**CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN DETERMINING WHAT CONSTITUTES A BACCALAUREATE LEVEL COURSE**

**COLLEGE OF THE SEQUOIAS**

**(Local Version Spring 2010)**

*(This document was originally approved by the Academic Senate of the California State University in 1986. A slightly modified version was subsequently approved by the Academic Senate of the California Community College in 1987. There are four identified criteria involved in the determination: the institution, the learner, the course, and the pedagogy. The primary differences between these versions are in the course criteria. This local version is the same as the CSU AS and CCC AS versions in all regards except the course criteria. Sections C.1 & C.2 have been modified in an attempt to adjust and clarify our course inclusion criteria).*

Because baccalaureate level coursework is intended to contribute to the student's attainment of the objectives embodied in the baccalaureate degree, courses which are designated as baccalaureate level will meet, as one of several standards, the criterion of having a "bridging" function, helping to move the student from the skills and knowledge expected at entrance toward the competencies expected at graduation.

In areas of the curriculum for which the Intersegmental Senate Committee has identified expected entry level competencies (e.g., English, mathematics, natural sciences), baccalaureate courses shall not replicate the skills and knowledge which are entry expectations but instead will require for satisfactory completion the prior attainment of such skills and knowledge. As comparable statements are developed in other areas of the curriculum, reference to entry‑level expectations will be useful in helping to define baccalaureate level

Various graduation expectations, such as those expressed in the goals of general education, the objectives of the various majors, in the standards for competency, and those expressed in such generalized expectations as "intellectual growth", also will influence the judgment as to what constitutes baccalaureate level coursework. Courses designed by qualified faculty to help qualified students move toward the attainment of those expectations generally will be of baccalaureate level. In such courses faculty judged by their peers to be qualified to teach the courses shall have the determining voice in the decisions as to content, instructional methodology, instructional support resources, and methods and standards for assessing performance. Qualified faculty shall construct and teach baccalaureate courses in ways which assure that the level is appropriate for enhancing the knowledge and skills of the adequately prepared student, and appropriate faculty entities shall have primary responsibility for making course level determinations.

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING BACCALAUREATE LEVEL COURSES

There are four significant elements involved in this determination: the institution, the learner, the course, and the instructor/pedagogy. Course content alone will not determine acceptability for baccalaureate credit. The criteria are phrased in terms of expectations from each of the parties.

**A. Institution**

1. The course shall be taught by a qualified instructor.

2. Qualified faculty, as judged by their peers, shall make the decisions as to course content, instructional

methodology, instructional support requirements, and methods and standards for assessing student

performance.

3. Adequate instructional support resources shall be available to all students who enroll in the course,

including facilities, library materials, and access to qualified faculty outside of class meeting times.

**B. Learner**

The learner shall be required to bring to the course:

1. a level of intellect, skill, prior knowledge, and maturity consistent with entry‑level collegiate

expectations and the stated prerequisite(s), if any, for that course.

2. learning skills and a vocabulary necessary for the completion of a baccalaureate level course.

3. the capacity to think critically and to understand and apply concepts.

**C. Course**

1. All baccalaureate level courses shall:

1. treat subject matter with an intensity and pace that establishes an expectation for significantly

greater learner independence than that required at the secondary level.

1. requires critical thinking demonstrated through performance in reading, writing, homework and/or problem-solving
2. require the student to continue development of communication skills appropriate for higher education
3. move the student toward acquiring competencies expected of university graduates.

.

2. All baccalaureate level courses shall meet at least one of the following:

1. enhances understanding of intellectual, scientific, and cultural concepts and traditions generally

may be considered baccalaureate level.

1. enhances understanding of occupational and professional fields usually requiring experience in higher education as prerequisite to employment in such fields may be considered baccalaureate level if it includes attention to appropriate theories & concepts rather than only upon a focus on the acquisition of technical skills for immediate employment.

EXAMPLE: Business is a vocational department which prepares students for numerous

occupational and professional fields that usually require experience in higher education

(baccalaureate). Many COS Business courses such as BUS 174, Marketing Principles, and BUS

188, Human Relations in Business, include attention to appropriate theories & concepts and

therefore meet the criteria for baccalaureate level. Other COS Business courses such as BUS

240, Banking Skills, and BUS 270, College Keyboarding, focus primarily on the acquisition of

technical skills and therefore do not meet the criteria for baccalaureate level.

EXAMPLE: Most COS Music courses meet the standard criteria for baccalaureate level. Some COS Music courses such as MUS 126AD, Computerized Audio 1; Midi, and MUS 181, Recording Arts 1, do not meet the standard criteria for baccalaureate level and focus primarily on the acquisition of technical skills and therefore do not meet the criteria for baccalaureate level.

EXAMPLE: Most COS Biology courses meet the standard criteria for baccalaureate level. Some COS Biology courses such as BIOL 270, Microbiology Techniques, do not meet the standard criteria for baccalaureate level and focus primarily on the acquisition of technical skills and therefore do not meet the criteria for baccalaureate level.

1. provides instruction in occupational and professional fields not usually requiring experience in

higher education as a prerequisite to such fields may be considered baccalaureate level if the

emphasis is upon providing a general introduction or foundation to the field, (focusing on an

understanding of the field or the theory and concepts that provide the foundation necessary for

advanced courses within the same occupational field) rather than only upon the development of

technical skills required for immediate employment.

EXAMPLE: Automotive is a vocational department which prepares students for occupational fields

that usually does not require experience in higher education (baccalaureate). AUTO 130,

Introduction to Automotive Technology, is an introductory course therefore meets the criteria for

baccalaureate level. AUTO 136, Automotive Electrical Systems, focuses on the theory and

concepts that provide the foundation necessary for advanced courses therefore meets the criteria

for baccalaureate level. All other Automotive courses would be designated as not baccalaureate

level unless a parallel lower division course is identified at a CSU.

EXAMPLE: Paralegal is another vocational department which prepares students for occupational

fields that usually do not require experience in higher education (baccalaureate). PARA 101,

Introduction to Paralegalism, is an introductory course therefore meets the criteria for

baccalaureate level. PARA 102, Legal Terminology, focuses on the theory and concepts that

provide the foundation necessary for advanced courses therefore meets the criteria for

baccalaureate level. All other Paralegal courses would be designated as not baccalaureate level

unless a parallel lower division course is identified at a CSU.

First Draft Submitted by Greg Keen (2-3-10)

Second Draft Submitted by Greg Keen (3-3-10)

Third Draft Submitted by Greg Keen (4-6-10)

Approved by Campus Curriculum Committee (4-17-10)

Approved by Academic Senate with Modifications (5-12-10)

Third Draft Version Approved by Campus Curriculum Committee and sent back to AS for Approval w/o Modifications (5-19-10)

Third Draft Version Approved by Senate (8-25-10)

GK / 9-9-10