

OCTOBER REPORT FROM THE GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE
“EVERYTHING YOU NEVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT CALGETC”

October 13, 2022

At our September general meeting the Faculty Senate passed a resolution opposing the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates' (ICAS) proposed Cal-GETC Singular GE Transfer Pathway. After that meeting, we received clarification from the Academic Senate of the CSU (ASCSU) that the proposed changes to the General Education pathway apply to transfers *only*.

The General Education (GE) Committee requested further clarification because it made little sense to us why a proposal that aims to promote parity across California public university systems would keep separate GE pathways for transfers and non-transfers.

We had lingering questions, including:

- **If the purpose of this change is to streamline GE pathways across the California Community Colleges (CCC), California State University (CSU) campuses, and University of California (UC) campuses, how is it justifiable to have different GE pathways within the same institution – one for transfers and one for everyone else?**
- **Why would the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) (and the UC?) require a standalone GE course in Speech when speech is a skill that can be taught and assessed *in the discipline*? Our General Education Committee agreed unanimously and in practice, if Speech gets cut instead of Humanities, *every single* major program could quite easily integrate speech outcomes into their own major courses (like our own ME department did). You can do that with a skills-based course, but not a disciplinary-based one.**
- **If there are *already* different pathways for fulfilling GE, why did the Chancellor's Office seem reticent to just state clearly in writing that the CSU Breadth requirements will *not* change?**

On or about October 1, Cal Maritime ASCSU Representative Christine Isakson shared these questions with ASCSU Chair Beth Steffel.

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING – OCTOBER 4, 2022

On October 4, 2022 at 11:00 AM, the General Education Committee met with ASCSU Chair Steffel to clarify whether AB 928 applied to *all* students or just those transferring to the California State University (CSU) system from the California Community Colleges (CCC) system. Chair Steffel stated emphatically **“that the law calls for single LD pathway for transfer students only,”** and does nothing to alter the existing CSU general education requirements.

She also explained the following:

- CALGETC is the “successor agreement to IGETC” [*Why did IGETC need revising?*] “Prior to Cal GETC there was no single pathway that a CCC student could take that would fulfill requirements at CSU *and* UC. The goal is to prepare CCC students to transfer to either.”
 - CALGETC reduces GE to 34 units
 - The UC and CCC academic senates are also reviewing this proposal, but “if all three senates can’t reach an agreement on a singular lower-division GE pathway, AB 928 gives authority to the respective administrations of three segments to decide”
 - The rules will be same as they are with IGETC now: if a CCC student completes that pathway at their community college, they don’t have to take any lower division GE courses at their CSU or UC campus.
 - The current policy *already* allows multiple ways for students to fulfill GE requirements. This gets confusing: Right now, when students complete CSU GE requirements at CSUs, or the IGETC requirements at their community college, those requirements are then certified by the CC or CSU (wherever they’re completed). A student who completes their lower division requirements at a community college or another CSU campus (or UC – those transfers happen, too) and has those requirements certified doesn’t have to take any lower division GE courses when they transfer into the CSU.
- **Bottom Line:** CALGETC will replace IGETC. **CALGETC is now what a student would complete at their community college to satisfy all lower division GE requirements prior to transferring to a CSU or UC.**

Steffel expressed hope that consensus could be reached because the law gives power entirely to the administrations of the three university systems if Academic Senates cannot agree on changes that accord with the law by October 24, 2022.

We asked some follow-up questions, and she responded accordingly:

Q *How is the UC system going to handle adding a speech requirement they don’t currently have? Are they getting funding to hire hundreds of oral communication scholars? / If this only changes GE for transfers, WHY would the UC system agree to add oral communication to their native GE pathway?*

A **“The UC is *not* adding oral comm. Classes at the UC won’t change.”**

Q *When will revisions to General Education end? / Legislative interference: when does it end?*

A **“CSU GE is completely different from CAL GETC. There is no proposal right now to change CSU GE in any way.”** Steffel adds that the “charge to GEAC this year has nothing about changing LD GE at all. If that proposal came forward, it would be separate from what we’re talking about here.”

Q *How will this impact our campus?*

A “Changes between IGETC and CAL GETC will be mostly felt at CC (since that’s where students are taking the classes they take to fulfill CAL GETC)”

Steffel had to leave at 11:30 AM, after which our General Education Committee continued discussion. ASCSU Representative Isakson agreed to forward the following feedback to Steffel for more clarification. Here are the main points:

- There's a problem with saying that this will only impact community college students and not CSU students because those CCC students *become* CSU students when they transfer.
- The impact on CSU language programs will be catastrophic if the current proposal is passed. While this proposal won't impact our campus as a school without humanities and language majors, introductory language courses at community colleges are a major gateway for students into CSU language majors on other campuses. This pathway into studying languages other than English will be cut off if CALGETC goes through in its current form. [*Think of it this way: transfer students can major in Communications or Speech at a CSU. The background work is minimal. But majoring in a language other than English requires fluency that only comes from multiple years of study; a student who is not exposed to languages in their first year of community college is extremely unlikely to pick it up as a transfer student.*]
- Saying that the UC isn't adding speech doesn't mean anything. UC has a Board of Regents that controls their charter and is essentially autonomous; the CSU is controlled by Cal Code of Regulations Title V right down to curriculum. Title V can be changed at any time by legislative action (as we have seen). So just because the UC doesn't have to change their GE program doesn't mean the CSU can't be compelled to do so later.
- C&C Department Chair Colin Dewey reported that the C&C consensus is that even *if* there will be no change to CSU GE patterns (for now), the CALGETC proposal is still problematic, and preserving lower division Humanities is more important than preserving a standalone speech course. Members of the department agreed unanimously that **speech outcomes could hypothetically be met in other disciplines, while the same was not true for Humanities.**
 - Dewey added this additional explanation: "The CSU does not **require** any language classes to transfer or to graduate, but many students do fulfill one of their LD C requirements by taking a language. The UC **has** required a language course for transfer, perhaps recognizing the near universally accepted idea in liberal education that language study improves performance in the native language even if it isn't extensive enough for proficiency in the target (new) language. The only place I ever learned any grammar or linguistics was in French and Italian classes, for instance. Removing this course from the CSU transfer pattern takes away this opportunity (maybe the only one) for transfer students to engage with either another language or a second semester of humanities. For all but humanities majors, the LD humanities required for transfer will be the bulk of their exposure to Languages Other Than English, literature, philosophy, arts, etc. A required speech class (which the CSU already has in its breadth and IGETSE transfer pattern) fulfills none of this and offers nothing in its place that wouldn't be achieved by participating in a humanities or language class."
- **The C&C department recommendation is that we CUT SPEECH AND "LIFELONG LEARNING" FROM CALGETC and preserve Area C as it is now.**

GE Committee consensus is that we:

- **Make a statement that we are concerned this could lead to changes in the CSU GE pathway.**
- **Recommend that we CUT SPEECH AND AREA E FROM CALGETC and preserve Area C as it is now.**

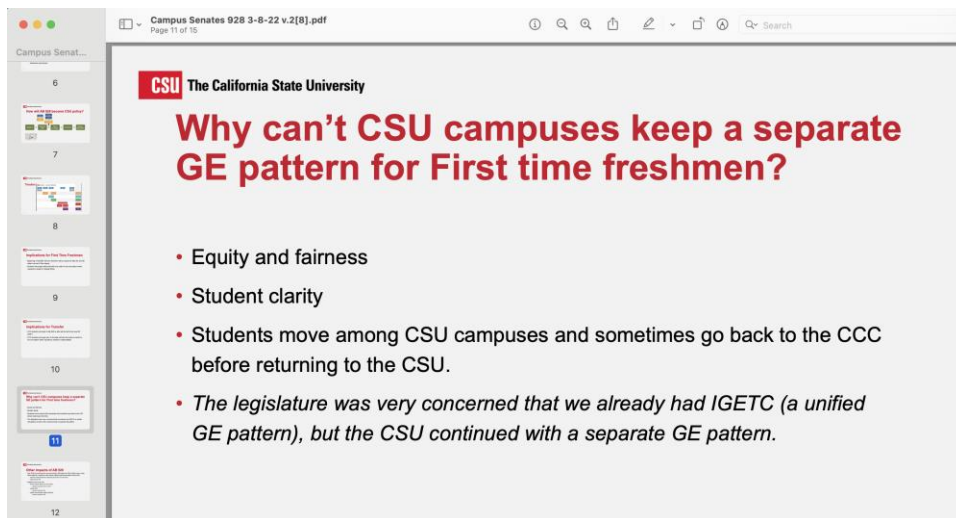
Rationale:

- CUT AREA E: As one GE committee member put it, “Area E is the dumbest area requirement. If you’re pursuing higher ed, aren’t you already pursuing lifelong learning? We can’t assess it. That can go.” [with the caveat that we want to preserve Information Literacy courses that may be Area E, possibly the can be moved somewhere else in the GE curriculum]
- CUT AREA A1: The outcomes for oral communication are achieved in many classes. Learning outcomes can be assessed in many other classes. Our ME department has already successfully lobbied to cut their standalone GE speech class and integrated oral communication instruction into major courses. (ET rep reports that their department also plans to include speech in major with project-based courses due to the pressure to cut units.)

THE PLOT THICKENS [later that day on October 4, 2022]

After the General Education Committee met on October 4th, ASCSU Rep Tsai apologized for “misleading” the committee into thinking that AB 928 applied to all CSU students, not just transfers, and explained that he based his conclusions on an ASCSU webinar he had attended in March 2022.

Later that day, GE Chair Sarah Senk received from a colleague at another campus a slide deck from an ASCSU webinar last spring – the webinar Tsai attended – and contacted Tsai to say he had nothing to apologize for as the slide deck very clearly indicates that the change impacts all CSU students. **(The smoking gun is on slide 9: “Since the new package is limited to IGETC size (33 units) instead of the CSU Breadth requirement (39 units), at least two course requirements will need to be removed from the CSU package.”** After seeing these slides, the GE Committee is confident that our campus ASCSU representatives represented the situation to our campus exactly as it was communicated to them in this webinar.

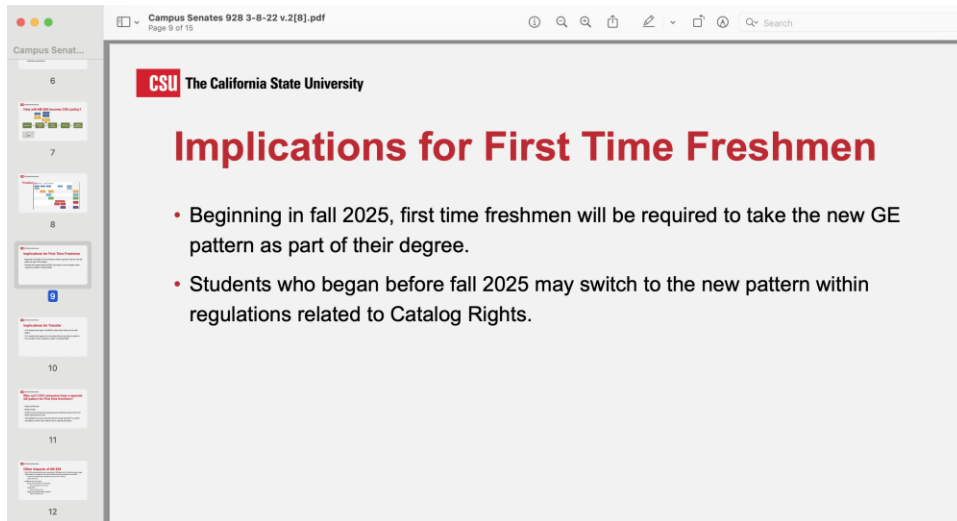


The image shows a screenshot of a PDF document titled "Campus Senates 028 3-8-22 v.2[8].pdf" on page 11 of 15. The slide content is as follows:

CSU The California State University

Why can't CSU campuses keep a separate GE pattern for First time freshmen?

- Equity and fairness
- Student clarity
- Students move among CSU campuses and sometimes go back to the CCC before returning to the CSU.
- *The legislature was very concerned that we already had IGETC (a unified GE pattern), but the CSU continued with a separate GE pattern.*



CONCLUSIONS:

The members of the General Education Committee believe it is important to craft a second resolution (in addition to the one passed in September and sent to the ASCSU) that commits to the record our discontent about the process by which the ASCSU responded to the enactment of AB 928.

We feel strongly that the ASCSU should resist all future attempts to make curricular changes by legislature, especially ones that effectively create a “hostage situation” (in which matters are completely taken out of faculty hands if no consensus can be reached.)

We recommend unanimously “option b” to our ASCSU senators: **“Recommend specific changes that satisfy the requirements of AB 928, with rationale.”** Our consensus is that even if the Chancellor’s office is *not* lying (aka if they *do* truly intend to keep a separate set of requirements for transfers) that the recommendation to cut HUM and require a standalone speech class is ill advised. We support cutting Area E but recommend cutting Area A1. Our primary rationale is that we can lose Speech before Humanities because students can meet A1 learning outcomes in any class but can only meet C outcomes in C classes. We also recommend clarifying that this recommendation is conditional: **We are ONLY approving the cut from 39 to 33 units for community college transfer students, and in no way is this to be interpreted as applying to the CSU General Education pathway.**