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Student Access to Graduation Rate and Career Data Moves a Step Closer
CSAC Committee to Conduct Hearing on SB70 Regulations

Rancho Cordova, CA, August 15, 2012: A committee of the California Student Aid Commission will hold a public hearing Wednesday, August 22, to receive comments on proposed regulations to implement SB70. The law requires colleges participating in the Cal Grant program to report statistics to the Commission regarding enrollment, persistence, graduation, and post-graduation job placement and salary.

“This information will be a huge benefit to students and families who are trying to make wise decisions about their investment in college,” said Commission Executive Director Diana Fuentes-Michel. “Bits and pieces of some of this data can be found by doing deep research at a number of Internet sites, but even then students are not able to get a complete picture of college outcomes. Under SB70, we will be bringing all of this data together in one spot for students to easily access and review.”

Because of the significance of the data for student decision-making, the Commission’s Student Impact Committee will be conducting the hearing on the draft regulations. Committee Chair Johnny Garcia Vasquez, who is a student representative on the Commission, and staff members will provide an overview of the impact of SB70, including a website mockup of how students and their families will access the data once it is collected and posted.

“Students need to know the track record for a college they are considering enrolling in,” said Garcia Vasquez. “Are there enough classes offered for students to graduate in a timely manner? Are support services adequate so students are making progress and continue to enroll each year? Does the degree have enough value to help a student get a good job in a pertinent field? The SB70 data will give students insight into these important questions.”

The proposed regulations have been circulated among public, nonprofit and for-profit colleges since May and have been the subject of multiple webinar discussions to ensure that all concerns were aired and addressed before the start of the formal regulatory process. While some institutions have indicated they are reluctant to take on the added workload of reporting statistics, the Commission has made provisions for an option that allows colleges to submit unsorted data that Commission staff can then put into the correct format. Other institutions have argued that the data duplicates information already collected by the federal government. Those statistics, however, are limited to first-time, full-time students. In contrast, SB70 requires the collection of data on all enrollees, including continuing and part-time students.

Public comments on the draft regulations are due in writing by August 20. In addition, testimony can be provided at the August 22 hearing. After Commission staff analyzes and responds to all comments and if no substantial revisions are required, the full Commission will consider in September moving forward to submit the regulations to the Office of Administrative Law for its review. The regulations are expected to be finalized well before the December 31 implementation date.

The public hearing will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 22, 2012 at Sacramento City College, 3835 Freeport Boulevard, Room LRC (Learning Resource Center) 105, 1st Floor, Sacramento.

The California Student Aid Commission is the principal state agency responsible for administering financial aid programs for students attending public and private universities, colleges, and vocational schools in California. The Commission distributed over \$1.3 billion to California's college students during the 2010-11 academic year through its Cal Grant, specialized and loan forgiveness programs. The Commission also administers financial aid awareness and outreach programs, such as Cal-SOAP and Cash for College, in collaboration with business, private industry and community-based organizations.