

Report on the Credit/Noncredit Policy

Submitted to

**The Academic Senate for California
Community Colleges**

by Leon P. Baradat
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Annotations to the Credit/Noncredit Report

By Leon Baradat

The credit/noncredit issue arose in response to supplementary language in ABS requiring a study of the question. Since ABS is the bill funding community colleges, and since the legislature has previously refused to fund noncredit courses offered at CSUC, the potential relationship of this study to community college funding was abundantly clear to all involved.

The Academic Senate faced a dilemma. By helping with the study The Academic Senate could have unwillingly become a party to a process which could encourage the legislature not to fund certain community college offerings. By refusing to participate in the study, however, the Academic Senate would have abandoned the establishment of criteria for credit/noncredit to those who hold different views on the subject than its own. Therefore, the faculty chose to participate fully in the study.

The Chancellor created a taskforce on which the faculty held a small minority of seats but the faculty contribution was not inconsiderable. The taskforce readily agreed on two points: 1) credit/noncredit was not a rational criteria upon which legislature should determine funding for community college courses, and 2) therefore, the taskforce would develop its report based solely upon the educational merits of the issue and not be concerned with the potential economics of the matter.

Because it was impossible for the taskforce to complete its work in the time requested by the legislature, the taskforce submitted its report in two parts. Part I was submitted on January 1, 1980. Part I of the report established the criteria by which credit and noncredit courses are to be distinguished. Please refer to the page headed "Part I".¹

The pages headed "Part II" include the substance of the second part of the report on credit/noncredit submitted to the Board of Governors in July 1980. These pages were taken from the Chancellor's report on Board actions dated July 30, 1980. A report on Part II of the credit/noncredit report was forwarded to the legislature in the Fall of 1980.

Before specific annotations are made about Part II, some general comments are appropriate.

- 1) While Part I establishes criteria by which credit courses and noncredit courses are distinguished, Part II distinguishes between the kinds of credit and noncredit courses offered at the community colleges.
- 2) Part II specifies the applicability of credit courses to transfer status, certificates and degrees.
- 3) While Part II defines the various kinds of credit and noncredit courses offered at community colleges, it clearly leaves to each college the designation of each course at the college to the categories described in the report. Hence, each local college is to determine to which category each of its courses applies. This process will necessitate a total course and program review in each campus. Such a review will not only serve to educate the college personnel about the offerings at their institutions but it may also naturally lead into a general reevaluation of the quality and meanings of degrees, certificates, transfer programs, general education requirements, etc.
- 4) The college academic senates, along with students and administration, are specifically given the responsibility of advising the board of trustees on course designation.
- 5) If a faculty wishes to offer a course in a status for which the course does not qualify (i.e. credit, transfer, etc.) the course can be modified so that it can be appropriately offered under the desired category.
- 6) A particular subject matter can be treated in courses offered under more than one category simultaneously provided each course satisfies the criteria of the category in which it is offered. Hence, while a community chorus class may be offered in the noncredit made for instance, another vocal music course may also be offered for credit simultaneously.

For specific annotations on important parts of the report, please turn to the section entitled "Part II".

¹ This portion of the handout was taken from CPEC Analysis of the credit/noncredit study dated October 20, 1980.

Part I

Criteria for Credit and Noncredit courses

There was general agreement among those participating in the study that the designation of Community College courses as credit or noncredit should not be the basis for funding decisions by the State, since the designation is not necessarily correlated with the criterion of public versus private interest. While agreeing with this viewpoint, the Board of Governors adopted as minimum standards the following criteria for offering courses in the credit and noncredit modes at the end of the first phase of the study in December 1979.

“Credit” courses	“Noncredit” courses ²
<p>A credit course is a course which, at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is approved by the local district governing board in accordance with standards established by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges as a collegiate course meeting the needs of students eligible for admission, and has been approved by the responsible officials and faculty bodies as being of appropriate rigor. 2. Is taught by a credentialed teacher. 3. Teaches toward a set of instructional goals common to all students enrolled. 4. Provides for measurement of student performance and culminates in a formal recorded grade based on uniform standards which is permanently recorded and is available as an official student evaluation. 5. Grants units of credit based on specified relationship between the number of units and performance criteria. 6. Enrolls only students who meet prerequisites. 7. Is offered as described in an outline and/or curriculum guide in official college files. That outline and/or curriculum guide must specify the scope, goals, content, instructional methodology and methods of evaluation for determining whether or not these goals have been met. 8. Permits repeated enrollment only with prior written approval of college authorities. 	<p>A noncredit course is a course which, at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is approved by the local district governing board in accordance with Standards established by the Board of Governors of the California Community College as a course meeting the educational the needs of students eligible for admission. 3. Treats subject matter and uses resource materials; teaching methods, and standards of attendance and achievement appropriate for students eligible to attend. <p>-----</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Is taught by a credentialed teacher. <p>-----</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Is open for admission to all those 18 years of age or older or are otherwise eligible to attend who can profit from the experience. 4. Is conducted in accordance with a course outline. <p>-----</p>

² The criteria have been reordered so as to make parallel with criteria for “credit” courses.

Part II

Annotations

The Board of Governors adopted this report in principle at its July 24-25, 1980 meeting. Title 5 language must now be developed requiring the implementation of the report's provisions. Because the provisions of the report will necessitate a complete review of all college programs and courses, it is recommended that the faculty begin developing the mechanism for such a review at the earliest possible date. The questions and issues which each local faculty must address are listed at the end of this packet.

This paragraph assures that the taskforce hopes that implementation of the report will cause as little disruption at the college as possible.

Please note the specific inclusion of the academic senate in the course designation process.

The Senate has voted that it would be better if noncredit courses are not allowed to count toward the associate degree, but if such is the case, the Senate strongly urges that careful attention be given to the underlined phrases on the opposite page. This provision was added to the document to facilitate current practices at San Francisco City College and possibly other colleges which regularly give credit toward the associate degree from noncredit courses, arguing that this process gives students greater flexibility and that it is economical since teachers of noncredit courses are paid less at San Francisco City College than are credit course teachers. The senate argues that this practice is academically unsound and urges that faculties not allow it at their colleges. The academic senate settled for the underlined language only because it was unable to persuade the Board to eliminate this practice all together. Unfortunately, reference to the option is liberally sprinkled throughout the document. Such repeated reference to this practice appears suspiciously like an invitation for other districts to adopt it.

The basic classification appears in regular type while information is added in italics to explain the classification and to help describe or define the categories and uses of courses.

Clarification of Classification

This classification is not intended to influence the organizational pattern which a given college district, nor should it be construed that a service area for which state support is not provided is, therefore, prohibited. Not all colleges offer courses in all categories. Not all colleges agree on the instructional mode of every course offered. The classification system is intended to include all the instructional and community services of all the colleges and to describe them so that they may be understood and identified.

The specific designation of courses and services within the classification described in this document is an educational matter which is to be determined by local campus boards upon recommendation of the local academic senate,³ students, and administration in accordance with minimum standards adopted by the Board of Governors. Existing law and regulations will be followed regarding review of new courses and programs until and unless those laws and regulations are revised.

It is assumed that, in determining in which category courses will be placed, first will be decided the purpose for which the course is expected to be used and whether the course will be offered in the credit instructional mode or in the noncredit instructional mode. Then the appropriate category will be selected.

Noncredit courses are not intended to be used toward transfer or toward Associate Degrees. In some cases, upon petition and certification by the local Board of Trustees of credit-level achievement and prescribed academic rigor, and evidence of prescribed competence as approved by the faculty, such courses may count toward Associate Degrees.

³ Pending further decisions regarding delineation of function of "adult education" it is assumed that all noncredit course offerings of the community colleges will be coordinated with secondary school offerings through RAVEC's or in some similar manner.

Credit Courses

The academic level of the offerings rather than the subject matter determines transferable status. The underlined phrase is the essential criteria which should be applied. An identical course need not be offered at the four year intuitions, but a transfer course must be equivalent in educational respects...”

Ordinarily, credit courses may not be repeated for credit; however, course repetition may be permitted when the governing board has designated certain courses that may be repeated for credit. Such courses will be so designated in the college catalog. Courses so designated must provide for either 1) a substantive change in subject matter, e.g., independent study or 2) increasing levels of student performance.

Classification

I. Instructional Services

Instructional services include all classroom lecture and laboratory instruction and independent study offered for credit and instruction offered in a noncredit mode in the areas of adult basic education, personal development and survival, parenting and family support, community and civic development and trade and industrial/vocational training.

Local Boards of Trustees may classify courses in a discipline or from related disciplines as listed in the Community Colleges “Taxonomy of Programs”: October 1979 or any subsequent edition of this taxonomy in accordance with the purpose for which the course is expected to be used and whether the course will be offered in the credit instructional mode or in the noncredit instructional mode. The classification does not limit the categorization of a course by the Board of Trustees from any discipline or related disciplines to either credit or noncredit provided the course meets the definition established in E.C. 78200, namely, “an instructional unit of an area or field of organized knowledge, usually provided on a quarter, semester, year, or prescribed length-of-time basis.”

A. Liberal Arts and Sciences Education

Liberal arts and sciences and general education courses to meet the needs of students of the 13th and 14th grades and courses of study deemed necessary to provide for the civic and liberal education of the citizens of the community.

1. Baccalaureate Oriented Programs and Courses

Courses of study certified as transfer by the local community college. These courses of study are equivalent in educational respects to courses offered at the freshman-Sophomore level at four-year institutions of higher education and are recognized by the University of California, the California State Universities and Colleges, or an accredited independent college or university in California as part of the required or elective preparation toward a major degree or as part of a general education requirement and are subject to the published standards for matriculation, attendance, and achievement of the university, college, or system.

Credit Courses

This category is a gray area. Note that the two underlined phrases seem to be in contradiction. The phrase “of freshman or sophomore college level” was deliberately written so as to indicate that these courses are college level by virtue of their academic rigor and not simply because they are being taught at a community college. Yet, because they are “not intended for transfer” there is some doubt as to their collegiate status. The courses in this category are expected to be very few in number. They are courses occupying an ambivalent academic status such as college math or elementary algebra. We are concerned, however, that this category may be abused; that unless faculties are vigilant, a large number of sub-college courses may be placed here.

These are remedial courses:

Credit Courses - Not transferable

Only a limited number of units from this category should apply to the associate degree. The limit adopted by the local board with the advice of the local academic senate is to be reported to the Chancellor. Until only a few days before the meeting at which the Board of Governors adopted this policy, this section carried the recommendation that local boards allow no more than nine units from this category to count toward the degree. That language was removed by the Chancellor's staff without the knowledge or consent of the committee. The academic senate recommends that no more than 10% of the units applying to an associate degree come from this category.

Non-Credit Courses - Not applicable to associate
Not applicable to transfer

Courses in this section are offered for credit and they transfer to four-year institutions of higher education. These courses also apply to Associate Degrees and Certificates.

2. Associate Degree Programs and Courses

Courses of study of freshman or sophomore college level leading to an Associate Degree as determined by the local district governing board.

Courses in this section are offered for credit. Such courses apply to Associate Degrees and Certificates but are not intended for transfer to four-year institutions of higher education.

3. Developmental Programs and Courses

Courses of study to develop basic skills in mathematics, reading, and English for adults and for helping individuals acquire educational skills and knowledge necessary for pursuing freshman and sophomore level offerings in the community colleges.

a. Compensatory Programs and Courses

Courses of study to meet the academic and personal needs of educationally disadvantaged students and to bridge the gap between secondary school and college for the student with specifically identified deficiencies.

Courses in this section are normally offered for credit. A limited number of such courses may apply to the Associate Degree. Courses in this category may apply to Certificates.

The local board of trustees shall determine the limit, on the number of such courses which may apply to the Associate Degree and shall report the limit to the Chancellor.

b. Adult Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills Programs and Courses

Courses of study in basic education and those subjects required for the high school diploma (E.C. 8530-8531), and noncredit courses taken for the same purposes as those described in 3.a. above.

Courses in this section are designated as noncredit. They apply to elementary and secondary achievement and recognition only.

Usually Noncredit Courses - Not applicable to associate - not applicable to transfer - May, however, be offered for credit if thought appropriate by the local authorities.

The academic senate, along with virtually every other group testifying on this policy, urged that specific mention of courses be eliminated from the report on the grounds that such specific reference could invite budget cuts in the courses mentioned. The Chancellor's staff prevailed, arguing that the legislature had traditionally protected these areas and that specific reference to them would hopefully assure their continued funding.

4. Community (Continuing) Education Programs and Courses

Courses of study in the liberal arts and sciences determined to be of public (versus private) benefit and designed to assist students and/or students' families to be more self-sufficient and more productive as citizens of the community.

Courses are included in this category when it is determined by the local board of trustees that the student is best served if the subject matter is taught in the noncredit instructional mode. These courses are distinct from credit courses of a similar nature, which may include identical subject matter, in that they do not meet the Carnegie Requirements for units of credit and/or they are not required to meet the minimum requirements for credit courses as established by the Board of Governors on December 6, 1979. These courses are distinct from community service classes, which may include similar subject matter, in that they are determined to be of more public than personal interest.

a. Personal Development and Survival Courses

Courses of study designed to assist students with special needs to cope with their special problems and to become independent, healthy, participating persons.

- (1) *Courses of study in English for Foreigners including all English as a Second Language courses defined by Education Code Section 8511. English as a Second Language includes courses in speaking, reading, and writing skills for non-and limited-English speaking adults.*
- (2) *Courses of study in Citizenship which are courses in national, state, and local government designed to prepare immigrants to meet the requirements for naturalization and full citizenship. (E.C. 8530, 8531, or 8533)*
- (3) *Courses of study for Substantially Handicapped Persons who have handicaps which are likely to continue indefinitely or for a prolonged period and whose handicap results in substantial functional limitation in one or more of the following activities: self-care, receptive or expressive language, learning, motivation, self-direction, capacity for independent living, or economic self-sufficiency. (Title 5, Sections 56000-56024, 56032 and 56350-56360)*
- (4) *Courses of study designed specifically for Older Adult including, but not limited to, courses in health, consumer services, entitlements, and managing money for self-maintenance.*
- (5) *Courses of study in Personal and Career Development including but not limited to, courses in career planning, job seeking, self-assertiveness, interpersonal communication skills, and courses for coping with personal life crises.*

Please note the absence here of any mention of "evidence of prescribed competence as approved by the faculty." Though an unfortunate oversight, it should not be understood to eliminate those features as the operative paragraph for this procedure is found on page 3.

- (6) *Courses of study designed to promote directly Physical and Mental Health including, but not limited to, first aid, lifesaving, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and safety and courses designed to assist students in the early identification, treatment, and prevention of common major diseases; in planning a program of nutrition and exercise; in managing and reducing stress; and in developing physical fitness.*

Courses in this category are normally designated as noncredit. However, the specific designation of courses in this category is an educational matter which is determined by local governing boards upon the recommendation of the local academic senate, students, and administration in accordance with minimum standards adopted by the Board of Governors. If it is determined that the course will be offered for credit it should be placed in the appropriate category.

Noncredit courses may, in some cases, count toward the Associate Degree upon petition and certification by the local Board of Trustees of credit-level and prescribed academic rigor.

b. Parenting and Family Support Courses

Courses of study designed to strengthen the family as a unit including, but not limited to, courses in home economics, home repair and remodeling, personal money management, parent cooperative preschool, child growth and development, and parent child relationships.

c. Community and Civic Development Courses

Courses of study designed to teach adult citizens procedures for effective participation in community and civic improvement *including, but not limited to, courses in mechanisms of local government, legal methods for effecting change, citizen planning for community development, and in the conservation and development of human and natural resources.*

d. General and Cultural Courses

Courses of study designed to prepare students for the responsibilities they have in common as citizens in a democracy and to enhance the overall quality of life in the community *including, but not limited to, courses in self- understanding; language and literature; science and technology; social and human relationships; the American heritage and democratic institutions; cultural, moral, and ethical values.*

Courses in sections b, c, and d are designated as noncredit. However, the specific designation of courses in these sections is an educational.

Credit Courses - Apply to associates. May apply to transfer provided they, like all transfer level courses, are “equivalent in educational respects” to offerings at accredited four year colleges.

Please note the absence here of any mention of “evidence of prescribed competence as approved by the faculty.” Though an unfortunate oversight, it should not be understood to eliminate those features as the operative paragraph for this procedure is found on page 3.

Credit Courses - Apply to associates. May apply to transfer provided they, like all transfer level courses, are “equivalent in educational respects” to offerings at accredited four year colleges.

Please note the absence here of any mention of “evidence of prescribed competence as approved by the faculty.” Though an unfortunate oversight, it should not be understood to eliminate those features as the operative paragraph for this procedure is found on page 3.

Noncredit Courses - Not applicable to associate - Not applicable to transfer.

Please note the absence here of any mention of “evidence of prescribed competence as approved by the faculty.” Though an unfortunate oversight, it should not be understood to eliminate those features as the operative paragraph for this procedure is found on page 3.

Matter which is determined by local governing boards upon the recommendations of the local academic senate, students, and administration in accordance with minimum standards adopted by the Board of Governors. If it is determined that the course will be offered for credit it should be placed in the appropriate category.

B. Occupational Education

Occupational education courses of study prepare persons for an occupation without the need for subsequent training or education in an institution of higher education. Occupational education courses at a community college may also provide for upgrading of job related skills.

1. Vocational/Technical Associate Degree and Certificate Programs and Courses

Courses of study determined to be of college level providing educational preparation for an occupation at the semiprofessional, technical or skilled level (including apprenticeship when offered in the credit instructional mode).

Courses in this section are normally offered for credit but may be offered as noncredit classes. If offered for credit, such courses apply to Associate Degrees and/or occupational Certificates and may transfer to four-year institutions of higher learning.

2. Supplementary Vocational Courses

Courses of study determined to be of college level but not in a degree or certificate sequence providing for retaining, upgrading, or advancement in a specific occupation or group of occupations.

Courses in this section are normally offered for credit but may be offered as noncredit courses. If offered for credit, such courses apply to Associate Degrees and/or Occupational certificates and may transfer to four-year institutions of higher education.

3. Trade and Industrial Programs and Courses

Courses of study to provide vocational education services to the public and to meet the particular vocational education needs of the local community including Occupational/Vocational (E.C. 8532) programs and apprenticeship programs and home economic programs when offered in the noncredit mode.

Courses in this section are offered in the noncredit mode. Noncredit courses may, in some cases, count towards the Associate Degree upon petition and certification by the local Board of Trustees of credit level achievement and prescribed academic rigor.

Noncredit Courses

The provision allowing noncredit courses to count toward the associate degree in certain circumstances does not apply to community Service courses and programs.

This report suggests that user fees may be charged for community service courses.

II. Community Services

Community services include all noncredit instruction classes and cultural and recreational activities exclusive of those defined under Instructional Services above. Community service classes and activities are characterized by the fact that they serve more personal than public interests.

A. Community Service Classes

Since it is presumed that classes as described below are of more personal than public interest they are categorized as community service classes. Also, when other courses which might be considered properly categorized under Instructional Services are determined to be of more personal than public interest they are offered as community service classes even though they are not included in the following descriptions of community service classes.

1. Avocational Classes

Classes which meet a personal desire for a specialized though nonprofessional pursuit outside one's regular occupation and that one normally finds interesting, enjoyable, or relaxing. *Avocational classes include, but are not limited to classes in photography; woodworking and other handicrafts; ceramics; and classes in the performing arts such as drama, chorus, and instruction in musical instruments which are not a part of the Instructional Services Program.*

2. Recreational Classes

Classes which meet the personal need for play or which restore the individual to health or create his or her energies anew. Recreational classes include classes which require physical activity but are not a part of the physical education Instructional Services program *and include such classes as those in dance, archery, baseball, basketball, hiking, boxing, firearms/marksmanship, football, gymnastics, soccer, swimming, tennis, track and field, golf, volleyball, wrestling, fishing, and intramural sports.*

3. Conferences, Seminars, Workshops, and Forums

Community services education offered in specialized format of short duration to meet specific community needs.

B. Community Service Activities

1. Civic Center Activities

Activities occurring in community college facilities designated as civic centers in accordance with the provisions of Education Code Sections 82530-82547. *Facilities used by the community in accordance with the act may include an auditorium or lecture hall, a classroom, theater, gymnasium, soccer field, stadium, tennis court, swimming pool, all-weather track, or other community college facility.*

2. Cultural Activities

Activities of general cultural interest, including visual and performing arts. Community service cultural activities *include presentation and exhibition of art, choral and instrumental concerts, dance, film series, forums and debates, guest speakers and lecturers, drama productions, and museum and planetarium programs.*

3. Community Development Activities

Activities of particular service to individuals or groups of individuals within the community *including counseling, tutoring, cultural events, child care, and activities provided for older adults, re-entry women, minorities, the poor and the handicapped. Community development activities provide career assistance, train volunteers for community agencies, inform citizens of key environmental issues, and elicit citizen participation in community planning.*

4. Outreach Activities

Activities of particular service to individuals or groups of individuals who for some reason are not able to participate in general community activities. *Outreach activities include programs in prisons, detention homes, honor farms, retirement residences, and programs for other special groups which are, for other reasons, isolated from the general community.*

5. Recreational Activities

Activities which are designed to meet the need for play and to restore the individual to health or create his or her anew but are not provided in a class setting. *Recreational activities include those in which participants are spectators at athletic events, active participants in supervised recreational activities, or active participants in non-supervised recreational activities.*

6. Youth Service Activities

Activities of particular service to youth within the community. *Youth service activities include advisement on academic and occupational opportunities, job preparation experiences, job placement referrals, referrals to CETA and SWETA employers, and referrals to sources of legal and medical advice.*

The above categories may be used to classify the instruction and community service offerings of community colleges. They are not mutually exclusive, however, courses may be assigned to one (and only one) category on the basis of the principal objective of the course.

Recommendations For Further Study

As time and work load permit, with strong field participation, address the relative merits of:

- o A certified level of competence for admittance to the transfer program.
- o The use of passage of the high school proficiency examination as a prerequisite for entrance to credit courses, degree programs, or the transfer program.
- o Demonstrated proficiency in basic skills as a requirement for the Associate Degree.

Annotation to above

Part II included a list of recommendations. Among those was the call for study of the above items. CPEC urged the Chancellor's office to advance this study to a higher priority in its scheduled activities. The academic senate joins with CPEC in that appeal.

Questions which must be addressed by local colleges regarding credit/Non-credit policy

Since a complete review of each college program and course is necessary to implement the credit/noncredit policy, it is advisable that the local academic senates begin immediately establishing the mechanisms by which this review will be carried out.

Below is a list of questions and issues which each college must address in implementing the credit/noncredit policy.

1. Which courses at the college are to be offered for credit and which are to be offered for non-credit?
2. Will non-credit courses be allowed to count toward the associate degree in some cases?
 - a. What are those cases?
 - b. How will "prescribed competence" be determined?
 - c. By what mechanism will the faculty certify "prescribed competence?"
3. To which category does each course offered at the college belong?
4. How many units from "Compensatory Programs and Courses" may apply to the associate degree?