February 25, 2013

To: Members of the American River College Academic Senate

From: Faculty, Early Childhood Education Department

Subject: Proposed revision to Disciplines list

On the agenda for the Academic Senate Plenary Session in April is the attached proposal to add a new discipline called “Teacher Education” to the disciplines list. We present for your review two concerns we have with the minimum qualifications proposed for this new discipline. It is our hope, that upon review of these concerns, you take a position opposing the proposal and directing Tressa Tabares, our voting delegate to the Spring Plenary, to vote “no” on this proposal on behalf of the ARC faculty.

Objection #1: This proposal establishes a confusing new precedent with respect to minimum qualifications. To teach courses in this discipline, Teacher Education, one must hold BOTH a master’s degree AND a teaching credential. This runs counter to the intent of the Disciplines List.

- The concept of a Disciplines list went into effect in 1990, with the intent of replacing a system that required community college faculty to hold a credential issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

- With a “yes” vote on this proposal, we return to an era when a credential issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing is required for community college teaching.

- The requirement of both a master’s degree AND a teaching credential is unwarranted and adds an unnecessary element of confusion to the minimum qualifications.

- A “no” vote maintains the intent of the Disciplines list and the integrity of the master’s degree, with respect to minimum qualifications for disciplines requiring a master’s degree. (This proposal renders a master’s degree in the approved disciplines insufficient.)

Objection #2: The proposed minimum qualifications for the new Teacher Education discipline exclude faculty with a master’s degree in early childhood education or child development.

- This makes little sense, since a master’s degree in early childhood education or child development includes strategies for teaching and
learning from infancy through adolescence, as well as content related to the academic domains of elementary education.

- The sponsors of this proposal state that the “content of teacher education courses and articulation agreements with universities require faculty to possess expertise in K-12 teacher preparation requirements, state content standards, state teacher performance expectations, effective teaching methods and pedagogical practices, and possess experience in a K-12 setting.” Of note, within the new transfer model curriculum (TMC) called “Elementary Teacher Education,” there are only two courses specifically related to “teacher education,” with the degree composed primarily of general education courses. At many colleges, these two “teacher education” courses -- “Introduction to Elementary Classroom Teaching,” and “Child Growth and Development”— are in the department of early childhood education. This is true at American River College. Ironically, if the proposal is approved, faculty with a master’s degree in early childhood education, even those who possess a K-12 teaching credential, would not meet the minimum qualifications.

- The term P-12 (preschool) is replacing K-12 throughout California schools. Our Disciplines List must respond to the workplace of the future. The proposed discipline of Teacher Education will be relevant only to the extent that it meets this expanded vision of education. A “no” vote on this proposal presents an opportunity to be foresighted and to revamp it to include a master’s degree in early childhood education or child development.
Attachment

Text of the Proposal #4 to be voted on at the Spring Plenary:

PROPOSAL #4:
Proposed Revision Discipline: Teacher Education
Organizations: Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs

Current Minimum Qualifications:
Add new discipline

Proposed Change:
Master’s in education, teaching, special education, curriculum and instruction or in a recognized K-12 subject matter, AND hold or have held a state approved K-12 teaching credential, OR the equivalent.

Rationale: This proposal seeks to create a new discipline within the California Community College System titled: Teacher Education. The rationale for this proposal is based on the following:
1) The expanded role of the community colleges in K-12 teacher preparation has resulted in an expansion of the education curriculum offered and articulated with CSU, UC, and California Independent Colleges and Universities.
2) The content of these teacher education courses and the articulation agreements with universities require faculty to possess expertise in K-12 teacher preparation requirements, state content standards, state teacher performance expectations, effective teaching methods and pedagogical practices, and possess experience in a K-12 setting.
3) Although a current Education discipline exists within the community colleges, the minimum qualifications are too broad, do not specify K-12 teaching experience and do not align with state and national teacher preparation program accreditation standards. A proposal to change/narrow the minimum qualifications for this existing discipline