

California State University Dominguez Hills
Academic Senate Resolution
Resolution in Support for the Title 5 “American Institutions” Graduation Requirement for
all Undergraduate Degrees at CSU Dominguez Hills and a Commitment to an Equal and
Uniform Educational Experience for both Transfer and Native Students
EPC 11-10
MSP 10/19/11

- Resolved That the Academic Senate of California State University Dominguez (ASCSUDH) Hills reaffirm its commitment to an equal and uniform undergraduate educational experience by requiring that all transfer students as well as native students meet the American Institutions (AI) requirement through course work or comprehensive examination as established by Title 5, Section 40404;¹ and be it further
- Resolved That the ASCSUDH oppose the approval of any waiver requests of the AI requirement for any undergraduate degree program; and be it further
- Resolved That the ASCSUDH instruct college curriculum committees and UCC to uphold this academic and civic standard and reject all waiver requests of the AI requirements for any undergraduate degree program; and be it further
- Resolved That copies of this resolution be distributed to the Chancellor, the Board of Trustees, the ASCSU, all campus senates, the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, and the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges, the General Education Committee at CSUDH and the Associated Students Incorporated at CSUDH.

¹ California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 40404, CSU “American Institutions” Graduation Requirement.

Rationale:

At its inaugural meeting on June 19, 1961, the Board of Trustees of the California State Colleges (renamed the California State University in 1972) voted to maintain a system-wide graduation requirement in American Institutions (AI) that had been mandated under state law for its predecessor institution, the California State Teachers Colleges. This commitment to American Institutions was codified in Article 5, Section 40404 of the Administrative Code of the CSU system (Title 5) which states that "the purpose" of the American Institutions requirements "is to ensure that students acquire knowledge and skills that will help them to comprehend the workings of American democracy and of the society in which they live to enable them to contribute to that society as responsible and constructive citizens." Title 5 further required that "each campus shall provide for comprehensive study of American history and American government including the historical development of American institutions and ideals, the Constitution of the United States and the operation of representative democratic government under that Constitution, and the processes of state and local government."

Additionally, the CSU Board of Trustees assigns to faculty the primary responsibility for the educational functions of the institution in accordance with basic policy as determined by the Board of Trustees. This includes admission and degree requirements, the curriculum and methods of teaching, academic and professional standards, and the conduct of creative and scholarly activities.²

In 2010, the California legislature passed SB 1440 (the "Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act"), a measure designed to streamline transfers from the California Community Colleges to the CSU. SB 1440 did not require the CCC system to fulfill the CSU American Institutions requirements as a condition for transfer to the CSU and the CCC system has since refused to include these requirements in newly created transfer AA degrees. SB 1440 further specifies that, except for high unit majors, a student who completes the AA degree for transfer must be able to complete his or her baccalaureate degree by taking no more than 60 units at the CSU campus.

For reasons not fully explained, instead of defending the interests of the CSU system and the integrity of its baccalaureate degrees the CSU Chancellor's Office proposed a revision of Title 5 to allow for the waiver of the American Institutions requirements for entire transfer programs "in order to facilitate the implementation of SB 1440."

² Report of the Board of Trustees' Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, Collegiality, and Responsibility in the California State University, 1985.

http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/System_Strategic_Planning/docs/Rpt2BOT-CollegialityResponsibilityv.pdf

Although CSU faculty first learned of the AI waiver proposal in mid-April 2011, leaving very little time for discussion on campuses, thirteen CSU senates as well as the statewide Academic Senate passed resolutions either objecting to the waiver or requesting that a final decision by the Board of Trustees be deferred until the level of consultation required by the practice of shared governance occurred. The CSUDH Academic Senate was one of these thirteen campuses, passing a resolution that stated that all graduates of the California State Universities, including CSU Dominguez Hills, shall possess “knowledge and skills that will help them to comprehend the workings of American democracy and of the society in which they live to enable them to contribute to that society as responsible and constructive citizens;”³

Additionally, faculty members from several CSU campuses mobilized to form the *American Institutions Working Group*, and five chairs of history and political science presented arguments against the AI waiver proposal at the May 10, 2011 Board of Trustees meeting. Despite these efforts, and the formal opposition of over 500 CSU and CCC faculty, the Board approved the proposal to permit consideration of waiver requests of the American Institutions as a graduation requirement for the following groups of students: 1) students transferring under baccalaureate degree major programs mandated by SB 1440 (Padilla) that are articulated with California Community College associate degree programs and limited by law to 120 total semester units, 2) high unit “professional degrees,” **(i.e., for programs that are formally exempted from SB 1440)** and 3) for individual cases of “demonstrable hardship.” As a result of the Board’s action, each CSU campus now has the authority to decide whether or not to recommend AI waivers to the Chancellor's Office using “appropriate campus authorities”.

³ Resolution *Reaffirming Commitment to CSU Graduation Requirement (American Institutions) and Urging the Board of Trustees to Defer Consideration of Waivers to the Existing Title 5 Requirement*, (CSUDH Academic Senate, FAC 11-07, 2011).