RESOLUTION ON INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

#RS96-148

At its meeting of April 30, 1996, the Academic Senate unanimously approved the following resolution on disseminating information to the campus community:

RESOLVED That the Academic Senate at San Francisco State University accepts the Student Affairs Committee's Recommendations for Information Dissemination (April 9, 1996) concerning the communication of changes in University policy and curriculum requirements; and be it further

RESOLVED That the Academic Senate at San Francisco State University recommends that all University officials charged with implementing policies act to ensure the most timely, and widest possible dissemination of information to individuals affected by policy changes (including, but not limited to, the methods outlined in the Student Affairs Committee Recommendations); and be it further

RESOLVED That all Academic Senate committees require that those proposing changes to campus policy or curriculum include in their presentations a realistic and feasible plan for how changes will be communicated, and to whom.

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

(April 9, 1996)

Recent Academic Senate actions approving changes in curricula, grading options, and other academic policies have raised concerns about whether such changes are routinely and adequately publicized. Depending upon the nature of the policy involved, information may be needed by any, or all of the following:

- Students in specific categories
- All students
- High school students
- Students planning to transfer to SFSU
- All faculty
- Academic advisers (here and at the University's feeder institutions)
- Faculty and/or staff charged with implementing policies
The Student Affairs Committee presumes that it is generally best to use as many means as may be practical to reach the widest possible audience. The Committee suggests the following possibilities:

- Creation of a central information board that is up-dated with all changes as they are approved.
- Inclusion of relevant information on syllabi (for example, inclusion of changes in University grading policy as they might apply to a particular class)
- Touch-tone messages
- Class Schedule - Making a special section providing new information and policy changes a regular feature of this publication
- Use of system-wide e-mail and voice-mail for faculty and staff
- Creation of WWW pages dedicated to campus up-dates
- Notation in the Bulletin next to ALL courses indicating which semester(s) courses are offered (F, S, A)
- Posting dates in many locations across campus (for example, on each building/classroom a large, clear sign with important dates for the semester - add, drop, etc.)
- Direct communication with affected parties (e.g. mailings to newly-admitted majors regarding any change in the program)
- Writing to the students who are most immediately affected by changes (for example: writing to all non-graduating seniors who have GPA's between 3.25 and 3.49 about changes in honors policy so they won't be surprised at graduation, or could possibly even raise their averages enough - or elect to graduate at the end of Summer '96, before the change goes into effect)
- Distributing flyers about changes at high-traffic location (at the Records Counter, Residence Hall Desks, etc.)
- Mandatory orientation programs
- Posting information on chalkboards (e.g. ATTENTION! POLICY CHANGE!! CHECK IT OUT!!!)
- Posting on bathroom walls
- Installing additional SFSU View kiosks with information about policy changes available through them
- Including messages with grade reports indicating that there have been changes and noting how to obtain more information
- For future policy changes, building in lead time, if possible (For example, a more humane approach to changing the policy on academic honors would have been to keep the old calculations for a time, with the date of implementation of the new requirements listed in the Bulletin. Thus, the 1996-98 version might have read "Beginning with the January 1999 graduating class, honors will be calculated as follows...")
- Including information about policy changes in advisor training programs