



ACADEMIC SENATE

16/AS/20/UEPC

Priority Registration for Student Athletes

Whereas: Student athletes are recognized representatives of California State University, Stanislaus, and

Whereas: California State University, Stanislaus is a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) affiliated university whose student athletes compete under NCAA guidelines, and

Whereas: The NCAA places strict academic requirements on students who participate in a sport for any NCAA sanctioned university, and

Whereas: Every university in the California State University system that has an athletic program provides their student athletes with priority registration, and

Whereas: The faculty of California State University, Stanislaus fully support the concept and practice of shared governance, and

Whereas: Associated Students, Incorporated (ASI), the organization that represents the student body at California State University, Stanislaus, supports a priority registration for student athletes, and

Whereas: California State University, Stanislaus' administration supports a priority registration for student athletes, and

Whereas: Athletes and the teams on which they play perform best when they are able to attend team practices, and

Whereas: Coaches are, in part, evaluated on how well teams perform, and

Whereas: Coaches of every sport routinely report that students have to miss practices because of class scheduling conflicts that are, in part, due to classes being unavailable when it is the student athlete's assigned time to register for classes, and

Whereas: Student athletes have demonstrated a commitment not just to athletics but to attaining an education as demonstrated in the most recent five year timeframe (2014-2019) for which statistics were available which shows that student athletes make up ~3% of the enrolled students at California State University, Stanislaus but comprised ~4% of graduating students despite the lack of priority registration that is available to student athletes on other California State University campuses, then



Be it resolved: That the Academic Senate of California State University, Stanislaus enact a policy that grants student athletes the opportunity to register for classes after the state and federally mandated early registration groups (present or former military, foster youth, and disabled students) and before general class-level groups on first pass registration; and be it further

Resolved: That this policy be effective beginning in the next registration cycle; and be it further

Resolved: That this policy be reviewed by UEPC two years after implementation to assess effectiveness. UEPC will recommend whether or not the policy should be continued.

Rationale: There seems to be a misconception of what constitutes a student athlete at California State University, Stanislaus. When someone thinks of “student athlete,” they usually envision a sport they have seen on television or at a large stadium or arena where athletes from (depending on the sport) LSU, Alabama, Kentucky, Duke, Stanford, Oregon, Vanderbilt, etc. are competing. These student athletes have full scholarships, dormitories specifically for them, meal plans assigned by a nutrition expert and full university support. That is not the student athlete at California State University, Stanislaus.

At California State University, Stanislaus, no student athlete has a full scholarship. In fact, the majority of athletes at California State University, Stanislaus work to pay for classes, housing and meals. There is no nutrition expert setting up meal plans and the student athlete may go through a day eating food on the run, if at all, because of class schedules, practice schedules, and work schedules.

To further exacerbate the problems faced by student athletes, some take classes that have a service learning component that requires additional outside hours to fulfill the course requirement. Also, not all student athletes work in Turlock. They cannot leave work and be in class or at practice in 10-15 minutes. These either means missed practice time or reduced hours. Neither option is in the young person's best interest.

The NCAA requires student athletes to make progress toward a degree by taking required lower division general education courses and/or courses in their major or minor. This sometimes causes student athletes to take an unnecessary minor, or, in some instances, two minors, in order to maintain eligibility to play sports. The NCAA requires them to take appropriate classes to graduate in a 5-year time-frame (usually, at least 12 units per semester). This means paying for classes that are unnecessary to achieve their desired degree but necessary to be able to compete in their sport. In many cases this is because of no priority registration, at the end of their five year eligibility, what stipend they get to play a sport is no longer available and they have to pay for their education through work or loans.

The Academic Senate at California State University, Stanislaus has long stood for shared governance. Students, through their Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) representatives, are the driving force behind this resolution. As expressed in the attached documents, students are seeking priority registration for student athletes. Efforts have been made in the past to address this problem. The two-pass system was incorporated to, in part, address this issue. It did not correct the problem.



It is not students alone seeking this change. Also attached to this resolution is a letter from the coaches of these student athletes documenting issues related to academic achievement and athletic excellence. Coaches write that students are taking classes that they do not need simply to meet the 12 unit requirement imposed by the NCAA. The coaches note, as do the students, that California State University, Stanislaus is the only university in the California State University system that does not allow priority registration to their student athletes. As such, this puts the coaches at a decided disadvantage.

One of the questions asked by athletes considering California State University, Stanislaus as an option is whether or not priority registration is offered. This makes it difficult to attract the best available athlete. Also, coaches contend that it is realistically impossible to schedule practice times that every athlete can attend. One coach writes that, in 14 years of coaching at Stan State, he has never held a practice that every player was able to attend.

The attached documents indicate that students, coaches, and California State University, Stanislaus' athletics have suffered from the lack of priority registration for the student athletes. Nowhere in any of the attachments is there a claim that priority registration will correct all the problems that student athletes experience. However, as stated in the letter from the coaches (last 86 page of letter), it can eliminate the majority of the problems (listed on that page).

Coaches have always put the student's education first and this, as documented, has caused their athletic achievements to suffer. It is time to begin leveling the playing field by give the student athletes the same priority registration offered by every other California State University to their student athletes and give coaches the an opportunity to help each student athlete achieve full potential on the field and in the classroom.

An excel file is available to interested persons that shows statistics related to withdrawal rates, graduation rates, and raw numbers of students and student athletes. The sample size of athletes is too small to allow anything but descriptive statistics but those have proven informative as indicated in the above body of the resolution.

Approved by the Academic Senate on April 28, 2020
Approved by President Ellen Junn on May 17, 2020