COMMITTEE ON INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM

15-16 CIC 23
Monday, February 01, 2016

TO: The Academic Senate
FROM: The Committee on Instruction and Curriculum (CIC)
SUBJECT: 15-16 CIC 23: Bridge course exemptions to moratorium on curriculum changes

PURPOSE: Senate Approval

ACTION REQUESTED: That the Senate grant exceptions to the moratorium on quarter-based courses imposed by 14-15 CIC 21 for courses only offered during the 2017-8 Academic Year (including the Summer, 2018) that are intended to be “bridge” courses, as defined below.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
In 14-15 CIC 21, the Senate mandated that any new quarter-based course must have compelling reasons and be approved by CIC in addition to the usual procedures. In discussing the move to semesters, it has become clear that course sequences, particularly those that are 3 or more quarters long, may leave some students in the midst of a sequence where the follow-up courses on the semester calendar will not align. This would result in students being stranded and possibly force them to take redundant material in order to get to the appropriate starting point for the sequence when it is offered under semesters. This would violate the “Student Pledge”. Some of our predecessors in semester conversion have used so-called “bridge courses”- courses worth one or two (quarter) units that go beyond the quarter-based material so that, in the end, the student would, as far as course material is concerned, be at the same stage as though they had taken the course under semesters. Sometimes, these courses are offered in the last terms of the quarter-based calendar (particularly Spring and Summer); sometimes, they are offered in the first term of the new calendar. While CIC briefly discussed the potential of having special designations for bridge courses under semesters (such as using the suffix “T” for transition, so as not to cost programs number slots in the new regime), departments can create such courses at-will currently. Due to the aforementioned moratorium, however, it is procedurally difficult for programs seeking to assist their students in the transition while still under quarters. Accordingly, at CIC’s February 1, 2016 meeting, the committee unanimously recommends that the Senate consider bridge courses to be a “compelling reason” for creating a new course and exempt those courses from the moratorium and the need for individual approvals by CIC.