ACADEMIC STANDARDS REPORT  
May 14, 2001

INTRODUCTION

On January 18, 2000, the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate created a special committee on academic standards to examine whether standards are maintained in our courses and, if not, bring back recommendations for change. (See Appendix I.) Representatives from each school included: Norm Bowen, Arts, Letters, and Social Sciences, Chris Lubwama, (Chair) Business and Economics, Penny McCullagh, Education and Allied Studies, and Julia Norton, Science. Dean Jay Tontz, SBE represented the President on the committee. Michael Strait, Director, Assessment and Testing, joined the committee during the academic year 2000-01. The committee also received assistance from Leone Nidiffer, Institutional Research and Analysis, and Sandy Heisey, Assessment and Testing. The committee members met on site and via email for six quarters.

Beginning with eleven items listed in its charge from the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate, the committee formulated and tested questions believed to be relevant to the issues at hand, moving from an essay type questionnaire on to a web-based, multiple choice form with room for comments. 20/45 or 44% Chairs, 147/510 or 28% faculty, and 728 or 6% students responded. All students who were registered in Fall Quarter 2000 were contacted via mail and invited to log onto the University web site and respond to the questions. All faculty and Chairs were invited via repeated emails to respond to the questionnaire.

After considering a more random sampling of students, the committee chose to rely on a self-selected sample of students, after inviting all students to respond. With all its inherent faults, the self-selected sample did mirror the University GPA and other demographics such as student’s major department, year at the University, and level of the student. Institutional Research and Analysis monitored these statistics for the committee. While the similarities to the student population is a good indication that the sample is not a special interest group of students, it does not indicate anything about the equivalency between this group and that of a random sample.

Demographics of faculty and chairs were not checked. The same limitations of a self-selected sample apply to both faculty and Chairs.

We offer the following report and analysis incorporating data and comments from the surveys and additional data from the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. Relevant summaries and the charge from the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate are included in the appendices. There are many additional questions that could be raised from the survey, but we concentrated on the initial charge from the Executive Committee as most immediate to address. Those colleagues interested in mining the data further should contact Michael Strait of the Assessment and Testing Office for copies of the information available.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Grade Inflation

1.a. Data and Recommendations

Chairs, faculty, and students believe that there has been grade inflation. However, actual student GPA at graduation has remained the same for 20 years. There should be university-wide discussion at the school and department levels regarding grading standards.

1.b. Student Pressure on Faculty

There is strong agreement among all groups in the academic community that there is pressure to raise grades and lower standards and course workloads. Faculty and student communities need to engage in a frank dialogue on standards associated with college-level work.
1.c. Relationship Between Enrolled Units and Academic Progress

The current fee structure does encourage students to take as many units as possible. Chairs, faculty, and students all perceive that an overload of units compromises academic standards. However, GPA data indicate that taking a high number of units does not negatively impact GPA or retention. The University should consider a more restrictive policy for students who desire to enroll in a high number of units. For example, a minimum GPA should be established for students who want to take more than 18 units per quarter.

1.d. Lecturer Vulnerability

There is a belief among chairs, faculty, and students that lecturers are more vulnerable to pressure for easier grading than tenure-track faculty. However, the three groups also agree that lecturers uphold the same academic standards as tenure-track faculty. Lecturers should be included in discussion of grading policies to insure they are in correspondence with departmental policies.

1.e. Lengthy Modules

Faculty offer mixed responses regarding the maintenance of academic standards in lengthy module courses compared with standard daytime modules. Faculty members teaching upper-division or evening graduate courses were largely positive. Negative responses related primarily to lower division undergraduate courses. A systematic review of long courses should be conducted and consideration should be given to limiting these courses to more advanced students.

A small number of students (8%) wanted more web-based assistance for courses. However, only 2 or 3 students wanted full on-line courses. We should continue to experiment with alternative venues and modes of instruction and evaluate their effects on academic quality.

2. Admission, Retention, and Disqualification Standards

Chairs, faculty, and students believe that many students who come to CSUH are under-prepared for college level work. Data from IRA as well as comparative data from other CSU campuses provide partial support for this perception.

SAT and GPA scores of CSUH students compare well with the surrounding CSU campuses in terms of first-time admits. Although, the SAT scores of transfer students has shown some decline over the last 11 years. CSUH disqualification standards are in line with the Title 5, California Code of Regulations. Retention rates at CSUH are better than those at surrounding campuses. The university should enlarge its engagement with surrounding high schools and community colleges in an effort to clarify CSUH expectations for in-coming students.

3. Other Related Topics

3.a. Plagiarism and Cheating

A sizeable minority number of faculty and students report problems of plagiarism and cheating. Most students are aware of the definition of plagiarism. A majority of departments and individual instructors have written plans concerning plagiarism. Most cases of plagiarism and cheating are handled informally by individual instructors. The university should clarify the academic dishonesty reporting process.

3.b. Grading

Students believe that testing and grading is fair. Faculty members express concern about student preparedness. However, there has been no decline in the average GPA at graduation over the last 20 years. There is also disagreement between chairs and faculty regarding the extent of oversight and discussion of grading practices. The University should develop an agreement to work collectively to raise expectations of student performance.
3.c. Writing Across the Curriculum

Faculty do not believe that students write at the college level. Students are comfortable with the amount of writing required in their classes. Nearly one quarter of all faculty report assigning more writing now than five years ago. CSUH should consider a university-wide approach such as writing across the curriculum. All departments and programs should establish writing plans designed to improve the writing of students.

3.d. Final Exams

The hours of the final exam are included in the minimum number of contact hours required for accreditation. According to the university catalogue, “Final examinations are administered only during final exam week and only at the times scheduled by the university.” At least 12% of faculty responding said they did not meet class during the final exam period. However, 33% of the students report no class meeting during final exams. Department should be sure that instructors use the final exam period for academic purposes. The Academic Senate needs to clarify university policy concerning final exams as stated in the catalogue.

3.e. Classroom Behavior

Some faculty report a worsening of behavioral problems in the classrooms. Faculty experiencing such problems should establish clear written guidelines on in classroom behavior.

3.f. Assigned Readings

The CSUH Office of Institutional Research and Analysis reports that the average student studied 4.8 hours per week per 4-unit class instead of the 8 recommended. Faculty should ensure that course loads reflect University guidelines of 2 hours of study per academic unit.

3.g. Completion of all assignments

Three fourths of students and faculty agree that all assignments must be completed in order to receive credit for a class. Faculty should insist that students must complete all course assignments required in the course syllabus to receive credit for the class.

3.h. Correspondence Between Faculty and Students

The University should monitor the growing amount of correspondence between faculty and students required to ensure that it does not become an undue burden on faculty time.

3.i. Office Hours

Most faculty and students agree that almost all faculty hold office hours. Most instructors do not require that students attend office hours. Instructors should be encouraged to incorporate office visits into course requirements.
1. Grade Inflation

1.a. Data and Recommendations

As documented in the student, chairs and faculty surveys there are widely different perceptions of the degree to which grade inflation is a problem and the potential relationship between perceived grade inflation and the causes there of.

While 60% of the chairs do not identify a grade inflation problem in their department, 81% of the faculty believe there is a grade inflation problem. Sixty-one percent (61%) of the faculty believe that grade inflation is related to wanting good student evaluations. However, 80% of the students do not believe that students give better evaluations to “easy” teachers. And, 76% of the student respondents do not believe teachers give easy grades because they want good evaluations.

Student responses are consistent with other research (Selding, P., 1999). Selding’s findings indicate that there is not a high correlation between grades in a course and student ratings of instructors.

The themes of most student comments on grade inflation include: (1) Grade inflation is a national problem. In my graduate program I had only one A - and I am not that good really. I think if all faculty were to raise the bar it would be a good thing. (2) “I sometimes feel that grading standards at CSUH are too lenient. It cheapens the quality of a degree earned at this school There are some classes where it is rather easy to earn a high grade.” (3) “I think grading is generally fair. If you work hard and show up for classes, you will probably get an A or a B. Maybe grading is even a little too easy.” (4) “Students look for profs who are easy graders but also good educators.” (5) “Grading standards are too easy, based on the skills I see in college grads.”

The most common faculty comments on grade inflation include: (1) “Grading standards seem to be very inconsistent from one department to another and even within a single department.” (2) “It is difficult to maintain grading standard when other instructors (other departments) regularly inflate grades.” (3) “We need a campus-wide grading policy.”

Table 3 (Page 14) demonstrates that between 1980-2000, the mean GPA remained at approximately 2.99.

Recommendations:

The University should distribute information on grades by class and instructor to the Department Chairs. The chairs should use this information to facilitate departmental discussions on the extent to which grade inflation is a problem in their department. The chairs should include reference to this study and other national research which does not support the contention that students give easier evaluations to faculty members who are easier graders.

1.b. Student Pressure on Faculty

(CQ 1) 70% of chairs agree, while 30% disagree, that students pressure faculty to reduce course workloads. (FT 59) Faculty are equally alarmed; 67% agree, while 28% disagree, that students impose continual pressure to lighten work loads. (FT 80) In addition, 33% of faculty perceive more pressure than five years ago, while 53% think that the pressure is about the same. (ST 50) Students are divided on this issue, with 48% agreeing and 44% disagreeing, that students exert such pressure. (ST 70) 72% of students say that student pressure to reduce the number of assignments remains about the same, while 23% say the pressure is increasing. A similar pattern
is reflected in a question asking students about pressure to reduce the difficulty of assignments. 76% of students think that such pressure remains constant, while 24% think that it is increasing.

Another question asked about pressure from students to reduce standards in courses. (FT60) 57% of faculty agree, while 35% disagree, that students assert pressure to reduce standards in courses. Students agree in similar proportions (58% agree while 34% disagree that students exert such pressure).

Recommendations:

Faculty and student communities need to engage in a frank dialogue on standards associated with college-level work.

1.c. Relationship Between Enrolled Units and Academic Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Fee Structure – Undergraduate (From Winter 2001 Class Schedule)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-6 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State University Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other fees the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two related issues regarding standards.

1.c.1 Does the current fee structure encourages students to take as many units as they can?

Because any number of units taken over 6.1 cost the same for students then it could easily be stated that the current fee structure encourage students to make a decision to take either 6 or less units or 6.1 or more units.

The perceptions of the chairs, faculty and students concur with this reality. When asked if the current fee structure encouraged students to take on extra credits the following responses were obtained: (CQ 5) 55% of chairs agree while 25% somewhat disagree. (FT 77) Among faculty, 33% strongly agree, another 19% somewhat agree while only 9% disagree that fee structure is a problem. (ST 67) 65% of students agree, while 24% disagree with this statement.

The logical question that would follow such an argument might be – does taking more than a normal load of 12 or 15 units harm academic progress and thus compromise standards?

1.c.2 Does taking a large number of units compromise standards?

Results of the survey indicate that there is widespread belief that students are enrolling in too many units eroding academic effectiveness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CQ 4</th>
<th>FT 76</th>
<th>ST 66</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, an analysis of the student data in the Fall Quarter 2000 by the office of Institutional Research and Analysis does not support the conclusions that excessive units leads to poorer performance.

According to the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis, in Fall 2000 18.20% of undergraduate students took more than 16 units, 7.87% took more than 19 units and 0.79% took more than 23 units. 26.22% of students took fewer 12 units in fall 2000 and may be classified as part-time. Among the 6889 students taking 12 or more units, 74 or 1% had an official overload of more than 23 units. 2300 or 33% took between 16 and 19 units. 661
students or 9.6% took between 20 and 23 units. Roughly 10% of CSUH full-time students take at least one full course over a full load of 16 units.

The data do not support the concept that taking a high number of units is a problem.

Students who took 23 units or more in Fall 2000 were generally more successful than those who took 12 or fewer units. Of the 86 who took 23 or more units in Fall 2001 (86%) had a total GPA at the end of the term that was the same as, or higher than, their GPA at the beginning of the term. Only 14 (16%) lowered their total GPA in the term in which they took 23 or more units. No student “dropped out.” (Of the 11 who did not enroll as undergraduates in Winter 2001, all were “graduating seniors,” some of whom did enroll as graduate or post-baccalaureate students in winter.)

Overall, students taking 23 units or more raised their total GPA. The mean GPA for students taking 23 units or more at the beginning of the term was 2.84. At the end of the term their mean GPA was 2.89.

In contrast, ignoring those who did not return for any reason in Winter 2001, the students who took fewer than 12 units in Fall 2001 (excluding those who were first time freshmen) lowered their total GPA from an average of 2.84 in Fall 2000 to an average of 2.82 in Winter 2001.

First time freshmen who took more than 20 units had more success than those who took fewer units. All those who took 20 or more units in their first term continued, and their average GPA was higher than those who took fewer than 20 units. Those who took fewer than 12 units most-often failed to continue, and those who continued had a lower GPA. (Only one first time freshman took more than 23 units, so that category was not examined separately.)

Using the Student Needs and Priorities Survey from Winter 1999, the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis correlated hours worked per week with number of units taken per term. The sample size was 915 students. 50% of respondents worked fewer than 20 hours per week. 53% of students taking over 20 units, 73% of students taking 17 to 20 units, 66% of students taking 13 to 16 units, 54% of students taking 9 to 12 units and 16% of students taking 8 units or fewer worked 20 or fewer hours/week.

### First time freshmen by first-term units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA of those who continued to Winter 2001</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Term 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA of Continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Continuing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who take more units have a higher GPA than those who take fewer units. This was true in 1990 and still true in 2000. However, the differences are not so great that current GPA could easily be used to determine which students should take the higher level of units.

### Mean Total GPA of Students by Units taken (excludes those with no established GPA—most of whom are first time freshmen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Term</th>
<th>Total Undergrads with GPA</th>
<th>Less than 12 units</th>
<th>12.0 – 15.9 units</th>
<th>16-19.9 units</th>
<th>20.0 – 22.9 units</th>
<th>23.0 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>8542</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>8465</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>8400</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations:

The student data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis do not support the perceptions of chairs, faculty and students. While the current fee structure seems to encourage students to take as many units as they can, taking a higher number of units does not seem to negatively impact GPA or retention. Nonetheless, department chairs who perceive this to be a problem in their departments should discuss this issue with faculty and students.

1.d. Lecturer Vulnerability

Chairs, faculty and students (85%, 65%, 42%) believe that lecturers are more vulnerable to student pressure than tenure track faculty. Even so, all three groups agree that lecturers uphold the same standards as tenure track faculty, with students disagreeing the most (15%, 24%, 29%), and are integrated into the life of the departments (75%, 62%, 72%).

Students have many issues about faculty, particularly regarding competency and quality. These are expressed primarily through the comments that they made. A real question about the ability of a student to evaluate the material presented by faculty in terms of content must be raised.

Survey Results:

A majority of department chairs, faculty and students agree that lecturers uphold the same academic standards as tenure-track faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite their agreement on the standards of part-time faculty, a majority of all three groups also agree that non-tenure track faculty are more vulnerable to student evaluations than tenure-track faculty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chairs, faculty and students also concur that lecturers and one-year appointments are integrated into the life of the department.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not clear that students actually know the status of faculty. The proportion of no opinion is higher for students than for faculty or chairs in all of these questions. Even if students have taken the time to look up the status of an instructor in the catalog, this question may be the first time they have seriously pondered what the differences might be and how the instructor is affected.

Related comments:

Questions that students felt were not asked and should have been asked frequently focused on faculty. Are faculty competent? What is the overall quality of faculty? Do faculty instill confidence in their ability to teach? Are teachers fair? Are there enough good faculty? Is the English of faculty adequate? How can we complain about faculty quality? Faculty should be
evaluated in every course. Are instructors held accountable? How can we reach faculty for online courses? Are faculty approachable, willing to help? What are the reasons for dissatisfaction with faculty? Tenured faculty need to be accountable. What is the quality of instruction? Sometimes expectations are not clearly defined.

In discussing faculty relations, some students noted that there is a need for more permanent faculty and a larger student body. 14/121 or 11.5% of students mentioned. When discussing faculty expectations, some students made the following related comments. Treat part time faculty better because the poor treatment rubs off on students. Long-term lecturers should be tenured. We need more tenure track faculty or just more faculty (3/188). Same class should have a common exam.

While some students didn't know the difference between tenured faculty and non-tenure track faculty, others had clear opinions. The quality of classes is improved by lecturers (10/188 or 6%). There is no difference in tenured and tenure-track faculty, but another mentioned that white racial privilege is obvious. We need bios on faculty. Faculty are normal. Faculty are individuals; some better than others; status is not important (5/157 or 3%). Finally, there is a clear second job mentality among faculty that hold other jobs (3/157 or 2%).

Some faculty expressed the following: “The elevated proportion of lectures hired is a scandalous form of exploitation and irresponsible behavior for the quality of education.” “Since tenure-track seems distant, we must elevate the status of lecturers.” “Give true one-year appointments (8/33 or 24%) Other faculty mentioned that lectures and untenured faculty are well treated by most faculty, indicating that they were not treated well by others. “We have long-term non-tenure-track faculty with de facto tenure”(6/33 or 18%). Another reported that lecturers work very hard and often aren't treated like real members of the faculty (1/33). On the whole, regular faculty get along and are supportive and respectful. Could be improved by respecting differences. Hiring a junior faculty member has improved morale (6/33 or 18%).

Full-time and part-time faculty

One of the assumptions behind the Academic Senate’s charge to the committee was that the increasing number of part-time faculty was compromising the academic standards of the institution. Several questions addressed this issue.

Clearly, there are more part-time faculty on the CSUH campus and they are teaching a larger share of the courses. In fall 1990 part-time faculty represented 3% of all “full time equivalent faculty (FTEF).” By fall 1999 instructors represented 37% of FTEF. The percentage of students that were taught by part-time faculty also rose. In fall 1990 part-time faculty taught 11% of the Full Time Equivalent Students (FTES). They taught 44% in Fall 1999. Over that same ten-year period, part-time faculty taught 7 or 8 students more per class than full-time faculty (Student Faculty Ratio [SFR]). In fall 1999 the SFR for part-time faculty was 22.32 as opposed to 17.11 for full-time faculty.

Recommendations:

Some suggested ideas include increased numbers of tenured faculty, evaluations in all courses, peer reviews (especially for the most vulnerable faculty, but perhaps for all faculty), educating students about the history of tenure in academia, common finals in multiple section courses, University-wide, department-wide or course-wide standards.

The results of this survey do not reveal any clear distinction in quality of teaching or commitment to students between full and part-time faculty. Nonetheless, the current trend towards a greater dependence on part-time faculty raises questions with respect to any university-wide effort to raise standards. The limited contractual obligations of part-time faculty combined with the reduced number of full-time faculty make more difficult an across-the-board effort to improve advising, tutoring and general academic support for students. Some people believe the hiring of more full-time faculty would seem to be a prerequisite for raising academic standards at CSUH.
1.e. Lengthy Modules

Student comments on lengthy modules primarily touted the notion that if the faculty member insists on standards, then the standards are present and the same as other courses (14%). Many say that they rely on such lengthy classes to manage work and would like to see even more of them (4%). At the same time they complain about the amount of reading and writing assigned by faculty who should be aware that they are working, etc (8%).

Faculty report that these courses are demanding to teach and require care in diversifying material for student attention, but that they are essential in graduate programs (29%). Other faculty report that there is pressure of one type or another to lower standards from students (16%).

Survey Results:

A significant number of responding Faculty (73%) have a lot of experience with evening courses offered once a week, but many fewer (21%) have a lot of experience with weekend or collapsed courses.

Only 27% of responding faculty say they have a lot of experience with distance learning (interactive video) classes, and even fewer (16%) claim significant experience with online courses.

However, 67% of Faculty who have an opinion believe academic standards are compromised in distance learning and online courses.

Students also have limited experience with these modes of delivery and about 40% believe academic standards are compromised.

More comments are negative than positive about these modes, both from students and faculty, but both some faculty and some students believe they are (1) necessary alternatives and/or (2) believe some teachers and learners are better suited to some modes than others.

Related comments:

Among the 123 comments about evening classes, etc. that students made, students thought that standards are the same as day classes. (17/123 or 14%) Some thought these courses are too difficult. (8/123 or 6.5%) Others had no experience with such classes. (11/123 or 9 %) One student worried about plagiarism or cheating in such courses. Two direct quotes include: "The disadvantage of one-night-a-week classes are (1) sometimes too much to cram into a week's worth of classes at one time (2) miss one class = missed a whole week (3) Fatigue plays a part in absorbing the" material or "seem to cram too much information in a short amount of time for students who have worked all day and are too tired to adequately participate in." Complementing those opinions is the following quote: "Almost all of my grad classes were once-a-week evening classes, highly charged, motivated students and human instructors working without a safety net." PACE is wonderful. (4/123 or 3%)

Students also said that there should be more evening and weekend classes. (5/123 or 4%)There is a good balance of courses here at CSUH (1/123). Prefer day classes (4/123). Take both evening and day classes and like to meet folks who work. (1/123)

Faculty comments included the following. Evening courses are imperative at the graduate level. Students are often better prepared. Challenging to teach, but important (9/31 or 29%). There should be pay differential for evening courses (1/31). Students lobby to leave early (1/31). Students too tired to learn (1/31). Length of continuous teaching is problem. Longer than two hours is not reasonable (1/31). One day courses for undergraduates are troublesome (1/31). PACE is a failure for most students (1/31). Standards aren't lower (4/31). My standards aren't lower, but students put in less time (1/31).
One faculty member noted that students want quick, easy, abbreviated, instant degrees. (1/31)

The committee made a supplemental request for information on one-night-a-week and other long classes to faculty who had taught such courses (list provided by the Faculty Development Center). Nineteen faculty responded.

Were faculty able to cover the same amount of material in one-night-a-week classes? 9 yes, 2 no (10-15% less, 25% less). There were only slight variations by school. SBE: 4 positive on night courses for upper division or MBA courses. Science: 2 positive, 1 positive for upper division. ALSS: 5 positive, 3 negative

Most positive responses specified that these were courses designed for upper division or graduate students. There was skepticism that such courses were appropriate for undergraduate, and especially lower division students.

Respondents who commented on student preparation did not think that night students were less prepared for class than day students. Are students as well prepared? 3 yes, 1 no. On the other hand, 4 faculty reported problems with students missing night classes and the cumulative impact on attendance that results.

To a large degree, instructors teach these classes differently, changing pedagogy, introducing a variety of activities, showing more films. Are courses taught differently? 5 yes (“pedagogy must be adapted.”). Specific suggestions from faculty: vary class activity (cognitive, visual/kinesthetic/application), use case analysis/simulations, take several short breaks, insist upon weekly assignments to keep students engaged.

Satisfaction with night classes is strongest in programs with courses taught exclusively in the evening. Some faculty believe that teaching at night has its reward: stronger more motivated students. Three commented that night students are better.

There is concern about the fact that night classes are physically and mentally demanding on faculty and students. Three respondents mentioned that faculty were exhausted after such courses. Three others mentioned that the students were exhausted after a full day’s work. Several mentioned the unofficial practice of moving the starting time up to 6 p.m. One said that a faculty member should schedule no classes or committee meetings on the morning following night classes.

There was skepticism about shifting to 2-night a week scheduling. Two faculty thought that it would make no difference. One instructor polled students who opposed the idea.

Some faculty (4) expressed support for night classes because of the convenience that they represented for students.

All faculty (5) who expressed themselves doubted the pedagogical validity of long weekend courses, Friday-Saturday courses or condensed five-week courses (“pedagogically unsound after 3 hours.”)

**Recommendations:**

The university should undertake a systematic review of long courses; the limiting of such courses to more advanced students should be considered. If these modules are maintained, more effort should be made by departments and schools to prepare faculty to teach them. Team teaching or mixed delivery (part in-class, part on-line) strategies should be tested. Faculty teaching these courses must be committed to delivering the same number of hours of quality in-class education as in any other class.

1.f. Interactive and Other Venues

In the student comments, it was clear that a small number of students (about 8%) wanted more web-assistance for classes, but only two or three wanted full on-line courses. There is fear that no
one will interact with them, that they won’t be able to reach faculty, and that no one will be able to write them letters for graduate school or help them get a job.

There are a few complaints about the quality of the video equipment that links Hayward to Contra Costa. The students at Contra Costa want more classes and more faculty out there. Some complain that the majority of classes are in the evening and on weekends. It is clear that some students (and faculty) did not distinguish between compressed video courses and online courses.

Many of the students discussed the use of film in the classroom. The students who discussed the use of video in class thought that video use was primarily to strengthen the material presented, 67%. Negative comments about film were rare. Some students remain fearful that others are getting away with not learning the material and that film, like other coursework (reading, etc.), was treated as only optional by the faculty and other students. Faculty generally agreed that the use of film is exceptional but can be broadening in a course when carefully selected and used sparingly 87%.

Survey Results:

Only 27% of responding faculty say they have a lot of experience with distance learning (interactive video) classes, and even fewer (16%) claim significant experience with online courses.

However, 67% of Faculty who have an opinion believe academic standards are compromised in distance learning and online courses.

Students also have limited experience with these modes of delivery and about 40% believe academic standards are compromised.

More comments are negative than positive about these modes, both from students and faculty, but both some faculty and some students believe they are (1) necessary alternatives and/or (2) believe some teachers and learners are better suited to some modes than others.

Related comments:

Students had varying comments about different modes of teaching. A variety of course venues is very important (19/123 or 15%). Would like to try on-line or condensed courses (11/123 or 8%).

Two students do not like on-line courses. Four students think that there may be a need for different evaluations of such courses. Some thought that distance courses are a bit passive or distracting or problematic technically (15/123 or 12%). Three students were very positive about distance courses and thought we should offer more degrees through distance education. On-line courses require strong, motivated students and careful planning. (4/123 or 3%) There should be more distance and web classes (2/123). Relationships may be difficult to build in these courses (2/123). Do not like seminars (1/123). Colleges need to change (1/123).

Student thoughts about film included that films were rarely used and when these were used they were primarily presented as supplemental ideas. The films, they stated, were related to the class and gave an alternate perspective. One student had a professor who used a filmed lecture of himself when he had to be away at a conference. Several students thought that films used in their major for teaching certain skills or procedures were useful but dated (112/166 or 67%). Six more thought that films were useful but should be discussed after or a quiz given concerning the film (6/166 or 4%). Other students wanted more films or more films related to the coursework (9/166 or 5%). One student requested films but was told there were none for this class (1/166). One student felt that films should be used in place of dissecting animals (1/166).

Some students who discussed film felt that films were never okay unless as an assignment outside of class. Another felt films were brainwashing tools (15/166 or 9%). Four students mentioned that PowerPoint and overheads were used more than films (4/166 or 2%). Films cannot replace human interaction (2/166 or 1%). Others thought that films were too old or boring (4/166 or 2%). One student reported having difficulty seeing the films.
Faculty also thought that a variety of teaching formats fit some faculty and students better than they fit others. These courses are important compromises for serious students (4/31 or 13%). Online and distance courses not for all fields and courses (3/31). Student face-to-face contact is imperative (1/31). All courses are one-week courses until the faculty gives an exam or an assignment (1/31). More security for exams is required (1/31). Some need different assessments for grading (1/31).

Faculty who discussed the use of film indicated that film is a good supplement to lectures and one of the modes useful to students (12/32 or 37.5%). Even so, I use only sparingly (16/32 or 50%).

No university study has been conducted correlating special modules (one-night-a-week, weekend, compressed quarter) with academic standards. Departments/programs/schools have not evaluated the academic integrity of these courses. The exception is SBE, which dropped the one-night-a-week sessions for undergraduate courses.

Neither has the university evaluated the academic integrity of the compressed video (formerly distance learning) courses. While IMC circulates a survey to students on the technical aspects of the courses and departments do regular student evaluations of these courses, no general evaluation of the pedagogical implications of compressed video courses has been made.

According to the director of the Faculty Development Center, no such evaluation has been done of on-line courses either. This is clearly an area where demand is driving curricular changes. The Faculty Development Center offers workshops on coping with long courses; the assumption is that they have to be taught differently.

Recommendations:

We should continue to experiment with alternative venues and modes of instruction. We should monitor and assess learning with the introduction of new forms of learning.

2. Admission, Disqualification, and Retention Standards

2.a. Admission Standards:

The Sub-committee found some inconsistency between the results of the survey and the data collected by the Institutional Research and Analysis Office. There was agreement among faculty (83%) and students (54%) that many students who come to CSUH are not prepared for college. And also Chairs (79%) agree that more students today come to CSUH unprepared for college-level work than students did 5 years ago. Institutional Research and Analysis data seem to be mixed at best, with transfer students entering with lowered average SAT scores and first-time freshmen entering with average SAT scores of the same as three years ago.

2.a.1. Compared to surrounding CSU campuses:

Using percentage of first time regular admits to total first time admits as a measure of admission standard, CSUH admission standards compare very well with surrounding CSU schools since 1995. In 1995, CSUH regular admits as a percentage of total first time admits stood at 77.2%. This was lower than that SF State of 84.1% and 78.0% of Long Beach. But was higher than 75.0% of CSU Sacramento, 70.6% of Dominguez Hills, and 67.7% of San Jose State. While CSUH regular admits percentage slipped to 74.5% in 1999, it came back up to 86.2% in 2000.

2.a.2. CSUH Admission GPAs and SAT Scores:

Similarly, while the average GPA of regular admits has remained steady at around 3.22 over the four years, that of special admits has steadily improved from 2.74 in 1997 to 2.77 in 2000. The GPA data also suggest that CSUH admission standards are continuing to improve. CSUH transfer student GPAs and mean SAT scores show a comparable trend (see Table 1).
2.b. Disqualification Standards

2.b.1. CSUH Academic Probation

CSUH follows Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations which requires students to achieve at least a 2.0 GPA in all university work, all at CSUH, and all work in a student’s major to receive a baccalaureate degree. Those who fail to maintain the 2.0 GPA are put on academic probation.

2.b.2. Mean GPA at Graduation-Undergraduate Degree Recipients

Data collected by the Institutional Research and Analysis Office shows that there is no identifiable trend in Average Total GPA at graduation for bachelor’s degree recipients over the past twenty years. The mean for 1999-2000 of 2.99 is equal to the mean GPA for 1980-1981.

Over the past twenty years, the average total GPA at graduation has been higher than 2.97 in 7 years, and lower than 2.96 in 7 years, and at 2.96 or 2.97 for 6 years. The highest mean total GPA was in 1982-1983 (3.00) and the lowest was in 1988-1989 (2.93). (See Table 2 below).

Recommendations:

Even though the institutional research and analysis data do not support faculty, student and chair perception that CSUH first time admits and transfer students are not adequately prepared for college work, there is always room for improvement in our admission standards. Following are some possible ways to do so:

(1) Closer University relations with high schools and community colleges.

The university could enlarge its engagement with surrounding high schools and community colleges in an effort to clarify CSUH expectations for our first time admits and community college transfers respectively, and assist them in the following ways:

(a) By following the lead of the School of Science to develop close articulation with the community colleges concerning the content and level of courses and expectations of students.

(b) By CSUH departments engaging our community college and high school colleagues in a dialogue on content and expectations.

Table 1: Survey Results

Faculty and students (83%, 54%) agree that many students who come to CSUH are not prepared for college. Also Chairs (79%) agree that many students today come to CSUH unprepared for college-level work than students did 5 years ago.

Survey Results: Many students who come to CSUH are not prepared for college.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survey Results: Many students today come to CSUH unprepared for college-level work than students did 5 years ago.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairs</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: CSUH Admission Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSUH First Time Admits GPA and SAT Scores</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEAN HIGH SCHOOL GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YEAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**CSUH Transfers’ Mean GPA and SAT Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEAN GPAs</th>
<th>MEAN SAT SCORES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YEAR</td>
<td>REGULAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 3: Mean GPA at Graduation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL DEGREES</th>
<th>MEAN GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>1421</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>1481</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>1527</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>1614</td>
<td>2.98</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987-88</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>2.96</td>
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<td>1959</td>
<td>2.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989-90</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>2025</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-92</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>2201</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>2277</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.c. Retention Studies

The CSU participates in a retention study from the Center for Institutional Data Exchange and Analysis. There are 294 institutions, including 102 in our Carnegie classification (and a number of research institutions such as the UC campuses).

CSUH is one of the few CSU campuses that submit information but do not allow our results to be identified in the publication. One of the reasons for that is our long-standing policy of not releasing average SAT scores.

This study categorizes the institutions by selectivity as:

- Highly Selective: Mean SAT >1100, UC Berkeley is 1330
- Selective: Mean SAT 1045-1100, Arizona State U is 1100
- Moderately Selective: Mean SAT 990-1044, Portland State U is 1019
- Less Selective: Mean SAT <990, All CSUs except SLO.

For the 1993 first time freshmen cohort, as of Fall 1999, here are the numbers that were submitted for the CSU (these numbers are slightly lower than the official ones reported to the Federal Government because they include students who started as part time first time freshmen):

(F93 class) Freshmen who entered 1993
Mean SAT  6-year graduation rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Mean SAT</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLO</td>
<td>1009</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humboldt</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomona</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma</td>
<td>891</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>859</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fullerton</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Jose</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanislaus</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakersfield</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayward</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northridge</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominguez Hills</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Beach</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Bernardino</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not published

Los Angeles          n.a.  n.a.
Maritime Academy     n.a.  n.a.
Monterey Bay         n.a.  n.a.
San Marcos           n.a.  n.a.

So in 1993 our mean SAT scores, compared to the CSUs who reported, were second-to-bottom (but usually Dominguez Hills is lowest) and our 6-year graduation rate was in the lower middle.
2.d. Academic Renewal and Withdrawal Periods

At a recent Academic Senate meeting, Senator Frank Loewenthal made the following proposals: (1) Under Academic renewal, to include both the old and the new grades in computing the student’s GPA, and (2) to reduce the withdrawal period from 7 weeks to 5 weeks. The committee consulted the Office of the Registrar about the matter and found:

2.d.1. Each CSU campus treats student academic renewal somewhat differently. Most campuses have a maximum number of credits for which a student can have academic renewal in. For example, Cal Poly and Chico have a maximum of 20 credits. We were not told of any CSU campus which included the old grade in computing the GPA. It would also appear that inclusion of the old grade in the computation of the GPA would not be academic renewal.

2.d.2. Executive Order No. 268 of 1977, Section 5, reads: “Withdraw from a course (or courses) may be permitted, without restriction or penalty, during a time period established by the campus.” This order seems to leave the maximum withdrawal period up to individual campuses. Reasons for the proposed change at CSUH were not made available to the committee.

3. Other Related Topics

3.a. Plagiarism and Cheating

More than half of all department chairs and a third of all faculty believe that cheating and plagiarism are an increasing problem. A majority of faculty and students do not believe that the problem is increasing. While nearly three quarters of all students had not observed a single case of cheating or plagiarism in the last academic year, only a third of the faculty had observed no cases. One quarter of the students had witnessed at least once case and a few had observed more than ten. About 7% of the faculty encountered more than ten cases of cheating or plagiarism. Nearly all CSUH students are “fully aware” of the definition of plagiarism. Thus the claim that high standards of academic honesty cannot be maintained on the grounds of student ignorance is unfounded. Furthermore, a majority of departments already have a policy on plagiarism and most instructors discuss plagiarism in their classes. Still, nearly a quarter of all students do not agree with the statement that professors “clearly discuss plagiarism.”

(CQ 2) 58% of chairs agree (42% disagree) that cheating and plagiarism are an increasing problem in their department. (FT 68) 49% of faculty disagree (37% agree) that cheating and plagiarism are an increasing problem in their classes. (FT 71) When asked how many times in the last academic year they had encountered plagiarism faculty responded as follows: 7% more than 10 times; 1% 7-10 times; 13% 3-6 times; 33% 1-2 times; 34% none.

(FT 58) 68% of students disagree (15% agree) that cheating and plagiarism are an increasing problem in their classes. (ST 61) Students responded as follows as to how many times in the last academic year they had observed cheating and plagiarism: 73% none, 16% 1-2 times, 7% 3-6 times, 1% 7-10 times, and 3% more than 10 times. 27% of students saw cheating or plagiarism at least once in the past year.

(ST 60) 97% of students are fully aware of the definition of plagiarism. Only 2.4% are not. (FT 59) 71% of students agree (23% disagree) that their professors clearly discuss plagiarism. (FT 69) Faculty members appear to be very proactive with respect to plagiarism. 86% of instructors actively inform students about, monitor and discourage plagiarism. 5% do not. (FT 70) 51% of faculty agree (22% disagree) that their department has a policy on plagiarism.

The survey did not ask faculty and students whether they were aware of university procedures related to the reporting of incidents of academic dishonesty. Nor was there a question to determine if students understood the possible consequences of confirmed academic dishonesty. The committee did attempt to correlate the number of incidents of academic dishonesty reported by faculty and students on the survey with the number of cases referred to the university academic dishonesty process. Our sample of 147 faculty reported no fewer than 211 cases of plagiarism (they were not asked about cheating) in the past academic year. The total number of cases of academic dishonesty observed by the entire CSUH faculty is presumably much larger. However,
the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs reported only 30 inquiries from faculty on cheating and plagiarism during the 1999-2000 academic year. Of the 30 inquiries, 16 cases were submitted to Student Judicial Services resulting in 8 suspensions (for variable lengths of time), 5 probationary sanctions and 2 cases of negotiated withdrawal from the university. One case was dropped. According to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, 13 Academic Dishonesty Reports were forwarded to that office in 1999-2000, with a ten-year average of 9 cases per year. A comparison of the results of the survey and the official data reported by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs leads to the conclusion that most cases of academic dishonesty were handled informally by individual faculty members without initiating official procedures. There is no record of how individual faculty members handled different kinds of infractions.

Faculty members who contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs concerning possible cases of academic dishonesty are advised of three possible ways of proceeding. The first way is to handle the case "in the classroom" alone through the grading process, giving a zero on an exam, asking the student to drop the course or submitting a grade of F, for example. The second way is to report the case on an Academic Dishonesty Form through the department, the school office and ultimately the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The third way is to submit the case to Student Judicial Services in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Recommendations:

The University needs to redouble its efforts to ensure an honest academic environment for all students. Faculty members have an obligation to maintain the integrity of their evaluation measures. All departments should establish policies on and monitor practices designed to minimize cheating and plagiarism. Departments should require that all faculty discuss cheating and plagiarism with their classes and establish clear policies on their syllabi. However, there is an important element missing from the university’s approach to academic dishonesty: the absence of well-defined guidelines concerning appropriate sanctions for specific acts of academic dishonesty. The absence of such guidelines leaves individual faculty members both isolated in the face of cheating and free to consider a wide range of actions, from doing nothing to recommending expulsion.

3.b. Grading

As reflected in the questions on writing, reading and other skills, except technology, most faculty members do not believe, as a whole, that CSUH students are performing at the college level. (FT 74) 46% strongly and 35% somewhat agree that “many students who come to Hayward are not prepared for college.” Only 14% disagree. (CQ 31) 60% of chairs strongly agree that students are more unprepared than five years ago and another 15% somewhat agree. (ST 64) Students agree, but to a lesser extent. 14% strongly and 41% somewhat agree (31% disagree) that many students who come to Hayward are not prepared for college-level work.

Students believe that testing and grading at CSUH is fair. Based on the 1999 Student Needs and Priorities Survey, students rated the fairness of testing and grading as excellent 18%, good 54%, fair 22%, and poor 5%. Graduate students rated the fairness of testing and grading as excellent 25%, good 52%, fair 19%, poor 4%, and very poor 1%.

The faculty’s negative perception of student ability is not reflected in self-reported grading standards. (FT 5) 55% of faculty report giving an average grade of B. 10% give an average grade of A, while 22% give an average grade of C. Even further removed are the actual grades submitted by CSUH faculty. According to the Office of Institutional Research, 35% of CSUH undergraduates have a GPA of 3.15+. 70-80% of credential/grad program students maintain a GPA of 3.5+. In spite of faculty concern about the decline in preparation of students, there has been no decline in the average mean GPA at graduation over the last twenty years (2.99, Office of Institutional Research and Analysis).

There is considerable discrepancy between department chairs and faculty as whole on the question of grade inflation. 35% of department chairs agree, while 60% disagree, that grade
inflation is a problem in their department. However, 75% of faculty agree, while 14% disagree, that grade inflation is a problem. Many faculty link grade inflation to the desire for good student evaluations. 57% of faculty agree, while 28% disagree, that grade inflation is related to wanting good student evaluations. In contrast, students deny ([ST 87]76% disagree) that instructors give easy grades because they want good student evaluations. Students also deny ([ST 86] 80% disagree) with the charge that they tend to give better student evaluations to easy teachers. Office of Institutional Research and Analysis data do not indicate any grade inflation over the past 10 years.

Department chairs and their faculty differ on the extent to which departments confer on grading. 60% of chairs report that their departments engage in oversight and discussion of grading. Only 28% of faculty agree, while 54% disagree. (FT63)

Recommendations:

Most desirable would be the development of a student-faculty compact to work collectively to raise expectations of student performance. All groups at the university have an interest in such a change since the long-term result will be a better education for the student, a more rewarding teaching experience for the instructor, and a better reputation for the institution. The ideal solution would be for students and faculty together to embrace the idea of raising standards. The sharing of grade data within and among departments could be a first step to fruitful dialogue on grading standards. Departments could also consider specific proposals such as course-wide finals for multi-sectioned courses.

Given the current crisis of student enrollment at the university and the parallel pressure on departments to maintain enrollment in classes (budgets being determined by enrollments), only a university-wide consensus to increase standards is likely to have much of an effect. Since there is a commonly held view among the faculty (although a question not asked in the survey) that students are not working up to their potential, raising standards need not result in a major increase in student failure rates.

On a regular basis, all departments should compare grading policies and discuss the amount of work expected of students.

3.c. Writing Across the Curriculum

(FT 6, ST 6) There is broad agreement among faculty (93%) and students (86%) that the quality of writing is important for all university students. Three quarters of all faculty members find that students cannot write at the college level. Over one third of the faculty assert that student writing skills have declined in the past five years.

(ST 10) 67% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their professors include formal writing assignments in all courses. (ST 11) Overwhelmingly (79%) students thought that the amount of writing was “about right.” Only a few (10%) believed that there was too much writing while about the same number (11%) believed there was too little.

Student comfort with writing assignments contrasts with the widespread. (FT 7) 76% of faculty contend that students are not able to write at the college level. Further, while 44% of faculty believe that student writing ability remains unchanged, 37% find that their students’ writing skills have declined in the last 5 years, as opposed to 8% who see improvement over that same period. (CQ 21) 75% of department chairs believe that students are less able to produce college-level writing than five years ago.

(FT 10) 49% of the faculty strongly agree that they include formal writing assignments in all their courses. Another 23% somewhat agree with the statement.

There seems to be some movement among faculty to assign more writing. (FT 11) Nearly a quarter of all Faculty (22%) report assigning more writing than previously as opposed to 11% who assign less. However, most faculty (53%) report no change in the amount of
writing required. (CQ 22) 40% of department chairs agree that their faculty assign less writing than 5 years ago; 45% disagree.

(FT 8) Faculty are reticent (48% oppose while 39% favor) to take on the task of teaching writing in the academic disciplines. Students are also split on the notion of teaching writing in the discipline (51.4% agree while 38.1% disagree). (FT 9) On the other hand, a majority of faculty members (55%) say that they have a "specific writing plan." (PLWS) Chairs were split evenly on the question of whether their department had a written plan in the area of writing skills. (DVWS) However, more departments are making this commitment; 63% affirmed, while 37% denied, that their department had plans to develop writing skills among their students.

There is some variance among the groups as to the existence of formal departmental writing plans. (ST 9) 41% of students agree while 35% disagree that their major has a "specific writing plan." (PLWS) Chairs were split evenly on the question of whether their department had a written plan in the area of writing skills. (DVWS) However, more departments are making this commitment; 63% affirmed, while 37% denied, that their department had plans to develop writing skills among their students.

Students made 295 comments concerning writing. Many of the comments reported that better writing skills were needed, developed either through the English Department or through the disciplines, with clear expectations (49/295 or 17%). Some students felt that CSUH has low writing standards. Others reported that other students have low writing skills (and one included some faculty) (23/295 or 8%). A number felt that their skills have improved while at Hayward (22/295 or 7%). Two students reported that none of their teachers had given written assignments yet.

Faculty offered 71 comments related to writing. They may be regrouped as follows.

Nearly half of the faculty comments (33/71 or 46%) revolved around the "abysmal," writing skills, "incoherent sentence construction," lack of "basic high school skills," and lack of "critical thinking" that make it difficult for so many of our students to compete. Some faculty insisted on the dividing line between two groups of students, those who can communicate effectively and those who can't.

Faculty suggestions included more support for ESL students (9/71 or 13%), greater use of Graduate Writing Assistants, and support for faculty in implementing writing across the curriculum (13/71 or 18%). Objections were raised that some classes were too large to assign much writing (7/71 or 10%)

**Recommendations:**

The university must take seriously the overwhelming faculty perception that CSUH students do not write at the college level. A university-wide approach such as writing across the curriculum is preferable for two reasons. In a time of enrollment pressure, individual faculty and departmental efforts to raise standards could have negative budgetary implications for them. Furthermore, unless all faculty assist in raising the writing level of students, the burden will fall disproportionately on those who make the commitment to improve student writing. All other faculty would be receiving a "free ride."

The rapid establishment of the student achievement center would be an ideal first step since the center would provide the institutional support for faculty committed to the improvement of writing who feel that they have neither the time nor the training to teach writing. The Center should serve the needs of evening and weekend students.

All departments and programs should establish writing plans designed to improve the writing of student majors.

Where practicable, all faculty should incorporate writing in their classes and should make the quality of writing an integral part of the grade.
3.d. Final Exams

Final Exam Period

The hours of the final exam are included in the minimum number of contact hours required for accreditation. According to the university catalogue, “Final examinations are administered only during final exam week and only at the times scheduled by the university… Exceptions for compelling reasons are authorized in writing by the department chair with a copy to the school dean.”

(FT 88) 85% of faculty meet with the class during the final exam period; 8% do not. There is considerable variation by major. (ST 81) 67% of students report class meetings during the final exam period as opposed to 33% who report no class meeting during final exams.

Recommendations:

The prevailing interpretation of the catalogue seems to be that take-home finals or finals during the last week of regularly scheduled classes are acceptable as long as the class meets for academic purposes during the regularly scheduled exam period. Departments should be sure that instructors use the final exam period for academic purposes.

The Academic Senate needs to clarify university policy concerning final exams as stated in the catalogue, especially regarding exams given during the last week of regular classes.

3.e... Behavior

All groups polled assert that behavioral problems in the classroom are worsening, although this was probably not a fair question to ask of students who, on average, have only attended CSUH for a couple of years. (CQ 29) 55% of chairs agree, while 40% disagree, that there are more behavioral problems with students than five years ago. (FT 72) Most faculty (53%) think the behavior problem remains about the same, while 27% say that it is worse. The survey did not ask faculty if behavior was a problem. Nor did it ask them to identify the level or kinds of classes where problems were most likely to occur. (ST 62) Most students (67%) also believe that behavior problems remain about the same (only 9% say they are increasing while 25% say they are decreasing). (ST 56) 76% of students agree (as against 23% who disagree) that instructors provide guidelines for classroom behavior.

Recommendations:
Faculty should be encouraged, with support from their departments, to establish clear written guidelines on in-class behavior. Some faculty have had success establishing “learning contracts” with students.

3.f. Assigned Readings

When an instructor offers a course and a student signs up to take it they enter into a contract of mutual expectations that is at the core of the learning process. These expectations are specified in the university catalogue (For example, "Generally, you can expect two hours of preparation for each hour of classroom work.") and in the course syllabus. The survey sought to explore the nature of the learning contract on the CSUH campus.

(FT 20) 53% of the faculty assign between 3 and 6 hours of reading per week; 20% assign 1-2 hours, 10% assign 7-10, while 1.4% assign more than 10 hours per week. Since faculty were not asked about the total amount of work per week that they require of students it is difficult to comment on these figures. (ST 19) Students were asked the question “How many hours of reading, on average, do you complete on a weekly basis?” While the question did not specify if this was a per-course average or the total for all courses, the assumption is that respondents gave a per-course figure. 1% of students claim to do no reading per week,
21% do 1-2 hours, 52% do 3-6 hours, 16% 7-10 hours and 10% do more than 10 hours per week.

A majority of students are comfortable with the amount of reading that is required of them. (ST 20) 65% of students say that the amount of reading is about right. 32% say that there is too much while 3% say that there is too little reading.

The CSUH Office of Institutional Research and Analysis has produced a preliminary report on the average number of hours CSUH students study per unit taken. The report is based on a random sampling of 2000 students with 304 responding. The average student studies 1.2 hours per week per academic unit or 4.8 hours per 4-unit class. Students taking fewer units study more per unit (2.4 hours/unit for 0-4 units, 1.8 hours/unit for 5-8 units) while students taking more units study less per unit (1 hour/unit for 17-20 units and .8 hours/unit for 21 or more units). The “typical undergraduate student” (13-16 units per quarter) studies 1.1 hours/unit outside of class, thus devoting between 27 and 34 hours per week to class plus study.

A large minority of faculty fault students for not preparing the assigned readings. (FT 19) More faculty (48%) disagree than agree (37%) that students complete the assigned readings on time. Students see things differently. (ST 18) 60% say that they complete the reading assignments on time while 28% disagree.

Recommendations:

Faculty need to remind students about the average number of hours of preparation expected of them per week (2 hours per unit according to the catalogue). Course loads should then reflect the overall university guidelines. Faculty cannot complain about the student work ethic if they are not in turn holding students accountable for completing the required work. The alternative is to reduce the guidelines better to reflect the actual amount of work performed by our students.

3.g. Completion of All Assignments

In the survey, faculty and students were asked if completion of all assignments was required to receive credit in a class. (FT 61) 77% of faculty agreed that this was the case, while 16% said that they did not require the completion all assignments. 76% of students agreed while 23% disagreed with the same statement.

Recommendations:

While it is common for some instructors to “drop” a certain number of homework or other assignments when averaging the final grade, it should not be the practice that students are allowed to pass classes after failing to complete major assignments (scraping by with a C or a pass on the basis of the exams when the term paper has not been completed for example).

3.h. Correspondence Between Faculty and Students

The survey asked one question related to correspondence with students. (ST 83) 53% of students claim to have no correspondence with faculty. However, 44% claim 1-2 hours, 2% claim 3-6 hours, 2% claim 7-10 hours and .3% correspond with faculty for more than 10 hours per week. (FT 90) 4% of the faculty do not correspond with students, 56% correspond 1-2 hours, 25% correspond 3-6 hours, 2% correspond 7-10 hours and 3.4% correspond more than 10 hours per week. This issue begs for further analysis. Faculty and students involved in on-line courses were not asked to subtract this “correspondence” which includes class time and office hours. Faculty did not say whether they were able to handle e-mail correspondence during their regular office hours. Nor do we know what form(s) the correspondence took.
3.i. Office Hours

(FT 86) Faculty are mostly aware (92%) that office hours are required. (FT 87) Overwhelmingly (93%), faculty agree to meet students outside of regularly scheduled office hours. (FT 89) Full time faculty and lecturers together report holding the following office hours: 8% 1-2 hours, 77% 3-6 hours, 3.4% 7-10 hours and 4% 10+ hours.

(ST 78) 76% of students knew that faculty were required to keep office hours, while 24% said that they did not know. (ST 79) 92% of students affirm that instructors hold their office hours (9% say they do not). (ST 80) 89% agree, against 11% who do not, that faculty will meet them outside of normal office hours. Students were not asked whether they felt that faculty office hours were convenient. However, they did estimate the number of office hours maintained by faculty. (ST 82) 1.4% said none, 39% said 1-2 hours, 56% said 3-6 hours, 4% said 7-10 hours and .4% said 10+ hours.

(ST 57) According to students, most faculty do not require students to meet with them during office hours. 56% strongly disagree, 22% somewhat disagree, while 13% agree and 3% strongly agree that faculty require office visits. (FT 67) Faculty responses confirm student perceptions. Only 18% of faculty require office hour attendance, while 74% do not. The survey did not ask how many students make use of office hours.

Recommendations:

Faculty should make every effort to encourage/require students to attend office hours. While no such correlation was attempted in this survey, the academic literature suggests that contact with faculty is an important ingredient of student success. Weaker students are more likely to receive the help that they need; stronger students are more likely to be challenged to do their best. Both will have extra opportunities for oral communication. Both are more likely to improve their academic performance and to achieve their individual potential.