



# Digest

Digest means an item that has been through internal review of the Chancellor's Office and the review entities. The item now has form and substance, and is officially "entered into Consultation." The Council reviews the item and provides advice to the Chancellor.

## CONSULTATION

**TITLE:** Report on the Study of Noncredit Repetition and Multiple Enrollments in the Same Course during the Same Term

**DATE:** June 18, 2009

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### 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 § 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 courses 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 information gathered and analyzed. As a result, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors (BOG) approved section 58161.7 of the title 5 revisions adopted in May 2008, where the Chancellor is required to report to the Board of Governors on repetition and multiple enrollments for noncredit courses.

An eighteen (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 ten (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 (2) broad areas, special populations and subject disciplines. There are four (4) special population categories: Citizenship for Immigrants, Parenting, Education Programs for Persons with Substantial Disabilities, and Education Programs for Older Adults. There are six (6) 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 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 studied noncredit enrollments. While 70% of the students in the California community colleges enroll only in credit courses, the remaining 30% enroll in noncredit courses of some kind. 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 CCC System; only twenty-five (25) colleges generated 82% 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 shows that over two-thirds (69%) of the students in the cohort enrolled in the course only one time in the six-year period.
- Less than one-third (31%) 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 re-enrollment patterns do facilitate student movement through successive course objectives required for course completion.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Consultation Council members discuss the recommendations of the subcommittee for noncredit repetition and multiple enrollments. These recommendations are presented in the report that will be taken to the Board of Governors in July 2009. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Not establish system-wide 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.