

IFS TESTIMONY HB 2525, MARCH 13, 2015

CHAIR READ AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

FOR THE RECORD MY NAME IS JEFF DENSE, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL FACULTY SENATE (IFS). WE REPRESENT THE FACULTY OF OREGON'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES.

IFS GREATLY APPRECIATES THE FOCUS THE SPONSORS OF HB2525 HAVE PLACED ON THE IMPORTANT ISSUE OF TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS BETWEEN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. IN ORDER FOR THE STATE TO ACHIEVE ITS AMBITIOUS 40/40/20 GOALS, STUDENTS AND PARENTS NEED TO BE PROVIDED A CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT PICTURE BY WHICH THEY CAN NAVIGATE THE 'PATHWAY' OF HIGHER EDUCATION. HB 2525 IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HOWEVER, CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE CURRENT LANGUAGE THE BILL MAY PROVE PROBLEMATIC IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION. SPECIFYING THE PARAMETERS OF WHAT CONSTITUTES A "SUFFICIENTLY SIMILAR" COURSE OFFERING CAN BE ACHIEVED BY DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMON COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM FOR LOWER DIVISION COURSES WHERE STUDENTS ARE PROVIDED CLEAR INFORMATION ON WHAT IS RECOGNIZED AS A COURSE EQUIVALENCY. THIS GOAL CAN BE ACHIEVED BY THE HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION UTILIZING ITS CONVENING AUTHORITY TO BRING TOGETHER FACULTY, GROUPED BY ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE, TO ALIGN COURSE NUMBERING BETWEEN

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OREGON'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. COMMON COURSE NUMBERING HOLDS SIGNIFICANT PROMISE IN ADDRESSING THE "SUFFICIENTLY SIMILAR" PROVISIONS OF HB2525.

A MORE CHALLENGING ASPECT THE BILL IS SECTION 1(3)(c). WHILE NATIONALLY DEVELOPED TESTS SUCH AS ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) AND THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) DIPLOMA ARE GENERALLY ACCEPTED BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN OREGON, THE BILL'S PROVISION THAT "TEST DEVELOPED BY A COMMUNITY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY" IS AN INDICATION OF A STUDENT'S COURSEWORK PROFICIENCY IS PROBLEMATIC. ISSUES OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTIVELY ADDRESSED AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FOR AP AND IB PROGRAMS. THIS PROVISION MAY RESULT IN A PLETHORA OF TEST INSTRUMENTS WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO UNDERMINE ACADEMIC QUALITY, THE BEDROCK PRINCIPLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN OREGON. IFS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITS THE PHASE "OR A TEST DEVELOPED BY A COMMUNITY COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY" BE DELETED FROM THE CURRENT DRAFT OF HB 2525.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, AND I WOULD BE GLAD TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.