

**REPORT ON THE STUDY OF NONCREDIT
REPETITION AND MULTIPLE
ENROLLMENTS IN THE SAME COURSE
DURING THE SAME TERM**

6.4

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Presentation: *Morgan Lynn, Executive Vice Chancellor for Programs*
Michelle Pilati, Vice President, Academic Senate and Co-chair of the
Noncredit Repetition Subcommittee
Lori Gaskin, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Student Services, and
Co-chair of the Noncredit Repetition Subcommittee

Issue

This item presents the report and its recommendations on noncredit repetition and multiple enrollments in the same course during the same term. The report serves as the basis for the Board of Governors' consideration of a limitation on noncredit course repetition as specified in title 5 section 58161.7 which states in part, "*It is the intent of the Board of Governors to consider the recommendations of the Chancellor and adopt appropriate limitations on multiple enrollments and repetition of noncredit courses by January 31, 2010.*"

Background

During the broad review of title 5 regulations on curriculum and instruction conducted from 2006-2008, repetition of both credit and noncredit courses was discussed. It was evident that while there were regulations addressing limitations on credit repetition, there were no limitations on repetition of noncredit courses. A major question raised was *Did the absence of limitations on noncredit repetition encourage excessive or inappropriate repetition in noncredit courses?* Initial efforts to answer this question and reach consensus regarding a recommended number of repetitions for noncredit were unsuccessful since insufficient information and data were available at that time.

It was subsequently determined not to establish limitations on noncredit enrollment in the title 5 revisions approved in July 2007 and May 2008, but to study noncredit repetition thoroughly and then make recommendations based on the information gathered and analyzed. As a result, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors (Board) approved section 58161.7 of the

title 5 revisions adopted in May 2008, where the Chancellor is required to report to the Board on repetition and multiple enrollments for noncredit courses.

An 18 member subcommittee/working group of the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum was formed to study the value, role, and cost associated with repetition and multiple enrollments. The subcommittee/working group was comprised of members of the Academic Senate, chief instructional officers, and Chancellor's Office staff from Academic Affairs, Student Services, and Technology, Research and Information Systems, as well as representatives from the Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst Office and other groups.

Analysis

There are 10 noncredit course and program categories identified in title 5 section 58160 that are eligible for state apportionment funding. These categories can be grouped into two broad areas, special populations and subject disciplines. There are four special population categories: Citizenship for Immigrants, Parenting, Education Programs for Persons with Substantial Disabilities, and Education Programs for Older Adults. There are six categories that address several disciplines or skill areas: Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills, English as a Second Language (ESL) (*including Vocational ESL*), Home Economics (*Consumer and Family Sciences*), Health and Safety Education, Short-term Vocational Programs with High Employment Potential, and Workforce Preparation.

The subcommittee/working group looked at several factors related to noncredit repetition in all of these areas of noncredit instruction including cost, funding, students served, level and rate of re-enrollment, and the benefits of re-enrollment in noncredit instruction. In addition, the subcommittee/working group studied noncredit enrollments. While 70 percent of the students in the California community colleges enroll only in credit courses, the remaining 30 percent enroll in some kind of noncredit courses. Most noncredit students enroll in the areas of ESL, basic skills, short term vocational, and workforce preparation courses. It was found, however, that noncredit enrollment is skewed in the System; only 25 colleges generated 82 percent of the total noncredit FTES in 2007-08.

The most critical factor that was analyzed was the level of noncredit repetition in the system. The subcommittee looked at the Chancellor's Office Management Information System (COMIS) data for re-enrollments in the same course over a six-year period beginning with the fall 2000 term to determine, to the extent possible, the level of noncredit course repetitions and multiple enrollments. The noncredit enrollment data were constructed using a cohort model that looked at the fall 2000 enrollment for noncredit students. These data were tracked over a six-year period to determine the number of re-enrollments in the same course.

Conclusions from the data include but are not limited to the following:

- The data show that over two-thirds (69 percent) of the students in the cohort enrolled in the course only one time in the six-year period.

- Less than one-third (31 percent) of the students had a number of re-enrollments during the six-year period.
- The noncredit instructional categories with the highest rates of re-enrollment generate the lowest FTES in noncredit instruction (citizenship for immigrants and substantial disabilities).
- While the re-enrollment rates for these areas are high, the impact on apportionment for re-enrollment is low.
- Another area with a high rate of re-enrollment is Older Adults, which generates a relatively high level of apportionment in noncredit; however, the impact on apportionment for re-enrollment in this area is low as well.
- The vast majority of re-enrollments consisted of just one re-enrollment—in other words, students took a given course just two times.
- The cost per re-enrollment attempt to the system is less than \$35 per attempt.

Within the context of re-enrollments, there is an instructional relationship and benefit to student re-enrollment patterns for noncredit. Most faculty and administrators view noncredit course re-enrollment, repetition, and multiple enrollments positively, and such re-enrollment patterns do facilitate student movement through successive course objectives required for course completion.

Conclusion

While this information item does not require the Board of Governors to take action at this time, the attached report forms the basis for future action to be taken by January 31, 2010. The subcommittee/working group's report recommends that the Chancellor ask the Board to consider the following recommendations:

1. Not establish systemwide limitations on re-enrollment, repetition and multiple enrollments in noncredit instruction;
2. Adopt regulations requiring each community college district to develop local policies and procedures designed to ensure that noncredit re-enrollment, repetition and multiple enrollments do not limit access and to develop policies that facilitate student progress;
3. Reaffirm the value and role of noncredit instruction in completing the various missions of the California Community Colleges; and,
4. Continue the practice of publishing the criteria for the appropriate academic standards for noncredit courses and programs in the Program and Course Approval Handbook.

Staff: *LeBaron Woodyard, Dean, Instructional Programs and Services*