TO: The Executive Committee
FROM: Committee on Instruction and Curriculum
SUBJECT: Monitoring Compliance with Previously Approved Caps for General Education Areas C4 & D4
PURPOSE: For Approval by the Executive Committee and (possibly) information to the Senate

BACKGROUND
INFORMATION: In June 2003, the Academic Senate approved course enrollment caps of 35 for upper division General Education courses selected to meet the humanities and social science requirement (02-03 CIC 12 amended). Those caps were instated to ensure that the Senate-approved advanced writing components in C4 and D4 were met. The purpose of the course caps was specifically to allow faculty the work space to meet the writing components of these two GE requirements: a minimum of 4500 words of writing for humanities courses, and a significant research writing requirement for social science courses.

Over the years since the approvals were first given, there have been a growing number of courses offered at much higher capacities, casting doubt on the ability of the teaching faculty to meet the GE outcomes.

Absent effective GE assessment of the upper division learning outcomes, the enrollment cap violations suggest that with enrollments of 50 or more students in many cases students are not being held to the writing requirements outlined in the student learning outcomes governing the courses.

Further, the growing existence of such high course capacities suggests increasing pressure from administrators, increasing lack of knowledge of the GE requirements, and/or simple disregard of the existing requirements. Despite the demands of very difficult budget times, it is the intent of the GE Subcommittee and CIC to enforce the Academic Senate’s commitment to supporting the student learning outcomes and, particularly, the commitment to support student acquisition of writing competencies appropriate for college-educated students.
Therefore, the GE Subcommittee recommends that the following policy be approved:

Monitoring: The GE Director is charged with

1. reviewing the course caps each term for all courses carrying a C4 or D4 indicator,

2. notifying each chair of their failure to comply with Academic Senate set GE requirements, and

3. requesting that enrollment caps be adjusted to reflect Academic Senate requirements.

Consequences: Departments that fail to meet Academic Senate writing outcome requirements AND/OR COURSE CAPS COMPLIANCE will have the GE designation removed from the course for all future terms. Reinstatement will require re-review of the course through the Academic Senate’s course review process and strong commitments from the department chairs that they will comply with the learning outcomes in the future.

In the case that the Director fails to notice over-cap enrollments until after the term has started or enrollments have exceeded the limit, the department will be expected to provide written explanation of how the course will meet the GE learning outcomes, adjust the cap at the next offering, or apply for a waiver of the cap. Failure to comply will result in removal of the course from GE area approval.

Waivers: If a department demonstrates that students are meeting the learning outcomes for writing in their courses, despite larger enrollments, through the use of Graduate Writing Assistants, readers, etc., and can demonstrate that students are receiving feedback on writing and allowed to submit at least one draft for comments before final papers are due, the GE Subcommittee may vote to continue the course’s GE designation, for no longer than one academic year.

Passed by the GE Subcommittee on 3-9-09 and passed by CIC via email vote 3-12-09, with several revisions, and with one CIC member expressing the opinion that this document should go to the Senate for approval.