

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Transfer Conference for Counselors



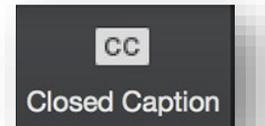
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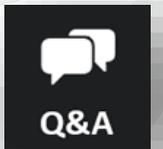


Audio/Visual

You will be muted with your camera's off during the entire webinar. To ask a question please utilize the Q&A feature.

Q&A

Click the Q&A tab to enter questions for the presenters and read their responses. We will do our best to answer as many questions before the end of this session. Questions we are unable to answer will be addressed post-event in the coming weeks. Some questions will be answered live at the end of this session.





All of today's presentations will be recorded and accessible on the CCC Transfer Counselor [Website](#) under "*Transfer Counselor Conference*" tab.

Equity Issues Centered Around Grade Alleviation Practices and Policies

FACCC Counselor Committee

Transfer Conference for Counselors
March 27th, 2024

Presenters



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FACCC Counselor Committee Members also include:

Transfer Conference for Counselors
Carlos Maruri, Compton College
Michele Hittleman, Mission College
Yvonne Portillo, Ed.D., Golden West College

Agenda Overview

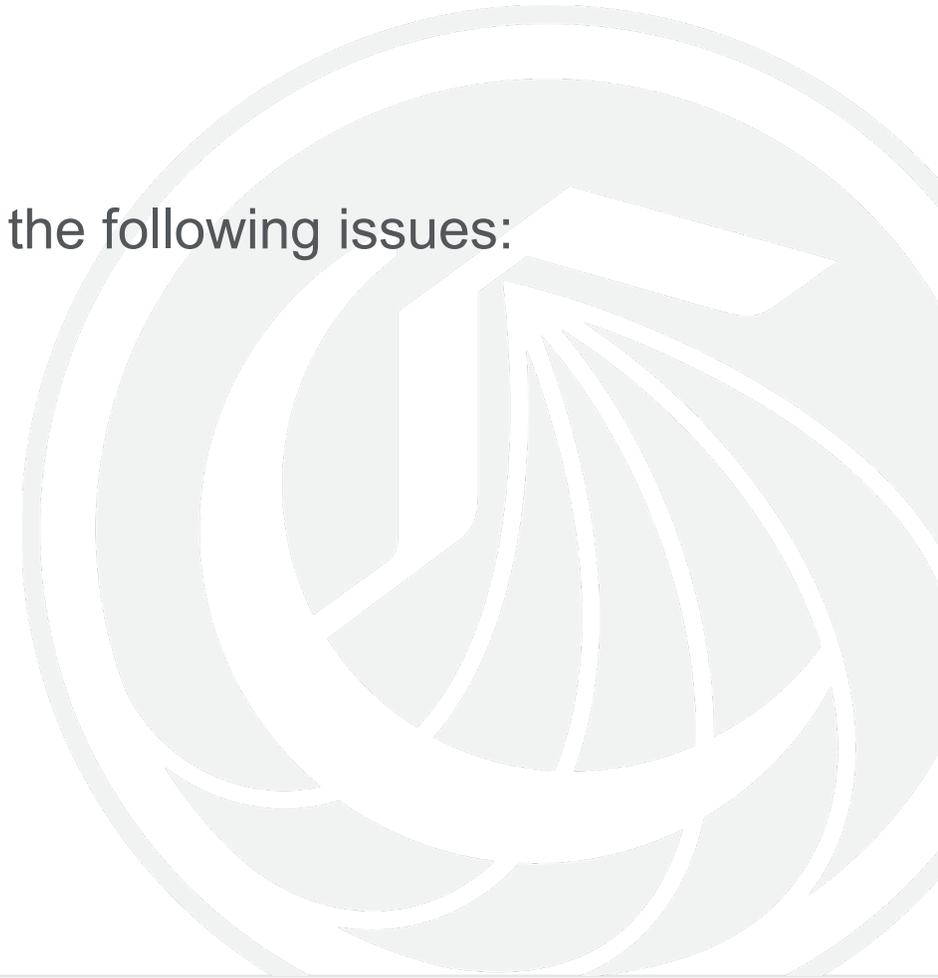
- The Problem
- Unpacking Grading Policies
 - Grade Change
 - EW
 - P/NP
 - Academic Renewal
- Implications and Unintended Consequences
- Call to Action
 - Local/College-level Advocacy
 - Statewide Academic Renewal Policy
- Q&A



The Problem (Equity Issue)

Grading and grade reporting triggers an equity issue due to the following issues:

- Academic/Progress Good Standing
- AA/AS Degree Attainment
- Transfer Ramifications
- Financial Aid Implications
- Inconsistent and inequitable implementation



Unpacking Grading Policies

- Grade Change
- Excused Withdrawal (EW)
- Pass/ No Pass (P/NP)
- Academic Renewal (RWO)



Grade Change (Grade Challenge, Grade Grievance)

- Typically outlined in BP & AR 4231 at your college
- Pursuant to Education Code 76232 & 76224
- Students are encouraged to begin the process informally (i.e. discussion with prof.)
- Instructor initiated grade change vs. Student initiated grade change
- Time limit: local decision (6mo - 3yrs)

Sample AR 4231 - Grade Changes/Challenges

Any student who believes he or she has a grade grievance shall make a reasonable effort to resolve the matter through direct communication between the student and instructor. If the student's concern cannot be resolved, this procedure outlines the course grade challenge process. The course grade challenge process is not a legal proceeding. An observer may attend meetings as support but may not act as legal counsel. When challenging a grade assigned by an instructor, the burden of proof is on the student to provide evidence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence.

Mistake: an unintentional act, omission or error by the instructor or the college, such as an error in calculation or data entry.

Incompetence: a lack of ability, legal qualification, or fitness to conduct and fairly grade a course, which is usually pervasive and not restricted to one student or one incident.

Bad Faith: assigning a course grade that is not based on the grading system found in the course syllabus, changing the grading criteria to the detriment of student(s) without prior, documented notification, or not applying uniform grading criteria to all students within the same course.

Fraud: deliberately assigning a course grade in order to secure unfair or unlawful gain, material or otherwise.

Step 1: Discuss the Issue with the Instructor

Step 2: Student Files a Grade Challenge Form

Step 3: Instructor's Formal Response to Grade Challenge

Step 4: Meeting with Dean/Director, Student and Instructor

Step 5: Appeal to a Course Grade Challenge Committee

Grade Change Can Benefit Students Who:

- Needs to amend their transcripts
- Challenge a grade issued by an instructor
 - Never attended a day of class but earned a grade/notation
- Believe a mistake was made
 - Incompetence, Bad Faith, Fraud other reasons
 - Burden of proof is on student

Grade Change: Implications and Unintended Consequences

- Financial Aid Implications
 - Going from letter grade to W/EW is the problem; no issue going from grade to grade
 - Students may have to return aid
 - audit findings
 - 6 months seems short; does fall in line with financial aid recommendations
- Look into delineating process: one process for grade to grade change and another for grade to W/EW
- Implementation not consistent across college's / system

Excused Withdrawal (EW)

Title V Section 55024 Definition

Excused Withdrawal (EW) occurs when a student is permitted to withdraw from a course(s) due to specific events beyond the control of the student affecting his or her ability to complete a course(s)

Upon verification of these conditions and consistent with the district's required documentation substantiating the condition, an excused withdrawal symbol may be assigned at any time after the period established by the governing board during which no notation is made for withdrawals. The withdrawal symbol so assigned shall be an "EW."

CCCO FAQ - <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/curriculum/ew-pass-no-pass-faq-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=E17CD1526DD83D672CDF04B80AA772C0853066C5>

Excused Withdrawal (EW)

Reasons may include (per Title V): Post COVID no documentation required

- A job transfer outside the geographical region.
 - An illness in the family where the student is the primary caregiver.
 - When the student who is incarcerated in a California state prison or county jail is released from custody or involuntarily transferred before the end of the term.
 - When the student is the subject of an immigration action.
- Or
- Other extenuating circumstances making course completion impracticable.

Excused Withdrawal (EW)

Examples of circumstances that **will not qualify** for an EW include:

- Disliking the class format
- Disliking the instructor
- Disagreeing with the grade received
- Chronic conditions without a significant change of circumstances
- Account holds or computer glitches – If a student is unable to access their account before the deadline to drop without a W, the student is responsible for contacting the Admissions and Records Office for assistance.

Excused Withdrawal (EW) Equity Benefits

- Excused withdrawal shall not be counted in progress probation and dismissal calculations.
- Excused withdrawal shall not be counted toward the permitted number of withdrawals or counted as an enrollment attempt.
- In no case may an excused withdrawal result in a student being assigned an “FW” (Failed Withdrawal) grade.
- Retention Strategy (no harm toward GPA, Fin Aid, etc.)

Excused Withdrawal (EW) Equity Benefits

- EW notations did not count toward SAP calculations during March 20,2020 through May 11, 2023 when the National emergency ended.
- Starting Spring 2023 Financial aid included EW grades in SAP again.
- Most colleges returned to pre-Covid policies of EW counting towards SAP.
- Title 5 is silent on SAP calculations

Inconsistent Implementation

- Some colleges consider individual circumstances (SFCC)
- An EW at Cypress College does not count towards SAP calculations
- Some campuses still require documentation for EW

Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Grade Option

§ 55022. Pass-No Pass Grading Option (Amended Oct. 2022)

(a) The policy adopted pursuant to section 55021 may permit courses to be offered in either or both of the following categories and, if so, shall require that each college catalog specify the category into which each course falls:

(1) Courses in which all students are evaluated on a “pass-no pass” basis.

(2) Courses in which each student may elect until the last day of instruction, as established and published by the districts, whether the basis of evaluation is to be “pass-no pass” or a letter grade.

(b) All units of credit earned on a “pass-no pass” or “credit-no credit” basis in accredited California institutions of higher education or equivalent out-of-state institutions shall be counted in satisfaction of community college curriculum requirements.

(c) Units earned on a “pass-no pass” basis shall not be used to calculate grade point averages. However, units attempted for which a student receives a “NP” designation (as defined in section 55023) shall be considered in probation and dismissal procedures.

Pass/No Pass (P/NP) Grade Option

- Student **may choose** P/NP Option instead of Letter Grade
- Pass (P) is equivalent to a C grade or better
- Units taken with P/NP Option do not affect student GPA, but NP units still considered in Progress Probation/Progress Dismissal
- Once P/NP option is selected, it cannot be reversed
- Available to all CCC students for courses identified in catalog to have P/NP Option
- Since Fall 2022 for all CCCs, deadline to request P/NP has been moved to last day of instruction prior to final exam
- **Having P/NP request deadline so late in term makes P/NP option relevant for students struggling in courses after deadline to Withdraw (W)**

Pass/No Pass Option Can Benefit Students Who:

- believe they will receive a grade in a course lower than the grades they typically receive, and **don't want their GPA to be negatively impacted**
- **feel anxious** about succeeding in a particular course
- are taking a **course for personal growth**, and don't want to worry about their grade
- **are at risk of academic probation/dismissal** status, and taking a course they find challenging
- are **unclear of their grade status** in a course where the instructor provides insufficient, late, or no details on graded assignments
- are confused by an instructor's **vague or inconsistent grading standards**

Inconsistent, sometimes irrational application of P/NP Option to courses across CCCs

- At most CCCs, **not all courses have P/NP option**
 - Lack of clarity to which courses are available P/NP
 - How is option communicated to students (catalog, admissions website, email)?
- Some courses are *Grade Only* to protect students in CTE programs because certification or licensure require letter grades
- Some courses are *Grade Only* to protect students wanting transfer to programs that require letter grades for major prep admission requirements
- Other times, courses are *Grade Only* for **no obvious reason**
- Even colleges within the same district may have randomly different policies on which types of courses are offered P/NP

P/NP Transfer Policies

- CSU system allows P (C-or better) grade notations to meet any or all GE courses including the Golden 4 minimum admission requirements
- UC system allows P (C or better) grade notations to meet 7-course pattern minimum admission requirements
- The pandemic allowed a temporary window of time to take major prep courses P/NP that are screened for by universities
- Myth/Rumor: CSU/UC campuses no longer allow P grade notations for any courses post height of pandemic

P/NP and Transfer Credit

If the Golden Four require a minimum C- grade to satisfy CSU GE requirements, can students take those courses for Credit/No Credit?

GE policy does not prohibit students from satisfying the Golden Four requirements with a Credit grade as long as the “CR” represents a letter grade of C- or better. However, we recommend that students take these courses for a letter grade as some majors may require letter grades in all required courses.

From:

[FAQ on the Revisions to EO 1100 Revised August 23, 2017
CSU General Education Breadth](#)

Academic Renewal (RWO)

(a) The governing board of each community college district shall adopt and publish policies and procedures pertaining to **the alleviation of previously recorded substandard academic work, as defined in section 55000, which is not reflective of a student's demonstrated ability**. Such policies and procedures shall include a clear statement of the educational principles upon which they are based, and shall be referred to as academic renewal procedures.

(c) The policies and procedures adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall address all of the following:

- (1) The **maximum amount** of coursework that may be alleviated;
- (2) The **amount of academic work to have been completed** at a satisfactory level (minimum 2.00) **subsequent to the coursework to be alleviated**;
- (3) The **length of time** to have elapsed since the coursework to be alleviated was recorded;
- (4) A description of any specific courses and/or categories of **courses that are, for any reason, exempt from consideration** under the alleviation procedures;
- (5) The **procedures to be followed** by students in petitioning for alleviation; and
- (6) The **personnel responsible** for implementing the procedures.

Academic Renewal

Why is it beneficial to students?

- GPA Repair
 - Academic standing
 - Financial Aid Eligibility
 - Transfer admission
 - Competitive program admissions criteria - Health Science AA degrees
 - Honors Program eligibility
 - Scholarship eligibility
 - Student Self-Confidence
- Saves time and money for not having to repeat unnecessary courses

Academic Renewal

Inequitable Implementation

Santa Barbara City College

Complete with a after earning substandard grade. Up can be renewed. May be times.

Norco College*

Limited to coursework in two terms (fall, winter, spring, summer), max 24 units alleviated., Completion of at least two semesters and 24 units of college work with a grade point average of 2.0. May only be granted once. (*previous policy, recently updated in 2023)

Mission College

Completion of 12 units with 3.0 cumulative GPA **or** Completion of 24 units with a 2.0 cumulative GPA. A period of 2 (regular) semesters must have elapsed since the substandard work.

Santa Ana College

15 units with a 3.0 GPA or 24 units with a 2.4 GPA. *(No elapsed time required)* May be granted multiple times, max 30 units can be renewed,

Recommendation for Practice

Colleges should review this policy, in consultation with the AR policies of other CCCs and consider the following conditions utilizing an equity lens:

- Max units alleviated (30 units norm)
- Min time elapsed (no time elapsed - two years)
- Units completed after substandard grade(s) (6 units - 24 units)
- Required GPA(s) - (2.0 - 3.0)
- Where units have to be completed (any US regionally accredited college)
- One time petition vs multiple opportunities
- Can petitions be submitted after certificates/degree posted?

At every decision point, need to ask “Why?” (educational principles upon which they are based) & how does this improve college success/completion for all, including students of color and other marginalized populations?

Recommendation for Practice

Consider a **statewide** policy similar to the largest CC district in the state:

Los Angeles CC District Academic Renewal Policy:

- *In order to qualify for academic renewal, the student must have completed a minimum of the equivalent of **12 [consecutive] semester units with a 2.0 GPA** at any United States regionally accredited institution(s) at **any time after the semester** or session of the coursework to be disregarded.*
- ***At least one (1) semester** must have passed since the semester or intersession term when the coursework to be disregarded was completed.*
- *Multiple petitions allowed; up 30 units max.*

CALL TO ACTION

- Local / college-level advocacy
 - Are you approaching these policies from a humanistic lens?
 - Step by Step approach
 - Active participation in academic senate and ed policies committee to advocate for the change
 - Review your college's current policy and propose changes based on more student-centered local colleges' policies
 - Meet with deans at dean's council meetings to discuss, elicit feedback, discuss concerns and address "uninformed" resistance
 - Agendize the newly proposed policy vetted by both dean's council and ed policies committees for a second read and final vote in order to submit for final board approval
- Proposed Legislative Recommendation - Statewide AR Policy/Resolution

Student Impact

Hi Steve,

I doubt that you will remember me, but several years ago, (2008) I returned to SAC to finally complete my education. I had just gone through an unwanted divorce and found myself without any marketable skills or education. I came to you for help, desperate and confused. I knew I wanted to teach, but I had no idea how to make that happen. I had taken classes on and off since 1975, but I wasn't even sure that any of those classes (some were not even in the catalog anymore!) would count for anything. A "late bloomer", I came to you and you helped me develop a plan that would allow me to transfer to Cal State Fullerton. In addition to that, you went over my files and somehow managed to find an AA degree for me out of the mess of classes that were in there. You even cashed in a favor for me with your colleague at Golden West College and had the "F" on my transcripts forgiven! You were so positive and so encouraging at a time when my self confidence was very low. I remember you telling me that I could do it! I have never forgotten that. If not for you and your encouraging words, I don't believe I would be where I am today. If you had not made it possible for me to graduate and experience the incredible feeling of accomplishment (clearly, one of the best days of my life!) I don't think I would have had the educational success that I have experienced. My graduation from SAC was the most memorable days that I will ever experience. It was a catalyst in my educational career! My graduation from Cal State Fullerton didn't even come close in making me feel that I really mattered.

Today, I am an Education Specialist working as a special education teacher in Compton. I love my job and I know I am making a difference. The students that I work with do not have easy lives and many are in foster homes. They have seen and experienced many things that children should not have to experience. My job goes beyond just teaching them how to read and do math, although that is important. In addition to academics, I have to instill in them the confidence that they have what it takes to be successful. I have to believe in them so they will believe in themselves. Just like you did for me.

I am writing this to you to say thank you. Thank you for being there for me and for encouraging me to forge ahead and to never look back. If I can do for them what you did for me , I know that they will have a chance to chase their dreams. I did and for that I want to say thank you very much! I will never forget you. You probably don't even realize that you are touching so many lives....but you are.

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