

progress in this regard in recent years. We expect that campuses ~~will be~~ will be able to work with departments to reduce units in the majors. Once these ~~system~~ system guidelines have been promulgated, I anticipate issuing revised guidelines for the curriculum process.