

**ACADEMIC SENATE  
Of  
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY  
San Luis Obispo, CA**

**AS-503-98/CC  
RESOLUTION ON  
EXPERIMENTAL COURSES**

- WHEREAS, Experimental or X courses circumvent the peer-review process in that they are not often reviewed by department, college, or university curriculum committees; and
- WHEREAS, Experimental courses, because they are not listed in the catalog, lead to many serious problems with communication of course content to students, transfer credit calculation, automated degree audit, graduate school or employer evaluation of transcripts, etc.; and
- WHEREAS, The established definition of experimental courses is that they "provide an opportunity for experimentation in education without delays that are necessary before new courses and programs can be reviewed for inclusion in the University Catalog" (CAM 490.4); therefore, be it
- RESOLVED: That faculty be encouraged, but not required, to offer specialized courses under variable-content/ focused subtopic course rubrics, or as selected advanced topics courses (470s or 570s). Such courses do get listed in the catalog, and the particular subtitle for the course does appear on the student's transcript; and, be it further
- RESOLVED: That faculty propose a course as experimental only in compelling circumstances. Such compelling circumstances might include the pressing need to offer a course in a newly important subject area, or the sudden availability of a visiting faculty member from another university to teach a new course in his/her specialty; and, be it further
- RESOLVED: That experimental courses receive as many different levels of peer review as time permits, with the minimum being that they are at least reviewed by the Academic Senate Curriculum Committee in order to avoid potential curriculum disputes between colleges or departments.

Recommended effective date: Fall 2000.

Proposed by: The Academic Senate Curriculum Committee  
Date: May 12, 1998  
Revised: May 19, 1998  
Revised: May 28, 1998

**State of California**  
**M e m o r a n d u m**

To: Myron Hood  
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: September 18, 1998

From: Warren J. Baker  
President

Copies: Paul J. Zingg  
Harvey Greenwald

Subject: AS-503-98/CC-Resolution on Experimental Courses

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I am pleased to approve the above-referenced Senate Resolution to be effective with Fall Quarter of 2000-200 1. This Resolution should enhance the peer review process of experimental courses to insure that academic integrity and quality are maintained and unnecessary duplication of courses is eliminated. Minimizing the use of experimental courses should also assist in the evaluation of transfer credits, the production of transcripts for graduate schools and employers, and the advisement of students.

The Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee are to be commended for reviewing this issue and for improving the process to further strengthen the academic quality of our programs.