April 19, 2022

Members of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Irwin
Capitol Office, 1021 O Street, Suite 620
Sacramento, CA 94249


Position: Oppose

Dear Members of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education and Assemblymember Irwin,

On April 9, 2022, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), the organization designated through statute and regulation as the representative of the more than 58,000 full-time and part-time faculty in the California Community Colleges system regarding curriculum, instruction, and academic and professional matters, voted to oppose AB 1705 (Irwin, 2022) as of February 9, 2022 unless amended. This bill would require that students, with few exceptions, are placed and enrolled in transfer-level English and mathematics, even when those courses are not required for the student’s educational programs.

Specifically, as directed by the delegates per Resolution S22 06.03, the ASCCC requests that the following amendment language be included in order to uphold the mission of the California community colleges:

Placement and enrollment of students in a transfer-level English or mathematics course should not prevent students from enrolling in a pre-transfer level English or mathematics course when a student determines a course fulfills their academic needs based on the desire to do any of the following:

1. Complete a certificate or career technical education program.
3. Build skills or re-skill.
4. Fulfill a lifelong learning priority in written communication and quantitative reasoning courses.

It is the intent of the legislature to neither prohibit nor deny a student the opportunity to enroll in any pre-transfer level English or mathematics course based on students’ rights to determine their educational goals and academic needs.

It is the intent of the legislature to neither create additional English or mathematics requirements in program pathways nor to increase the level of the English or mathematics requirements in program pathways.
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It is the intent of the legislature to add support and resources for faculty to implement equitable placement, such as a lower ratio of instructor to students not exceeding 1:10, professional development, embedded faculty tutors in the classrooms, and update the classroom environment to accommodate small groups.

It is the intent of the legislature to exclude noncredit from the definition of pre-transfer in this bill.

The ASCCC passed additional resolutions in regard to equitable course access, data collection on student enrollment, and measuring successes and challenges of AB 705 (Irwin, 2017):

- Resolution S22 06.04 Students’ Right to Choose to Take a Pre-Transfer Level English or Mathematics Course,
- Resolution S22 06.05 Regarding Chancellor’s Office Student Enrollment Data in AB 1705 (Irwin, 2022), and
- Resolution S22 03.04 Expand Methods of Data Collection and Analysis to Fully Measure the Successes and Challenges of AB 705 (Irwin, 2017).

While we truly appreciate the work that has been done so far in amending the bill, the amendments presented on April 19, 2022 do not provide the changes that are necessary for the ASCCC to be able to remove our opposition to the bill. For these reasons, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges wishes to express its position of oppose AB 1705 (Irwin, 2022) as of April 19, 2022 unless the bill is further amended. As the practitioners most familiar with curriculum, we are willing to continue to work with the author’s office to help create a bill that best serves students and enables them to reach their self-declared educational goals.

Respectfully,

Dolores Davison
President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges