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April 26, 2016

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair  
Assembly Appropriations Committee  
State Capitol, Room 2114  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: Oppose AB 1985 (Williams, as of 04/21/2016) Postsecondary Education: Advanced Placement Credit**

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez:

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is writing to express its opposition to AB 1985 (Williams), which would require the California Community Colleges to develop, and each community college district to adopt, a uniform policy to award a pupil who passes an Advanced Placement exam with a score of 3 or higher credit for a course within this curriculum with subject matter similar to that of the Advanced Placement exam.

This bill would require state-level consultation to develop a uniform policy and to perform ongoing reviews of advanced placement exams to keep that policy current, thus diverting resources that could be better used in other areas. It might also create additional costs for students who could be forced to complete coursework after transfer that was not required at the community colleges where lower tuition rates apply.

The Academic Senate is fully supportive of the awarding of appropriate credit for advanced placement exams. We have published various documents providing guidance and advisories for colleges to use in the awarding of such credit. We agree that students should not be asked to repeat coursework in which they have already demonstrated competence. Indeed, the great majority of our institutions and disciplines in the community college system already award credit in the manner that AB 1985 would require.

However, the specific academic standard by which credit for advanced placement exams is awarded should remain a decision of each institution. Mandating credit for a specific score at the state level could create inconsistency with the university systems that have the freedom to require a higher score for credit. Students may therefore be placed in a situation where the credit they have been granted at their community college does not transfer to their university, forcing them to retake coursework at a higher cost.

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

April 26, 2016

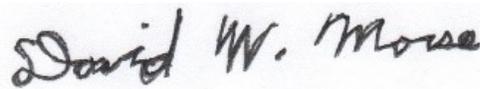
Page 2

In addition, advanced placement tests are regularly revised and updated for content and structure, and thus the requirements for credit should be reevaluated by institutions when such updates take place. Mandating credit for a specific score through legislation would prevent any sort of qualitative review of the exams and their content at the local level, and such a review at the state level would incur costs on an ongoing basis.

Finally, Education Code and Title 5 Regulations allow for the setting of academic standards at the local level and direct that the faculty, through the academic senate, should take primary responsibility for recommending those standards. This reliance on local decision-making is essential to ensure that all colleges are able to best serve their communities and that the setting of academic standards is informed by faculty expertise. AB 1985 would deprive both local boards and discipline faculty of their ability to set standards for their academic programs, setting a dangerous precedent that would endanger the local control that is so vital to the effectiveness of the community college system.

**For these reasons, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges expresses its opposition to AB 1985 (Williams, as of 04/21/16).** We would welcome a revised bill that encourages colleges to regularly update standards for advanced placement credit in order to ensure the best interests of students without imposing specific academic standards from the state level. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



David Morse

President

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

pc: Assemblymember Das Williams  
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee