



Testimony by Dr. Louise Feroe
Connecticut State University System
Before the Higher Education and
Employment Advancement Committee
February 10, 2011

Good morning, Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. For the record, I am Dr. Louise Feroe, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for the Connecticut State University System (CSUS), and I am here today to speak on behalf of Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 6231, *An Act Concerning Public Institution of Higher Education System Transfer and Articulation Agreements*.

I would like to comment briefly regarding House Bill 6231 and to provide you with some information as to what CSUS has been working on since Public Act 07-7, which addressed many of these same important issues. These include a review of the status and content of transfer and articulation agreements, a plan to implement common course numbering and a report on proficiency for college level courses.

This update follows the report submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Higher Education in December 2007, in response to Special Act No. 07-7, *An Act Concerning Public Institution of Higher Education System Transfer and Articulation Process*.

Transfer and Articulation Agreements with the Connecticut Community Colleges (CCC's)
Dual Admission Program

- A Transfer Compact agreement was signed in March 2007 and has, since then, been implemented. An oversight committee has been established with representation from the Connecticut Community College System and the Connecticut State University System to oversee implementation and further streamline the transfer process from CCC to CSUS. The Committee is co-chaired by President Barbara Douglass from Northwestern Connecticut Community College and President Jack Miller from Central Connecticut State University.
- A complete review of all CCC System common courses transferring and applying to the general education requirements at each university has been completed. Course listings are published and are scheduled for periodic updates.
- Common courses at the CCC System are offered by all colleges and are accepted by all CSUS universities.
- This work has led to identification of approximately 30 credits that could form a common general education core, and could therefore lead to development of one common liberal arts associate degree at the Community Colleges that would transfer in its entirety to the universities for automatic junior status and general education credit. The committee is moving in this direction.

- Committee Goals for 2010-2011:
 - Launch a new effort to publicize the program to prospective students.
 - Identify obstacles to widespread success.
 - Assess dual admissions effectiveness at increasing degree attainment in Connecticut .
 - Encourage expanded use of degree audit modules to aid in advising.
 - Create single program pathways and explore large scale curricular adaptations, based on the Florida model.

New Program to Program Articulation

- Several pathways to teaching careers have been created.
- Several Community College programs in other fields have been created in consultation with CSUS universities.

The Connecticut State University System is committed to moving forward to develop an ever more seamless pathway for transfer students, and will be an enthusiastic partner in a study that would encourage the continuation of this work.

This past fall 3,214 entering undergraduate students were transfer students, and of this amount 1,558 were from the Connecticut Community Colleges. A total of 5,064 were first time undergraduates. Thirty-nine percent of our new undergraduates were transfer students (while 19% of all new undergraduates transferred to CSUS from the CCC's). The pattern of postsecondary education is clear; these proportions of new students who are transferring in are increasing every year. In fact, students transferring from Connecticut Community Colleges to CSUS universities have increased 43% since 2005. At 9 of the 12 colleges in the current academic year, the number of transfer students matched or surpassed previous record levels. The development of clear, transparent pathways for students to access a university education – whether directly from high school or through other routes – will be a prerequisite for our success as a system in educating Connecticut citizens.

Public Act 07-7 also mandates the review of "... placement test scores for the community-technical college system and the Connecticut State University system that establish specific proficiency levels for all matriculated students entering college level courses."

In the spirit of this legislation, the universities in the CSUS have adopted a congruent set of proficiency assessments for placement into college level English and Mathematics courses. In addition, the CSUS is strongly committed to its Bridges program, designed to ensure the adequate preparation of high school students so that they succeed in doing college level work upon graduation. The CSUS is seeking to adapt the Bridges model to the Connecticut Community College System (CCC System). The goal is for the growing number of students transitioning from the colleges to the universities to be fully proficient and ready to succeed in baccalaureate programs.

English Proficiency

The universities in the CSUS have adopted a criterion for placing entering students in the first college level composition course (granting credit towards university degree): 450-510 in the SAT, or the university procedure incorporating an essay. The college level courses into which students are placed at the four universities have been identified for common course designation across the CSUS. It is important to note that the adopted system and the corresponding college level course placements are in concert with the CCC System approaches and its first college level composition course. Similarly, this course transfers to all CSUS universities for college credit.

Mathematics Proficiency

A common expectation for mathematics proficiency for entering students is set at the level of Intermediate Algebra, equivalent to the Algebra II in high school. The mathematics departments at all universities in the CSUS have adopted a document detailing the expected content and pedagogic approach to Algebra II. They have also adopted a uniform criterion for placing students out of Intermediate Algebra at an SAT score of 550 or higher, an identical placement method as the CCC System.

Common Course Numbering

This work was carried out by collaborative disciplinary committees including representation from all four universities. In order to accelerate the pace of identification of common courses:

- A comprehensive course equivalency matrix across the CSUS was completed and updated.
- Using this matrix, a set of 100 and 200 course equivalencies in all disciplines were postulated for common numbering.
- The first set of common courses were publicized to students in the Fall, 2010 semester.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.