

**Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee Public Hearing
March 9, 2017**

**Testimony Regarding Raised Bill No. 971 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROMOTION OF
TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS**

respectfully submitted by

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I am an Associate Professor in Political Science, and a member and Co-Chair of Content Area 2 (Social Sciences) of the General Education Oversight Committee, at the University of Connecticut. My testimony only represents my personal views on this bill, and I am testifying on my own behalf. My positions, however, give me a unique understanding of the topic of legislation.

I sympathize with efforts at helping students achieve their educational goals, but the current bill is imprecise, unnecessary, and pedagogically unsound.

The current bill is imprecise. The statute this bill attempts to amend enacted a specifically collaborative effort of the regional community-technical college system and the Connecticut State University System for liberal arts and sciences programs and any other degree program designated as a course transfer program. In contrast, this bill vaguely refers to “a course transfer program” that institutions “may” develop, and says such a program will consist of not fewer than thirty academic credits. Since it does not require collaboration among institutions, there is no guarantee that the requirements or academic credits across institutions will be similar. The bill requires the engagement of teaching faculty “in the development and implementation of the general education core of common courses,” but gives no indication how the development of such “core of common courses” will occur across all the varied institutions of higher education in Connecticut. If Section 1(b) envisions one large collaborative effort, then that contradicts Section 1(a)’s language of having each institution develop its own program; if Section 1(b) is consistent with Section 1(a) by having each institution act independently, then there will be no “core” as envisioned in Section 1(b).

The current bill is unnecessary. For students who wish to transfer to the University of Connecticut, they already have resources by which they can determine what courses in Connecticut will help them meet the General Education requirements for graduation (see <http://admissions.uconn.edu/apply/transfer/transfer-credit/equivalencies>). Students can fulfill nearly every general education requirement prior to transferring to UConn, but even more importantly, they can easily see how to do so. In addition, the Admissions office will work with students to examine any course that does not appear in that list. This does not guarantee that they will get general education credit for such courses, but my personal experience is that Admissions goes to great lengths to help students in this process.

Most importantly, the current bill is pedagogically unsound. Students earn their degrees from specific institutions of higher education. The faculty at every institution seriously and thoughtfully design their curriculums to embody the pedagogy they see as important for students earning those degrees. Sometimes the curriculums will overlap, and in such cases, as I just described, they will grant credits that meet similar requirements. Yet a wonderful aspect of higher education in Connecticut is that the faculty at different institutions can develop requirements that meet the specific interests and needs of different students; such differentiation can even occur within institutions across degree programs, schools and colleges. The kind of one-size-fits-all approach envisioned by this bill is pedagogically unsound and

undermines the amazing work of faculty at the many different institutions of higher education in this state.

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