

**SAN JOSÉ STATE
UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

**S26-2, University Policy, Curriculum
Principles and Instructions for Policy Creation
Development Policy**

Legislative History:

On February 23, 2026, the Academic Senate approved University Policy, Curriculum Development Policy *Principles and Instructions for Policy Creation*, presented by Senator Frazier for the Curriculum and Research Committee.

Action by University President:

Date: March 9, 2026

Signed and approved by: 
**Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President,
San José State University**

**University Policy, Curriculum Development Policy
*Principles and Instructions for Policy Creation***

RESOLVED, That the attached “Statement of Principles,” along with its instructions for the creation of a future permanent full curriculum development policy, be adopted as temporary SJSU policy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the “Statement of Principles” be included, after revision if necessary, with the eventual permanent full curriculum development policy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this temporary policy be sunsetted when (and only when) the permanent full curriculum development policy has been created and implemented; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all efforts be made to complete a full curriculum development policy by spring 2027.

Approved: 02-16-2026

Vote: 14-0-0

Present: Megan Chang (Chair), Stefan Frazier, Arvinder Loomba, James Brent, David Yan, Raha Shojaei, Cristina Velarde, Marc d'Alarcao, Melinda Jackson, Ellen Middaugh, Vishnu Pendyala, Emily Paredes, Scott Shaffer, Jessica Trask

Absent: None

Financial impact: None

Workload impact: This temporary policy has no workload impact.

SJSU Curriculum: Statement of Principles

I. Central premise: faculty stewardship of curriculum

At SJSU, the curriculum is a primary expression of the university's intellectual purpose. It largely defines what the institution is and what it offers to its students and the broader public. Moreover, as experts in their content areas and in their disciplines, faculty are charged with designing, revising, and assessing the curriculum. That principle has long governed the organization of higher education and remains the framework within which SJSU conducts its academic life.

The division of authority described in the Higher Education Employer–Employee Relations Act of 1978 (HEERA)¹ preserves the full exercise of the functions of the faculty in shared-governance mechanisms. A document adopted by the Academic Senate of the CSU in 1981, by the CSU Chancellor in 1983, and by the SJSU President in 1991, expands on that principle, declaring that “Through the campus academic senates/councils responsibility shall be vested in the faculty or its elected senate/council representatives for developing policies and making recommendations to the campus presidents on ... curricular policies, such as admission and degree requirements, approval of new courses and programs, discontinuance of academic programs, and academic standards.”² Further, the AAUP has emphasized that faculty carry primary responsibility for curriculum.³

In keeping with these tenets, this policy posits that the faculty, acting through the Academic Senate, hold responsibility for educational policy and curriculum. Administrative authority complements this by managing resources, compliance, and operations. These spheres are interdependent but distinct. The curriculum, as the embodiment of academic content and standards, shall primarily be the responsibility of the faculty.

This principle is not new, even at SJSU. It is articulated in SJSU Academic Senate Handbook footnoted here and SS-S15-6⁴, and it is evident in the university's time-honored practices of collegial consultation. It is also discussed in the university's positions on academic freedom.⁵ The forthcoming university-wide curriculum policy will codify these existing commitments, consolidating them into a single framework for consistent application.

¹ HEERA:

https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayexpandedbranch.xhtml?tocCode=GOV&division=4.&title=1.&part=&chapter=12.&article=

²“Responsibilities of Academic Senates Within a Collective Bargaining Context”:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/appendixb.pdf>; Chancellor's endorsement:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/appendixc.pdf>; SJSU President's endorsement:

<https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/appendixa.pdf>; see also

[https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/Documents/ASCSU Principles and Policies.pdf](https://www.calstate.edu/csu-system/faculty-staff/academic-senate/Documents/ASCSU_Principles_and_Policies.pdf)

³<https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/aaup-policies-reports/topical-reports/statement-government-colleges-and>

⁴SS-S15-6: <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/SS-S15-6.pdf>

⁵ Statement of Academic Freedom: <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F24-6.pdf>

II. The need for a unified curriculum development policy

Curricular decision-making at the university has, over many decades at SJSU, evolved through multiple parallel processes. A future unified curriculum development policy shall, in consultation with college representatives, provide for consistency of development structure and interpretation. It shall describe the review sequences from department to college to university levels, define the scope of authority at each stage, and establish the timelines and documentation that guide proposals and reviews. The policy shall make visible the steps through which curricular ideas are advanced, refined, and approved; shall provide a shared reference for faculty, staff, administrators, and students who participate in those processes; and shall represent a transparent system that reduces duplication and uncertainty.

A future curriculum development policy is not intended to standardize curriculum. The content of new programs and courses will continue to be entirely up to the academic units that create them, and especially the faculty in those units. Disciplinary independence and faculty intellectual property rights are to be maintained. Nor is the policy intended to add work to the processes. It is meant, instead, to clarify how units conduct curricular creation and maintenance. That might mean, regarding most processes, simply codifying what is already being done.

III. Levels of committee review, deliberation, and transparency

The Academic Senate and its committees provide the means by which curricular authority is exercised. A future comprehensive curriculum development policy shall identify the responsibilities of bodies at the department, college, and university levels, and describe how they interact, including the potential roles of administrative and other representatives, and how they record votes.

IV. Curricular changes; existing policies and practices

Curriculum changes continuously as knowledge develops and as new modes of teaching and inquiry emerge. The university shall maintain procedures that allow for innovation while ensuring that changes are reviewed with appropriate care. The future policy shall define the categories of curricular action — including, but not limited to, new course proposals, program modifications, discontinuances, and periodic reviews — and the routes by which these actions proceed.

The curriculum policy shall draw upon and unify existing statements of principle and procedure. It shall incorporate the relevant portions of existing university policies, including (but not limited to) curricular priorities⁶ and degree termination.⁷ (It shall exclude only those policies that pertain specifically to General Education, which is governed separately.)

Existing procedural guidance from the Office of Undergraduate Education and related university resources shall be integrated by reference, ensuring that operational

⁶ Curricular priorities: S93-14: <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S93-14.pdf>; Current university policies (index): <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/university-policies/current-policies-chronological-order.php>

⁷ Degree termination: <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S99-4.pdf>

details remain accurate and current. The policy shall also include, where appropriate, links to other university or system documents necessary for verification.⁸

V. Instructions to C&R for development of full curriculum development policy

1. State general principles affirming faculty primacy over curriculum, consistent with HEERA and Senate authority (as above).
2. Describe committee structures at departmental, college, and university levels, specifying membership and reporting lines.
3. Detail curricular process of approval, including recorded votes and materials for support in the review process.
4. Detail submission and review processes for new programs, new courses, program changes, and discontinuances (whether in-state or self-support).
5. Describe program review and assessment procedures, linking them to faculty governance and curricular improvement.
6. Incorporate existing curricular policies (excluding General Education), embedding and superseding S93-14.
7. Reference and / or replace procedural resources available through the SJSU Office of Undergraduate Education and related web materials.
8. Adopt the established flow of review as outlined in the current “Curriculum Review Process” document.⁹
9. Provide active links to all cited policies for verification.
10. Consult external models from other universities for additional guidance.

⁸ Office of Undergraduate Education: <https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/index.php>; GE Guidelines (for reference only): https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/GE%20Guidelines_Sept_2024.pdf

⁹ Curriculum Review Process (Google Doc): https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Dt5hhR2KvDUen7vF_4bOSt7Gvq0bzxQ2d-w0HgREdzE/edit?tab=t.0