

# Special Studies Working Group

## FINAL REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Paul Gray charged the Special Studies Working Group with developing standards and procedures for special studies courses.

The Special Studies Working Group recommends that:

- the checklists developed by the Working Group (in Appendix IV) outlining faculty, student, and department responsibilities for special studies courses be widely publicized and distributed beginning Spring 2003.
- the special studies course proposal form developed by the Working Group (in Appendix IV) be in place by Fall 2003; copies of this form are to be submitted to the Committee on Courses of Instruction each semester for every section of special studies a department offers for academic credit.
- a website be created specifically for special studies courses, including descriptions of what constitutes a special studies course, the policies and procedures that govern such courses, information for students wishing to initiate a special studies course, guidelines and responsibilities for faculty sponsors and departments, sample syllabi, and helpful links.
- deans, department chairs, faculty members, students, and undergraduate advisors be informed of these new policies and procedures through written and online material and via presentations at relevant meetings, beginning Spring 2003; and information related to special studies courses be included in existing hard copy and online publications.
- the campus strengthen the supervision and training of undergraduates serving as course facilitators and acknowledge and recognize faculty and students involved in these courses.
- every department have prior COCI approval to offer the appropriate types and levels of special studies courses.
- Senate Regulation A230 be modified to include language about lower-division field studies courses (97) and about the academic standing of undergraduates who enroll in 197, 198, and 199 courses.
- the passage in Senate Regulation A205 related to the number of Passed/Not Passed courses a faculty member can supervise be reviewed by the Academic Senate.

# Special Studies Working Group FINAL REPORT

## Background

The Special Studies Working Group was appointed by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP) Paul Gray to continue the work undertaken during Spring 2002 by the Special Study Courses Task Force. The primary focus of that Task Force, co-chaired by David Dowall, then Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, and Christina Maslach, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VP-UE), centered on the existing relationship between DE-Cal, the ASUC, the Academic Senate, and the campus administration, and paid particular attention to questions regarding the adequacy of oversight of the DE-Cal program. See Appendix I for the text of the Task Force report.

The Special Studies Working Group was asked to develop standards and procedures for special studies courses. Co-chaired by Professor Ronelle Alexander, Chair of the Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI), and Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Barbara Davis, its membership included faculty representatives from the Academic Senate committees on Educational Policy (CEP), Courses of Instruction (COCI), and Student Affairs (STA); student representatives from the ASUC and the DE-Cal program; and administrators from Letters and Science, the Academic Senate, and Undergraduate Education. See Appendix II for the Working Group membership list.

In addition to building upon the work of the Task Force as well as various Academic Senate committees, the Working Group reviewed frequency distribution data on enrollments and sponsoring faculty for all special studies courses, including DE-Cal affiliated courses, for the academic years 1999-2002. As had been done previously, the Working Group focused its attention primarily on the 98 and 198 (group study) courses, rather than courses numbered 97<sup>1</sup> and 197 (field study), and 99 and 199 (supervised independent study), where there was less evidence of, or cause for, concern.

The specific charge of the Working Group was to:

- Develop and recommend standards and procedures for special studies course approval (including a course proposal form);

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<sup>1</sup> At this time, Senate Regulation A230, which covers all special studies courses, does not define 97 courses as lower-division field studies courses. One of the recommendations of the Working Group is that the Academic Senate amend SR A230 so that 97 courses are included as lower-division field study courses. Thus, the Working Group has included 97 courses in this report, treating them as lower-division field study courses within the context of its discussion of special studies courses.

- Develop and recommend guidelines for faculty supervision of special studies courses;
- Recommend methods to educate department chairs and faculty sponsors on special studies regulations, standards and procedures for course approval, and supervision of courses;
- Recommend systems for the enforcement of special studies regulations;
- Consider whether to:
  - place a cap on the number of units of special studies courses that can count toward graduation, and if yes, what kind of cap or caps;
  - recommend the number of special studies courses a faculty member can sponsor and the department can sponsor;
  - have courses taught repeatedly reviewed by COCI for approval and be given an assigned course number;
  - include descriptive titles for all 98/198 courses on transcripts; and
- Recommend amendments to divisional Academic Senate regulations governing special studies courses, as needed.

### **Summary of Action Items**

The Special Studies Working Group recommends that:

- the course proposal form developed by the Group for special studies courses (to be submitted to the Committee on Courses of Instruction) be implemented beginning Fall 2003;
- the checklists outlining faculty, student, and department responsibilities for special studies courses be widely publicized and distributed beginning Spring 2003;
- a website be created specifically for special studies courses;
- deans, department chairs, faculty members, students, and undergraduate advisors be informed of these new policies and procedures through written and online material and via presentations at relevant meetings, beginning Spring 2003 and continuing as needed;
- information related to special studies courses be included in existing hard copy and online publications, including the *Catalog* and *Schedule of Classes*;

- the campus strengthen the supervision and training of undergraduates serving as course facilitators;
- efforts be made to acknowledge and recognize faculty sponsors and student course facilitators of group study courses;
- every department have prior approval from COCI to offer the appropriate types and levels of special studies courses (i.e., 97/98/99 for lower-division and 197/198/199 for upper-division special studies courses);
- Senate Regulation A230 be modified as described in this report to include language about lower-division field study courses (97) and about the academic standing of undergraduates who enroll in 197,198, and 199 courses; and
- the passage in Senate Regulation A205 related to the number of Passed/Not Passed courses a faculty member can supervise be reviewed by the Academic Senate.

### **Key Issues in Special Studies Courses**

During its deliberations, the Working Group identified several key issues that guided the development of its final recommendations. These are as follows:

**The importance of student-initiated courses and student coordination of those courses.** The Working Group strongly believes that student-initiated courses, whether affiliated with the DE-Cal program or operating independently of it, are an important component of the undergraduate educational experience and as such should be retained by the campus. Such courses provide a valuable opportunity for undergraduate students to engage with faculty and to take the initiative in the design and teaching of academically sound courses under faculty supervision.

**The need to educate the campus about special studies courses.** The broad area of special studies courses, including student-initiated courses (among which are included DE-Cal affiliated offerings), is poorly understood by faculty and students. This lack of understanding includes not only the specifics of policies and procedures that govern the approval of special studies courses, but also the general overview of the roles played by the department chair, faculty sponsor, and the student course facilitator in student-initiated courses.

**The need to clarify the differences among special studies courses, student-initiated courses, and DE-Cal affiliated courses.** The Working Group discovered that faculty and students are often confused about the distinctions among various types of special studies courses. Special studies courses can be of three types: field studies (97/197), group studies (98/198), and independent studies (99/199). See Appendix III for the descriptions of special studies courses as provided in Senate Regulation A230.

The greatest confusion seems to exist around 98 and 198 group study courses. Faculty can initiate and teach group study courses, following relevant departmental guidelines and Academic Senate regulations. Students can also initiate and coordinate group study courses under faculty sponsorship and with the department chair's approval, but in this case the procedures and guidelines are less generally clear. In particular, faculty and students may be unaware that student-initiated courses are bound by the same Academic Senate regulations and relevant departmental guidelines as faculty-initiated courses and must go through a similar approval process.

It is important for students, faculty, and staff to understand that DE-Cal is an ASUC-sponsored student-managed program that encourages student-initiated courses and serves as a resource center for students. DE-Cal provides advising and outreach but does not have any approval or oversight authority over courses. Because DE-Cal plays a visible and important role in facilitating most student-initiated group study courses, the misperception has arisen that DE-Cal has responsibility for the review and oversight of student-initiated group study courses. Such responsibility lies with the sponsoring faculty member and the department chair. DE-Cal is working to clarify its role in this regard and to more clearly define the criteria for courses to list on its website.

The Working Group focused its efforts on undergraduate special studies courses overall. We make reference to DE-Cal affiliated courses where relevant. We make no reference to special studies courses taught by graduate students or enrolled with graduate students.

## **Findings and Recommendations**

<p><b>A. Develop and recommend standards and procedures for special studies course approval (including a course proposal form).</b></p>
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In an attempt to provide guidance about standards, procedures, and responsibilities for approving and offering special studies courses, particularly student-initiated special studies courses, the Working Group has developed a course proposal form to be submitted each semester to the Committee on Courses of Instruction for every special studies course offered by a department for academic credit. The Working Group also developed checklists for students, faculty, and department chairs. These materials adhere to and expand upon the principles and regulations contained in Academic Senate Regulation A230. It is the Working Group's hope that these forms will make it easier for students to propose special studies courses and for faculty and department chairs to review course proposals for approval. See Appendix IV for the Course Proposal Form and Checklists.

**B. Develop and recommend guidelines for faculty supervision of special studies courses.**

The Working Group affirmed that the responsibilities for special studies courses are shared by faculty, students, and department chairs, and delineated the distribution of these responsibilities as follows:

**Faculty responsibilities for sponsoring student-initiated courses.** The Working Group has identified the following faculty responsibilities:

- **Verify compliance with campus policies**

Faculty members who sponsor student-initiated courses need to verify that the course is in compliance with Academic Senate regulations. It is a faculty member's responsibility to check that the course being proposed by the student is at the appropriate level (i.e., 97/98/99 for lower-division students; 197/198/199 for upper-division students) and that the department has COCI approval to offer that particular course number. In the past, some course numbers have not matched the content of the course (e.g., a group study course should only be offered as a 98 or 198, not as a 97 or 197). Faculty members need to ensure that the course numbering is appropriate for the course content and that the unit values reflect current Senate guidelines. Finally, faculty members should determine that there is a clear pedagogical rationale for offering the proposed course in their department and not in another department.

- **Ensure academic content**

All courses should contain explicit academic content and there should be requirements, beyond classroom attendance, which must be satisfied before credit is awarded. Students should read, as part of the course, articles, books, and/or primary source documents that place the topic of the course in an academic context. Students should also be required to write a paper (or papers) that deal with the readings or the readings in relation to the students' experiences, and to take a final examination, if appropriate to the objectives of the course. For field study courses (97/197), credit is awarded for the academic component of the course and not just for the field experience itself.

- **Work collaboratively with student course facilitators**

The Working Group discovered that some faculty members work closely with student course facilitators while others simply sign the required form and have no further contact with the course facilitator. The Working Group strongly recommends that faculty members supervise and mentor students who are coordinating a group study course. This means reviewing the syllabus and

providing feedback as appropriate,<sup>2</sup> developing a plan for supervision, helping the course facilitator select meaningful evaluation strategies, and providing advice and guidance as needed. It will also be helpful for faculty sponsors to be aware of, and encourage the course facilitator to participate in, the Student Learning Center's workshops for undergraduate students who are facilitating standalone courses.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the Working Group recommends that student course facilitators be enrolled in an independent study (99/199) under the supervision of the faculty sponsor, rather than in the course itself, in order to avoid noncompliance with Senate Regulation 750.E. That regulation states: "No student may serve as a reader or assistant in a course in which the student is enrolled."

- **Serve as the instructor of record**

Faculty members who sponsor student-initiated group study courses serve as instructors of record for those courses and are responsible for supervising the awarding of all final grades and reporting the grades to the Registrar. In addition, they oversee the keeping of records, which ensures that there is appropriate documentation to support awarding credit to enrolled students. The instructor of record also has the responsibility to respond to and attempt to resolve complaints, conflicts, and grievances brought by students taking the course. If a complaint, conflict, or grievance cannot be resolved with the student(s) involved, the instructor has the responsibility to pursue resolution under the appropriate policy or procedure (e.g., COCI's "Procedures for Grade Appeals Based on the Alleged Use of Non-Academic Criteria").

A checklist of faculty responsibilities can be found in Appendix IV.

**Student responsibilities for coordinating student-initiated courses.** Inherent in the notion of student-initiated special studies courses is the student's obligation to assume a primary role in designing and proposing a course of rigorous academic content. To a large extent, students' ability to do so successfully will depend on the availability of the appropriate information and support.

- **Develop a course outline and solicit faculty sponsorship**

The student course facilitator should assume primary responsibility for initiating a course proposal in consultation with a faculty member. It is the student course facilitator's responsibility to develop a proposal for the syllabus, reading list, and course requirements. The student should then review the course proposal with the instructor of record. The student should also discuss with the instructor of record the specific responsibilities of the student coordinator for course facilitation and of

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<sup>2</sup> Information on creating a syllabus can be found at <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Information about the Student Learning Center's training activities can be found through the Undergraduate Student Instructor Training and Resources link at <http://slc.berkeley.edu>.

the instructor of record for course supervision. The instructor of record, as the sponsoring faculty member, will make the final determination for these issues.

- **Obtain approvals in a timely manner**

The Working Group recognizes that preparing a special studies course requires much deliberate thought and discussion between the student course facilitator and the faculty sponsor, as well as additional time to seek the appropriate departmental review and approval and to respond to other administrative requirements. The fact that many student-led courses are proposed a very short time before the course begins, often in the first or second week of the semester in which the course is to be taught, can make it difficult to ensure the integrity of the academic content of the course. Since student-initiated courses receive the same credit as faculty-initiated special studies courses that are rigorously reviewed well in advance, this is rightfully a cause for some concern. At the same time, it is possible that some students may only become inspired to propose and coordinate a course after the close of a semester, or that a course may be prompted by recent events, or that a relatively long-running DE-Cal affiliated course might acquire a new course facilitator after the semester has ended.

In light of the above, the Working Group proposes as a general rule that student-initiated special studies courses receive final departmental approval the semester or summer before the course is to be offered. Exceptions could be granted, however, in those instances where the department chair is satisfied, on reflection of the particular circumstances, that approving the course after the start of the semester in which it is to be taught will not compromise the essential integrity of the academic experience.

- **Understand the role of the faculty sponsor**

A critical task of the faculty sponsor is to supervise and ideally mentor student course facilitators. Student course facilitators and the faculty sponsor need to jointly develop a plan for supervision and plans for evaluating the course at the end of the term. Students also need to be aware that the faculty member who serves as the instructor of record for a student-initiated special studies course is responsible for ensuring that the course has academic content and is within the scope of the department's academic program. The faculty member also oversees the awarding of grades, reports grades to the Registrar, and responds to and attempts to resolve any complaints or conflicts that may be raised by students enrolled in the course.

- **Coordinate a special studies course**

Students who coordinate special studies courses have a responsibility to adhere to campus policies and procedures, work collaboratively with the faculty sponsor, and become informed about opportunities for support and training in their pedagogical role. The Student Learning Center and the DE-Cal program provide students with information, workshops, advice, and support for initiating special studies courses and developing good teaching practices and instructional skills. In accordance with Senate Regulation 750.E., student course facilitators should not be enrolled in the

classes they facilitate. Instead, they should be enrolled in an independent study course under the supervision of the faculty sponsor of the course they are coordinating.

A checklist of student responsibilities can be found in Appendix IV.

**Department responsibilities for offering student-initiated courses.** A crucial component of the successful review and oversight of special studies courses lies with the sponsoring department, specifically the department chair who should ensure that all appropriate procedures have been followed.

- **Verify faculty member's responsibilities**

Much of the review required of the department chair accordingly focuses on ensuring that the faculty members offering special studies courses have met their responsibilities. As such, these include ensuring that the course is in compliance with campus policies, that it has academic content that fits within the scope of the department's program, and (for student-initiated courses) that the faculty member has developed an adequate plan for supervising and mentoring the student course facilitator.

- **Comply with SR A205**

Having noted with some concern the fact that several faculty regularly supervise large numbers of sections of special studies courses, the Working Group recommends that department chairs ensure that faculty members in their department are in compliance with Senate Regulation A205. The pertinent part of this regulation states that "An instructor may be in charge of no more than one [exclusively Passed or Not Passed] undergraduate course in any term, exclusive of individual study or research courses, except with the consent of the Dean of the School or College in which the course is offered." We further recommend that the Academic Senate examine this particular clause of SR A205 to determine whether the scope of its coverage extends to a particular course (i.e., a departmental 198) or the number of sections of a particular course that an instructor might be involved with.

- **Provide administrative support**

Department chairs should make efforts to ensure that student-initiated special studies courses receive appropriate administrative support.

- **Sign and forward approved course proposals**

Department chairs need to ensure that the required course proposal forms, with all relevant signatures, have been submitted to the Committee on Courses of Instruction, and appropriate copies retained in the departmental files.

A checklist of department chair responsibilities can be found in Appendix IV.

**C. Recommend methods to educate deans, department chairs, and faculty sponsors on special studies regulations, standards and procedures for course approval, and supervision of courses.**

In addition to the recommendations cited above, the Working Group believes that improvement in the quality of special studies courses, and in the degree of their contribution to student learning, can be achieved through better training opportunities and incentives for undergraduate student course facilitators, strong faculty-undergraduate mentorship relations, and enhanced educational efforts.

**Educate deans, department chairs, faculty sponsors, and undergraduate advisors.** The Working Group recommends the following steps be undertaken to enable departments to better understand special studies courses and the regulations, standards, and procedures governing their implementation:

- Hold informational sessions on special studies courses, to be conducted by the chair of COCI and the EVCP, or their designees, at the annual departmental chairs retreat, the annual orientation for new faculty, meetings of undergraduate advisors, and other such events.
- Develop concise summary information (a one- or two-page document) based on the recommendations in this report that highlights procedural issues, substantive possibilities for special studies courses, and guidelines for faculty, students, and departments. The Working Group recommends that VP-UE Maslach's office, in consultation with COCI, develop this summary.
- Create a website devoted specifically to special studies courses. The website could include descriptions of what constitutes a special studies course; the policies and procedures that govern such courses (e.g., Senate regulation A230); information targeted specifically for students wishing to initiate a special studies course; guidelines and responsibilities for faculty sponsors of student-initiated special studies courses; department responsibilities; sample syllabi that demonstrate the scope and quality of preparation for successful student-initiated special studies courses; helpful links (such as resources available through the Student Learning Center, the role of the Committee on Courses of Instruction of the Academic Senate, the DE-Cal program, online references to good teaching practices); and other supportive material. We recommend that the office of VP-UE Maslach take responsibility for the creation and maintenance of this website.<sup>4</sup>
- Distribute letters to deans and department chairs, alerting them to the new policies and procedures related to special studies courses. Both the EVCP and the chair of the Academic Senate should sign these letters.

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<sup>4</sup> URL for website: <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies> (not yet developed)

- Include information about special studies courses in the online Faculty Guide to Campus Life, the L&S Faculty Help Desk, Tele-Bears, and through Teach-net, the moderated electronic mail forum for exchanging information, advice, tips, and general talk concerning teaching at Berkeley.
- Disseminate material clarifying the nature of the DE-Cal program. DE-Cal is a student-managed program that provides information to students about how to develop a student-initiated special studies course and a central listing of most student-initiated special studies courses on its website. Clarifying material should highlight the fact that DE-Cal does not have responsibility for the approval or oversight of student-initiated special studies courses and that final authority for DE-Cal affiliated courses (as for all special studies courses) rests with the faculty member and the sponsoring department chair.

**Educate students.** The Working Group recommends the following ways to educate students about special studies regulations:

- Organize preparatory meetings for potential student course coordinators (and sponsoring faculty) early in the semester before that in which a course would be offered.

These meetings would give information on procedures as well as opportunities for training and possibilities for mentorship relations. They would focus on mentorship development, and would present examples of quality student-initiated special studies courses, emphasizing what it was that made them successful. These meetings could also introduce students to options for special studies courses, for example, having the courses offered as adjuncts to existing courses. We recommend that the organization of these meetings be jointly undertaken by the DE-Cal program and the VP-UE's office.

- Develop an information package for potential student course facilitators. The contents of this package would be based on the material in this report and on information generated by the Senate, departments, the DE-Cal program, and the VP-UE's office. We recommend that the office of the VP-UE, working with the DE-Cal Program and the ASUC Office of Academic Affairs, develop this package.
- Publicize widely the website for special studies courses and the helpful material it will contain.
- Include information about special studies courses in *Resource*, a guide for students, and other student publications, as well as through Tele-Bears.

**Strengthen student and faculty mentor relationships.** The Working Group encourages the campus to continue to provide opportunities for undergraduate students who initiate special studies courses to develop their teaching skills. The Working Group was divided, however, regarding how far the campus should go towards achieving this goal.

Some members believed that the development of something like an Undergraduate Teaching Mentorship Program (perhaps modeled after the Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program or other campus scholars programs) could significantly benefit undergraduates. Under the active guidance and mentorship of a faculty member, and through training provided by the Student Learning Center, students would have the opportunity to systematically explore teaching as a field of inquiry and develop instructional skills such as course design and leading discussions. Such a program could also provide some form of certification upon completion and support for undergraduate student-faculty mentorship relations. The hope was that students at Berkeley would thereby have opportunities to pursue both a research experience and a teaching experience under the guidance of faculty who excel at both.

Other members believed that, while we wish to clarify the functioning of the present system, affirm its value, and grant recognition to those who are involved, it is premature to propose any expansion of the role of undergraduates in instruction since this raises broader policy questions that require formal consideration by the Academic Senate. While these members of the Working Group agreed that any undergraduate student involved in undergraduate instruction should be well qualified, well prepared, and have a well-functioning relationship with his or her sponsoring faculty member, as described elsewhere in this report, they expressed reservations about increasing the presence of undergraduates in undergraduate instruction. There were also concerns about developing a new program like an Undergraduate Teaching Mentorship Program at a time when budgets are shrinking.

The Working Group also discussed a number of ways in which much-needed recognition could be provided to those students and faculty who develop, facilitate, or conduct special studies courses. Some possible ideas include:

- Award certification of some kind to student course facilitators.
- Host a reception in recognition of the work accomplished by student course facilitators and their faculty sponsors.
- Include specific mention of work undertaken in supervising special studies courses, both in campus reviews of departmental undergraduate programs and in faculty bio-bibs.
- Create a faculty award for Distinguished Mentorship of an Undergraduate Teacher (parallel to the Distinguished Mentorship Award for Undergraduate Research).

**D. Recommend systems for the enforcement of special studies regulations.**

**Ensure adherence to Academic Senate regulations.** The Working Group assumes that there would be no intentional violations if the regulations regarding special studies courses were clear and present when faculty and administrators made curriculum decisions. We recommend, therefore, that the Senate increase awareness of its regulations regarding, and the administration improve the auditing and reporting of, special studies courses and enrollment. This will require coordinated attention in four major areas.

- Enforce the cap on the total number of special studies units that can be applied towards graduation. Under existing Senate policy, no more than a total of sixteen units of special studies credit may be applied towards graduation, although a student may take more than this number of units during his or her undergraduate career at Berkeley.
- Enforce the cap on the total number of special studies units that can be taken in a given semester. Under existing policy, a student may not enroll in special studies coursework of more than four units per semester.

In both of the above circumstances, the Office of the Registrar has been charged with the primary responsibility for monitoring the caps, and for subsequently informing the student and the student's college when the caps have been reached. This allows the student to seek under policy an exception from the dean of the school or college to the applicable cap.

- Enforce the number of Passed/Not Passed courses that may be taught by an instructor of record. Under existing policy, no instructor may offer more than one special studies course on a Passed/Not Passed basis, except for 99/199 courses, again subject to an exception being granted by the dean of the school or college.
- Enforce appropriate standards for faculty supervision of student-initiated courses. As discussed previously, the instructor of record must assume responsibility for ensuring, among others, that a student-initiated course has academic content and is within the scope of the department's academic program; he or she must also oversee the awarding of grades, report grades to the Registrar, and respond to and attempt to resolve any complaints or conflicts arising from the course.

In both of the above circumstances, the department chair assumes the primary responsibility for monitoring the faculty member's actions which are at issue and for any final decision affecting the department's sponsorship of a particular student-initiated course.

The Working Group further discussed but ultimately rejected the deployment of a more formal enforcement process that would have included a body to review allegations of misconduct. Serious allegations of misconduct should be addressed in accordance with the *University Policy on Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline*.

Finally, the Working Group recommends that summary information regarding the number of times a student sought to exceed either the cap on the total number of units to be applied towards graduation or that could be taken in any given semester, as well as the number of times a faculty member sought to offer more than a single course on a Passed/Not Passed basis each semester without appropriate authorization from the dean, be provided on an annual basis by the relevant administrative office (e.g., Registrar, Planning and Analysis) to the appropriate dean, COCI, and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost. The primary purpose for disseminating this information would be to determine whether academic policy can properly be implemented by the current structure or whether some form of structural change needs to be considered to ensure compliance with applicable regulations.

**Documentation for special studies courses.** The Working Group believes that it is each department's responsibility to have on record the appropriate COCI approvals for both lower- and upper-division special studies courses (i.e., 97/98/99/197/198/199). Accordingly, we recommend that every department ensure that this is the case. If necessary, departments should create such courses by submitting a course approval form to COCI. This is particularly important for courses that are likely to be student-initiated: all departments should in principle be able to offer one or more sections of a special studies course without having to request special approval or variances for exceptional enrollments from their dean.

The Working Group further considered the paperwork that would be necessary to ensure the smooth administration of special studies courses while still keeping bureaucracy at a minimal level. As a result of this consideration, it developed the following proposals.

- Each department should submit copies of all departmentally approved course proposals for every section of special studies offered by the department each semester to the Committee on Courses of Instruction for the Committee's information.
- COCI should keep on file a copy of the approved special studies course proposal form for all sections of special studies courses that it receives.
- Departments and faculty sponsors should keep on file the original special studies course proposal form and the course syllabus for student-initiated group study.
- DE-Cal should keep copies of their program form and the class syllabus.
- Students should retain copies of the approved special studies course proposal form and the course syllabus.

- The Working Group offers no recommendation concerning how long course records should be retained. The Systemwide Records Disposition Schedule has no clear standards for doing so, and we offer no opinion as to whether five years is a reasonable period for retaining this information.
- With regard to whether the specific titles of all 98/198 special studies courses should be indicated on transcripts, the Working Group notes that since individual titles for sections of a course are never listed on transcripts, this option is not feasible.

**E. Recommend policy changes and amendments to Divisional regulations governing special studies courses, as needed.**

The Working Group considered a number of issues related to current Academic Senate regulations.

- **Cap on number of units for graduation**

If the policies and procedures outlined in this report are implemented, the Working Group does not believe that any change in the existing cap should be proposed at this time. Its reasoning is as follows:

Currently, no more than four units of credit for 98, 99, 198, and 199 courses may be earned in a given semester, and no more than 16 units total earned in a 98, 99, 197, 198, and 199 course “may be used to meet the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree.” (SR A230) The Working Group noted that the existing rule does not by its terms preclude a student from taking in excess of the aforementioned 16 units while enrolled as an undergraduate: it simply appears to limit the number of such units that might be applied towards graduation. Furthermore, the Working Group believes that adoption of the policies and procedures recommended in this report would ensure that all special studies courses, which include undergraduate research and independent study offerings, would constitute rigorous courses with substantive academic content. Accordingly, the Working Group did not think it was necessary to recommend a change in the existing rule.

- **Regularization of student-initiated special studies courses taught repeatedly**

The Working Group decided against recommending that frequently taught student-initiated special studies courses be regularized as an established part of any department curriculum. Its reasoning is as follows:

Some special studies courses are indeed offered on a regular basis. The Working Group originally considered recommending a policy that would result in the regularization of such courses. In light of the fact that faculty often do a trial run

of a potential new course as a special studies course before proposing it to COCI as a regularized course, this policy might have merit. However, the Working Group is concerned that requiring regularization of popular special studies courses would deny a faculty sponsor much-needed flexibility in determining whether or not to continue to offer the course. Finally, the Group took into consideration the fact that, although a frequently offered special studies course might normally be sponsored by the same faculty member, the student course facilitators would necessarily differ because over the years those students would graduate and no longer be eligible to coordinate the course.

- **Workload commensurate with units offered**

The Working Group considered the issue of how to ensure that the unit values for special studies courses are appropriate for the amount of work undertaken. In the end, the Working Group took no position on this issue, since there is no easy way to determine how much time any student actually spends on homework assignments or classroom preparation, nor is there any structured means for doing so. The only recourse is to recommend simply that unit values for special studies courses be in compliance with existing Senate regulations and guidelines.

- **Use of special transcript notation**

The Working Group further considered the question of whether transcripts should distinguish between student-initiated special studies courses and other special studies courses. The Working Group concluded that they should not, and that all special studies courses should be expected to meet the same rigorous standards and expectations for both the students and faculty involved in the course.

- **Possible revisions to Senate regulations**

The Group's final charge centered on Regulation A230 and on whether any possible revisions should be recommended for adoption by the Academic Senate. The following recommendations are proposed:

- Add specific mention of the lower-division field studies course (97) in all appropriate references to the range of special studies courses governed by the regulation. SR A230 currently omits any reference to the 97 course number although it does address the 197 course.
- In SR A230.A.2, change the wording so that 197, 198, and 199 courses are reserved for "appropriate study" by "undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least 60 units."
- Revise the Approval section, SR A230.A.3 consistent with the forms that are proposed in this report.
- Relocate SR A230A.4.1. to the Approval section.

These proposed changes and other editorial suggestions are in Appendix V.

The Working Group also recommends that the passage in Senate Regulation A205 related to the number of Passed/Not passed courses a faculty member can supervise be reviewed by the Academic Senate.

## List of Appendices

- I. Final Report of the Special Study Courses Task Force
- II. Working Group membership
- III. Descriptions of special studies courses as provided in Academic Senate Regulation (SR) A230.
- IV. Course Proposal Form and Checklists for faculty, students, and department chairs
- V. Recommended changes to Senate Regulation A230

## **Appendix I: Final Report of the Special Study Courses Task Force**

### **Background**

In Spring 2002, allegations published in *The Daily Californian* regarding the DE-Cal affiliated course entitled “Male Sexuality” prompted Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVC&P) Paul Gray to appoint a joint Academic Senate / Administration Task Force, charged with investigating all special studies courses that, like DE-Cal affiliated courses, fall under the purview of Academic Senate Regulation A230. The Task Force was co-chaired by David Dowall, Chair of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, and Christina Maslach, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VP-UE), and staffed jointly out of their respective offices. Membership in the Task Force included faculty representatives from key Academic Senate committees (Committee on Educational Policy [CEP], Committee on Courses of Instruction [COCI], Committee on Student Affairs [STA]); student representation from the ASUC; and staff representatives from key administrative units (Undergraduate Division of College of Letters and Science, Office of Planning and Analysis, and Student Learning Center). The Task Force was charged to consider, but not be limited by, the following key questions [see charge letter as attachment A<sup>5</sup>]:

- 1) What is the current relationship between the DE-Cal Program, the ASUC, the Academic Senate and the campus administration? Should this relationship be changed or formalized in any way? Is the level of program oversight of the DE-Cal Program adequate? What mechanisms exist / are needed to make sure that the program is effectively run and monitored?
- 2) Is there an adequate level of faculty involvement and administrative oversight at the departmental level of special study courses governed under A230, including those affiliated with the DE-Cal Program? What, if any, recommendations should be implemented to ensure effective monitoring of special study courses, including but not limited to DE-Cal affiliated courses?

The Task Force was convened in March and asked to submit its final report by the end of the spring 2002 semester. Given the short timeframe for its deliberations, Task Force members agreed to build upon the considerable work that had been done recently by various Academic Senate committees rather than start from scratch [see table of contents and documents as attachment B]. The Task Force also reviewed frequency distribution data on enrollments and sponsoring faculty for all special studies courses, as well as course descriptions for DE-Cal affiliated courses. The Task Force identified student-initiated group study courses, typically numbered 98 and 198, as the courses most in need of attention. The Task Force focused its attention on those types of special study courses, rather than courses numbered 197 (field study), and 99 and 199 (individual research), where there was less evidence of, or cause for, concern.

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<sup>5</sup> Attachments A-D are not included in this Appendix.

## Key Findings and Recommendations

### 1. Clarification of Responsibilities

#### A. DE-Cal Program

The DE-Cal Program is a student-initiated student service group that has made an important contribution to the campus for more than twenty years. It provides outreach and publicity services for student-initiated group study courses by providing students with information about how they can initiate a course and by listing courses on a website. Courses affiliated with the DE-Cal Program typically fall into one of the following types or categories: a) they cover subject matter that is not addressed in the regular departmental or major curriculum; b) they give students “hands-on” field or practical experience that may help them realize professional or personal goals; c) they respond to a timely event or issue of concern. DE-Cal affiliated courses, like all student-initiated group study courses, provide a valuable opportunity for students to take initiative to design and propose a course for faculty approval and to develop leadership and teaching skills as part of this process. The Task Force recognizes and supports the DE-Cal Program’s right to retain its historic autonomy and administrative location in the ASUC. The Task Force did not find any major problem with the DE-Cal Program’s operations or with the concept of student-initiated group study courses.

However, the Task Force identified a need to clarify the nature, role and responsibilities (and limits thereof) of the DE-Cal Program. It is critical to clarify with students, faculty, and staff that the DE-Cal Program is a student group that provides outreach and publicity services to, but does not authorize or oversee, student-initiated group study courses. It is also important to point out to the campus community that there are student-initiated group study courses taught on campus that are not affiliated with the DE-Cal Program, since there seems to be a misconception that all student-initiated group study courses are DE-Cal affiliated courses.

The Task Force recommends specifically that the VP-UE work with the DE-Cal Program on the following issues:

- Work with DE-Cal to clarify its role as a student-initiated service organization providing support and outreach services for students facilitating group study courses.
- The application form that DE-Cal uses should be modified as follows:
  - ▶ Eliminate 97, 197, 99 and 199 as possible course numbers for DE-Cal affiliated courses.
  - ▶ A note should be added to the form saying that it is not an official University form.

## **B. Sponsoring Faculty and Department Chairs:**

The Task Force identified the major problem as residing not with the DE-Cal Program, but with the lack of adequate faculty oversight of student-initiated group study courses. Senate Regulation (SR) A230.A.3.3. states the following [see attachment C].

- ▶ Each section of a group study course (98 or 198) must receive approval by the Chair of the Department (or equivalent) based on a written proposal submitted by the instructor who is to supervise the course that describes the matter to be studied, the methods of instruction, the number of units to be credited, and methods of evaluation of student performance.
- A copy of the approved proposal must be submitted for information to the Committee on Courses of Instruction.

The Task Force recommends that the Academic Senate and the Administration work jointly to clarify the roles and responsibilities of sponsoring faculty and department chairs vis-à-vis student-initiated group study courses. Specifically, the Task Force recommends the creation of a working group, described below, to develop standards and guidelines for faculty and department chairs and to consider additional questions related to the implementation of SR A230. It needs to be made clear to the campus community that the responsibility for reviewing, approving, and supervising student-initiated group study courses, including those associated with the DE-Cal Program, lies with the sponsoring faculty and department chair and not with the DE-Cal Program.

## **2. Recommended Next Steps:**

The Task Force has completed the initial phase of investigation and forwards recommendations for implementation in phase II.

### **A. Phase II: Working Group to Develop Standards and Guidelines, and Address Remaining Questions**

Given that the central identified problem is a lack of faculty oversight of student-initiated group study courses, the Task Force recommends the creation of a joint Academic Senate / administration working group comprised of Senate, administrative, and student representatives to address academic program issues related to SR A230. In phase II, the working group will propose standards for course approval at the departmental level and guidelines for course supervision, implementing SR A230. The proposed standards and guidelines will be reviewed for endorsement by the Academic Senate and, upon endorsement, circulated to department chairs and faculty. The Task Force further recommends that EVC&P Gray, or another senior administrator that he designates, work with the Senate to ensure continued review and oversight of student-initiated group study courses beyond the duration of the working group.

The Task Force recommends to the working group consideration of the following points when developing standards and guidelines. These points were adapted in part from an internal policy of the International and Area Studies Teaching Program [see memo as attachment D]:

- That there be clear standards for what a student needs to do to pass the course (and, by implication, to “not pass”). These standards should be clearly communicated to the students enrolled in the course through a syllabus, or other appropriate document.
- That the course workload be commensurate with the number of units offered for the course. No less than three hours of work per week (including class attendance, study, etc.) should be required for each unit.
- That a course description, syllabus, and book list be approved by a faculty sponsor, and be submitted to the department or program chair in time for him or her to approve it. The chair retains the right to deny authorization for a course that does not meet minimum standards for the department or program.
- That the faculty sponsor agree to monitor the course closely, to supervise the awarding of grades, and to attend the class if appropriate to ensure the quality of education being delivered
- That the faculty sponsor make explicit individual arrangements with the course coordinator on issues including, but not limited to, how to conduct evaluation of instruction, how to resolve disputes, and how the sponsoring faculty member and the student coordinator will communicate during the period of the course.
- That departments be encouraged to develop a guiding policy regarding how many student-initiated group study courses should be sponsored by a given faculty member and within the department as a whole in a particular semester.

The working group will also consider these remaining questions related to SR A230:

- Should there be a cap of 8 units placed on student-initiated coursework that may be counted toward graduation? This would require some mechanism for regulation. (Note: the Task Force does not recommend the use of a course prefix as recommended by some Academic Senate committees.)
- Should courses taught repeatedly be reviewed by COCI for approval and be given an assigned course number? The 98 or 198 designation is appropriate for experimental courses, for courses offered in response to an important event, and for other one-time courses. However, if a student-initiated course becomes a long-term enterprise, should its sponsoring department announce that status by giving it a course number and a catalog description, proposing

it for COCI review, and then subjecting it to the same annual rating and review process by which the quality of faculty-initiated courses is monitored?

- Should descriptive titles for all 98/198 courses be included on course transcripts and should sufficient resources be allocated to provide for this notation?
- Courses numbered 97 and 197 are included in some areas of SR A230, but not in others. The Task Force recommends that courses numbered 97 and 197 be included in all areas of SR A230.

## **B. Creation of a Central Office for Undergraduates Involved in Teaching:**

The Task Force found that students currently involved in teaching are scattered across the campus without a clearly identified and central administrative support structure that can help them with pedagogical and logistical matters. Furthermore, the Task Force found that student course initiators do not currently receive consistent pedagogical training or receive credit for such training as part of their experiences coordinating courses.

Although the sponsoring faculty member remains the primary individual responsible for guiding students on course content, grading standards and similar issues, students also have need of and can benefit from additional support and training around: 1) pedagogical issues (e.g., developing a course syllabus, leading discussion, evaluating student work); 2) code of conduct issues (e.g., comporting oneself in the classroom, dealing with diversity and sexual harassment issues); and 3) administrative issues (e.g., scheduling classrooms, arranging equipment and technical support). The potential value of the undergraduate teaching experience can best be realized if undergraduate instructors are given the guidance and resources to develop sound teaching practices. This type of support and training is perhaps best handled centrally through an appropriate student services support program as a complement to existing department mentoring and training programs. Additionally, the availability of education course credit for such training would be a powerful incentive for students to enroll without making the course mandatory.

The Task Force, therefore, recommends the creation of a central office for undergraduates involved in teaching that would be analogous to existing support structures provided for undergraduates involved in research and for graduate student instructors. This office would provide student services support to all undergraduates who were interested in and involved with teaching, including student coordinators of all student-initiated group study courses (including but not limited to DE-Cal affiliated courses), undergraduate tutors and undergraduate GSIs. Its charge would be to develop, coordinate and publicize services for a wide range of students involved in teaching, to provide more guidance and support for them, and to make sure that pedagogical training is part of the student's total learning experience. Its primary role would be one of support not oversight, since oversight for course content would continue to reside with faculty sponsors and department chairs. The unit would have a

facilitative role around student teaching and would also support student-faculty interaction to foster the mentoring relationship. This office is intended to complement the services that DE-Cal provides.

The Task Force recommends that this office be housed in the Division of Undergraduate Education, which includes both the Student Learning Center and the Office of Educational Development. The Student Learning Center has a model tutor training program, which could become the basis for expanded services for undergraduates involved with teaching. The Office of Educational Development (OED), which is charged with responsibility for faculty development, staffs the Committee on Teaching (COT) and may also have an appropriate role around issues of undergraduates involved with teaching.

The creation of this office is contingent upon adequate funding. The Task Force thought it best to build upon existing offices and units as much as possible to minimize the need for the creation of additional units or offices. The Task Force recommends funding 1 FTE in the Learning Skills Series for this office as outlined in the attached budget proposal [see attachment E].

## **Attachment E: Budget Proposal**

### **Rationale**

The Student Learning Center will provide pedagogical training to undergraduates involved with instruction on the campus. Participation by undergraduates in this training will be voluntary. The training will occur in two phases. The initial phase will be a week long pre-service training that will assist students with developing their course syllabi, identifying faculty sponsors, and creating effective strategies for advertising their courses. The second phase will be a thirteen-week training course designed to introduce students to classroom decorum; educational philosophies and critical pedagogy; multiple intelligence; and cooperative and collaborative peer learning models.

The number of undergraduates involved with teaching has grown considerably in recent years. In 2000, there were approximately 40 DE-Cal affiliated courses offered each semester; this spring 115 DE-Cal affiliated courses were offered. On average there are two DE-Cal coordinators teaching a course. This amounts to approximately 200-230 students engaged in teaching their peers. Similarly, the number of undergraduate GSIs grew from 54 in 2000-2001 to 151 in 2001-2002. In addition, other undergraduates engage in teaching activities as part of student-initiated group study courses not included in the DE-Cal Program, as part of service-learning activities, and as tutors in various programs on campus such as the Student Learning Center.

Given the significant population to be served, the Task Force recommends hiring 1FTE in the Learning Skills Series to help support and train the undergraduate instructors.

### **General Description of the Senior Learning Skills Position**

#### **Senior Learning Skills Counselor**

Under direction, incumbents assist in the development and direction of programs and activities in the area of student learning skills assistance that is broad in scope and impact. Incumbents may act as principal assistants to higher level learning skills counselors, typically with limited authority to develop and direct a complex program, and in addition may provide individual and/or group assistance to undergraduate and graduate students with difficult learning problems. Incumbents typically assist in the development of new materials and programs; design and conduct appropriate liaison and outreach activities; may be assigned continuing responsibility for coordinating programs; and may select, train and oversee lower level personnel.

#### **Minimum Qualifications**

Graduation from college with major work in a related field; and four years of related experience in a college-level student support service preferably in a learning skills service; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; knowledge and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

**Budget Request:**

1 FTE for a Senior Learning Skills Counselor at the quartile of the salary range = \$44,100 plus benefits (depending on funding source)

The Student Learning Center will provide office space, supervisory support, and supplies and expenses to support this endeavor.

**Appendix II:  
Working Group membership**

Professor Ronelle Alexander, Co-chair  
Chair, Committee on Courses of Instruction

Barbara Gross Davis, Co-chair  
Assistant Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

Professor Ralph Catalano  
Committee on Courses of Instruction

ASUC Vice President Tony Falcone  
Academic Affairs

Co-Director Sarah Haufrect  
DE-Cal Program

Professor Lorraine Midanik  
Committee on Student Affairs

Director Lourdes Miranda  
Undergraduate Division, Letters and Science

Professor John William Morris, Jr.  
Committee on Teaching

Professor Jeffrey Romm  
Committee on Educational Policy

Assistant Director Linda Song  
Academic Senate

Alan Kolling, Staff member  
Undergraduate Education

**Appendix III:  
Descriptions of special studies courses  
as provided in Academic Senate Regulation A230**

**AS 230A.2.**

The number 98 is reserved for Directed Group Study by lower-division students.

The number 99 is reserved for Supervised Independent Study by academically superior lower-division students, who are to be defined by each department, or equivalent. This definition includes, as a necessary part, a grade-point average of at least 3.3. (Eff. Spring 1985) (Am. 4.85)

The number 197 is reserved for Field Studies Courses. (En. 3.83)

The number 198 is reserved for Organized Group Study by undergraduates.

The number 199 is reserved for Supervised Independent Study by undergraduates.

## Appendix IV: Course Proposal Form and Checklists for faculty, students, and department chairs

### Special Studies Course Proposal Form

(Based on Senate Regulation A230 [http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/resources/regs\\_part1.html#230](http://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/resources/regs_part1.html#230). For more information, see <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies>.)

<b>Date submitted:</b>
<b>Department:</b>
<b>Name and title of instructor of record who will supervise the course:</b>
<b>Name of student/staff facilitator(s) (if applicable):</b>
<b>Course number:</b>
<b>Descriptive course title:</b>
<b>Number of units to be credited:</b>
<b>Term to be offered (e.g., Fall 2005):</b>

This course proposal form must be submitted each semester by the department for every section of special studies courses (97, 98, 99 for lower-division students, 197, 198, 199 for upper-division students) offered for academic credit. This includes both student-initiated and faculty-initiated courses. It should be submitted to the Academic Senate for their information the semester before the course is to be offered. Please fill out the following information, obtain the appropriate signatures (student coordinator [if applicable], instructor of record, and department chair), and submit this form to the Committee on Courses of Instruction, Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate, 320 Stephens Hall, Mail Code #5842.

**Will this course enroll (check one):**

- lower-division students only
- upper-division students only
- both upper- and lower-division students.

**Please provide a brief description of each of the following and attach the course syllabus:**

1. Nature of the subject matter or content of the course.
2. The key learning outcomes. What will students know or be expected to do as a result of this course?
3. The methods of instruction (e.g., lecture, discussion, collaborative learning, etc.).
4. The methods of evaluation of student performance.
5. For student-initiated group study courses: please provide a brief description of how the instructor of record will supervise the student coordinator(s). Supervision can take the form of in-class observations, review of course materials, meetings with student coordinator(s), among other options.
6. For 99 courses: please state the qualifications for student admission.

<b>*Student/Staff Course Facilitator(s):</b>	<b>Dean/Department chair:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Instructor of record:</b>	<b>Major advisor (199 courses only):</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

\* if applicable

## Faculty Checklist

(For more information, see <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies>)

Have you checked to ensure the following?

1. **The Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) has approved this course to be taught in your department at the appropriate level (i.e., 97, 98, 99 for lower-division students; 197, 198, 199 for upper-division students).**
2. **The course number matches the content of the course (i.e., 97, 197 are field studies courses; 98, 198 are group studies courses; 99, 199 are independent study courses).**
3. **The proposed course is in compliance with Senate guidelines on unit values, is graded on a Passed/Not Passed basis, and has regularly scheduled meeting times.**
4. **The proposed course has explicit academic content and requirements, beyond classroom attendance, for receiving credit. In particular:**
  - a. Students should read, as part of the course, articles, books, and/or primary source documents that place the topic of the course in an academic context.
  - b. Students are required to write a paper (or papers) that deal with the readings or the readings in relation to the students' experiences.
  - c. Students are clear about what they need to do to pass the course.
5. **The content of the proposed course is within the scope of your department's academic program.**
6. **For courses in which there is a Student Course Facilitator:**
  - a. You have reviewed and approved the course syllabus prepared by the Student Course Facilitator. The syllabus includes an outline of course content, the reading list, states the frequency of class meetings, and specifies clearly assignments and the requirements, beyond classroom attendance, for obtaining a passing grade. (See <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html> for information on how to create a syllabus).
  - b. You have developed a plan for supervising the Student Course Facilitator and reviewed this plan with the Student Course Facilitator. Supervision can take the form of in-class observations, review of course materials, meetings with Student Course Facilitator, among other options.
  - c. You and the Student Course Facilitator have identified an appropriate course evaluation form to be administered to students at the end of the term.
  - d. The Student Course Facilitator understands that you, as the instructor of record, are the one who has the responsibility for supervising the awarding of all final grades and for reporting the grades to the Registrar.
  - e. You and the Student Course Facilitator have established a mechanism for keeping accurate records and documentation to support the awarding of credit to enrolled students.
  - f. You, as the instructor of record, are aware that you are the appropriate person to respond to and attempt to resolve complaints, conflicts, and grievances brought by students taking the course.
  - g. You encourage Student Course Facilitators to attend workshops led by the Student Learning Center that provide advice and training in good teaching practices (<http://slc.berkeley.edu/>, see Undergraduate Student Instructor Training and Resources).
  - h. The Student Course Facilitator is not enrolled in the class itself. You may, however, enroll the Student Course Facilitator in a 99/199 course that you will supervise.
7. **Students enrolled in 197, 198, 199 courses have completed at least 60 units and are in good academic standing.**

### Next Steps:

1. Sign the proposal form if it meets with criteria for approval.
2. Retain a copy for your files.
3. Submit the proposal form to the department chair for review. The department chair must approve the proposal for the course to be offered.

## Student Checklist

(For more information, see <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies>)

Students who wish to initiate and coordinate a 97, 98, 197 or 198 need to do the following:

1. **Secure faculty sponsorship (an “instructor of record”) and course approval in the semester (or summer) before a class is to be offered. Under exceptional circumstances, the department chair may grant a one-time waiver of the requirement that course approval be secured one semester in advance of the offering.**
2. **Be aware of the role of the faculty member who serves as the instructor of record for student-initiated special studies courses. Faculty responsibilities include:**
  - a. assuring that the course is within the scope of the department’s academic program
  - b. approving the course syllabus
  - c. supervising and mentoring students who facilitate special studies courses
  - d. supervising and awarding all final grades
  - e. reporting grades to the Registrar
  - f. responding to and attempting to resolve complaints, conflicts, and grievances brought by students taking the course
3. **Consider attending the pedagogical workshops and seminars offered by the Student Learning Center; these are structured to help you design and teach a successful course** (<http://slc.berkeley.edu/> see Undergraduate Student Instructor Training and Resources)
4. **Become familiar with policies and procedures related to special studies courses** <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies> (new website not yet developed)
5. **Make sure that your proposed course has explicit academic content and requirements, beyond classroom attendance, for receiving credit. In particular:**
  - a. Students should read, as part of the course, articles, books, and/or primary source documents that place the topic of the course in an academic context.
  - b. Students are required to write a paper (or papers) that deal with the readings or the readings in relation to the students’ experiences.
  - c. Students need to be clear about what they need to do to pass the course.
6. **Develop a written syllabus that includes the:**
  - a. outline of course content
  - b. reading list
  - c. statement of frequency of class meetings
  - d. clear description of assignments and requirements for passing the class
  - e. key learning outcomes (what will students know or be expected to do as a result of this course?)
  - f. methods of instruction
  - g. methods of evaluation of student performance

See <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html> for information on how to create a syllabus.
7. **In collaboration with the sponsoring faculty member:**
  - a. develop a plan of the ways in which the faculty member will provide supervision and mentoring. The faculty member could observe your course, review your course materials, meet with you to discuss course progress, offer advice on teaching strategies, or suggest readings about good teaching practices, among other options.
  - b. identify an appropriate course evaluation form to be administered to students at the end of the term.
  - c. identify an appropriate evaluation form for you to complete at the end of the term that addresses your experiences in facilitating the class, and provide the form to the department chair.
  - d. establish a mechanism for keeping accurate records and documentation to support the awarding of credit to enrolled students.
  - e. enroll, if you wish, in a 99/199 independent study course supervised by the sponsoring faculty member; you cannot be enrolled in the course you are facilitating.
8. **Complete the Special Studies Course Proposal Form the semester before the course is scheduled to be offered and secure appropriate signatures.**

## Department Chair Checklist

(For more information, see <http://education.berkeley.edu/specialstudies>)

Have you checked to ensure the following?

1. **The Committee on Courses of Instruction (COCI) has approved this course to be taught in your department at the appropriate level (i.e., 97, 98, 99 for lower division students; 197, 198, 199 for upper division students).**
2. **The instructor of record, per Senate regulation A205, is not supervising more than one Passed/Not Passed undergraduate course in any given term, exclusive of individual study or research courses, unless approval to do so has been given by the Dean of the School or College in which the course is offered.**
3. **The department is willing to provide appropriate administrative support for this course.**

Have you verified that the instructor of record has made the proper decisions on the following?

4. **The course number matches the content of the course (i.e., 97, 197 are field studies courses; 98, 198 are group studies courses; 99, 199 are independent study courses).**
5. **The proposed course is in compliance with Senate guidelines on unit value, is graded on a Passed/Not Passed basis, and has regularly scheduled meeting times.**
6. **The proposed course has explicit academic content and requirements, beyond classroom attendance, for receiving credit. In particular:**
  - a. Students should read, as part of the course, articles, books, and/or primary source documents that place the topic of the course in an academic context.
  - b. Students are required to write a paper (or papers) that deal with the readings or the readings in relation to the students' experiences.
  - c. Students are clear about what they need to do to pass the course.
7. **The content of the proposed course is within the scope of your department's academic program.**
8. **For courses in which there is a Student Course Facilitator:**
  - a. The instructor of record has reviewed and approved the most current version of the syllabus.
  - b. The instructor of record has a plan for supervising the student coordinator.
  - c. The instructor of record and the Student Course Facilitator have established a mechanism for keeping accurate records and documentation to support the awarding of credit to enrolled students.
  - d. The instructor of record has ensured that the Student Course Facilitator is not enrolled in the course. The instructor of record may enroll the Student Course Facilitator in a 99/199 course that he/she will supervise.

### Next Steps:

1. Sign the course proposal form if it meets the necessary criteria for approval.
2. Retain the original approved proposal with your department records.
3. Send a copy of the approved proposal form to the Committee on Courses of Instruction (Academic Senate, 320 Stephens Hall, MC 5842).
4. Where there is a Student Course Facilitator, provide him or her with a copy of the approved proposal form.

**Appendix V:  
Recommended changes to Senate Regulation A230**

A230. SPECIAL STUDIES (Am.12.87)

A. Undergraduates

1. Credit

Subject to conditions in sections 3 and 4, a student may earn credit for supervised independent study of topics of the student's own selection, or a group of students may earn credit for an organized cooperative study of topics of their own choosing. Such study will receive faculty advice on topics or methods of study. (Rev. 3.83)

2. Course Numbers

- The number 97 is reserved for Field Studies Courses by lower-division students.
- The number 98 is reserved for Directed Group Study by lower-division students.
- The number 99 is reserved for Supervised Independent Study by academically superior lower-division students, who are to be defined by each department, or equivalent. This definition includes, as a necessary part, a grade-point average of at least 3.3. (Eff. Spring 1985) (Am. 4.85)
- The number 197 is reserved for Field Studies Courses by undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least 60 units. (En. 3.83)
- The number 198 is reserved for Organized Group Study by undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least 60 units.
- The number 199 is reserved for Supervised Independent Study by undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least 60 units.

3. Approvals

1. Each student enrolled in a lower-division Independent Study course (99) must have prior consent of the instructor who is to supervise the study. Approval by the Chair of the Department (or equivalent) must be obtained on the basis of

a written proposal that specifies nature of the study, number of units to be credited, and the basis for grading. The formal description of a 99 Course must also explicitly state the qualifications for student admission. (En. 4.84)

2. A written proposal for each Field Studies Course (97/197), signed by the faculty sponsor, must receive approval by the Chair of the Department. The written proposal must include a description of the course, number of units to be credited, and the basis for grading.
3. Each section of a Group Study Course (98 or 198) must receive approval by the Chair of the Department (or equivalent) based on a written proposal submitted by the instructor who is to supervise the course that describes the matter to be studied, the methods of instruction, the number of units to be credited, and methods of evaluation of student performance. (EC. 4.88; EC.00 )

~~A copy of the approved proposal must be submitted for information to the Committee on Courses of Instruction.~~

4. Each student enrolled in an Independent Study course (199) must have prior consent of the instructor who is to supervise the study and of the student's major advisor. Approval by the Chair of the Department (or equivalent) must be obtained on the basis of a written proposal that specifies the nature of the study, the number of units to be credited, and the basis for grading.
5. A copy of the approved proposal for all special studies courses must be submitted for information to the Committee on Courses of Instruction.

#### 4. Limitations

1. ~~The formal description of a 99 Course must explicitly state the qualifications for student admission.~~ (En. 4.84)
2. Students enrolled in 197, 198, and 199 courses must have completed at least 60 units of undergraduate study and must be in good academic standing (2.00 grade-point average or better).
2. Credit for 97, 98, 99, 198, and 199 courses in a single term may aggregate no more than four units. (Rev. 3.83)
3. Only a grade of Passed or Not Passed is to be assigned in 97, 98,99, 197, 198, and 199 courses.

4. Subject to approval by the Committee on Courses of Instruction, a Department may impose additional limitations on 97, 98, 99, 197, 198, and 199 courses.
5. No more than a total of 16 units of courses numbered 97, 98, 99, 197, 198, and 199 may be used to meet the requirements for a Bachelor's degree. (Rev. 4.84)

5. Exceptions

The Dean of the student's College or School may authorize exceptions to Limitations 2, 3, 4, and 6. (Rev. 2.87)

B. Graduates

1. Course Numbers

- Course number 601 is reserved for Individual Study for Master's Degree students.
- Course number 602 is reserved for Individual Study for Doctoral students.

2. Approval

Enrollment in these courses must be approved by the student's graduate adviser.

3. Credits and Grading

A student may earn 1-8 units per Semester and 1-4 units per Summer Session. These courses must be taken on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis.

4. Limitations

- Students will be permitted to accumulate a maximum of 16 units in 601 and 602 courses, respectively, toward examination preparation.
- Units earned in these courses may not be used to meet academic residence or unit requirements for the Master or Doctor's Degree. (Eff. Fall 1987)