HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY
University Senate

Resolution on Adoption of Campus Degree Planning Software

18-15/16-APC— March 8, 2016—First Reading

RESOLVED: That the Humboldt State University Senate recommends to the Provost that the Campus Degree Planning Software Policy and associated recommendations be accepted as submitted; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Senate recommends to the Provost the creation of a new Degree Planning Oversight Group to replace the Degree Planning Software Working Group, and coordinate and oversee the development and implementation of the software; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the University Senate extend its gratitude and thanks to the Degree Planning Software Working Group for its work.

RATIONALE: The Degree Planning Software Working Group has completed its work and provided a series of policies and recommendations necessary to implement the use of degree planning software at HSU. Use of degree planning software in conjunction with major academic plans is a best practice for increasing student success. By providing students with a defined pathway to graduation, it reduces the time required for routine advising, allowing advisors to use their time effectively. In addition to helping students see their pathway to graduation, it will help administrative units identify and plan for course demand. Effective implementation of degree planning software will require coordinated effort on the part of many individuals and units. The implementation, policy and process document represents a practical and achievable blueprint for bringing degree planning software onto our campus to provide an effective planning tool for advisors and students in order to better ensure their success. The use of degree planning software will also allow for the implementation of prioritizing student registration appointment dates in accordance with their progress to degree, rather than by the current total number of units earned. It is the recommendation of the Working group that this be implemented as it will motivate and reward students who are pursuing the fastest path to graduation, thus helping to increase graduation rates and lower time to graduation. Furthermore, it is recommended that existing milestones (Golden 4 -GE Area A and Area B: Mathematical Concepts by 60 units) have consequences for non-compliance and that two new milestones be developed by each program, also with consequences for non-compliance. It was felt that consequences were necessary for the milestones to be meaningful in encouraging student behaviors (such as learning to write) that would increase their chances of success in the degree. Data indicate that the Golden 4 milestone has not been observed, with approximately 600 juniors and seniors, who matriculated as freshmen to HSU, missing at least one of the Golden 4 courses from their transcripts. The additional milestones could be specific courses, or

one of a list of courses, along with a specific grade and time to complete. The idea of a milestone is that we set standards for expected academic progress that students will encounter at an early point in their degree. The standards indicate where the students need to be in terms of academic performance to be successful in their major. If students are unable to meet these standards at that time, they will be required to work with an advisor to make a plan. This might mean developing better study habits, getting a tutor, spending more time on homework, or it might mean switching to another major. Coming to this challenge point early on will result in a greater chance of success, or at the very least, spare them from further years in a major that they do not have the momentum to complete.