Excerpt from 1/28/2013 email:

Michael Hughes <mhughes@csusm.edu> wrote:

Hi David,

… here are our problems with the Challenge Exam Policy (I’m basing all comments on the policy at this website: <http://www.csusm.edu/academic_programs/curriculumscheduling/catalogcurricula/creditbychallengeexam.html>

Problem 1: credit awarded following semester

This seems mostly like an inconvenience, but classes most likely to be challenged will also most likely by prerequisites for courses a student might want to take next semester (301, say, as the prerequisite for 303). So any student who challenges 303 will have to get a permission number from the faculty member, and thus may not be able to enroll that semester at all since she will be prevented by PeopleSoft, and by the time the first day of classes rolls around 303 might be full.

Problem 2: students may not challenge courses for which they are enrolled.

This is a two edged sword. On the one hand, we free up seats in the challenged class (let’s say 301) which could be good for students when we have, say 40 students who want to enroll and 35 spots in the class. On the other hand, if I have 35 students who want to enroll, but 10 challenge successfully, now I only have 25 in the class, and now I get an email from Patty Seleski and the course is in danger of cancellation.

Problem 3: Administration.

If we allow lower division courses to be challenged (say a student gets 96% in Spanish 101 and now thinks she can handle 201, she might want to challenge 102, (this goes back to problem 1, also, since if she is successful she would want to take 201 that same semester) that is potentially a huge administrative hurdle, since this semester I have about 56 courses at the 101-301 levels. We could also address this via a placement exam, but we don’t have the money for that.

Do those objections make sense?

Let me know if you want to meet to talk this over in person.

Best,

Michael

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