

# FACCOCTS



# The Political Issue



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To inform, educate, empower, and advocate for faculty in service to students and the communities of California.

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An educational environment that is equitable, accessible, and appropriately funded led by a diverse and empowered faculty.

Every faculty a member, every member an advocate, every advocate informed.

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We value the expertise, experience, and professionalism of all faculty, full-time and part-time, as the primary force for advancing the mission of California Community Colleges.

We value students and the significance of the student-faculty relationship and the opportunity to foster mutual growth and success.

We value diverse voices, perspectives, and cultures of both students and faculty in the quest for social justice and equity.

We value community colleges as a driving force for economic growth, social cohesion, and opportunities for personal advancement for all Californians.

We value collegiality and a working environment that recognizes the importance of all organizational and personal voices in serving students.

We value the growth and development of all faculty members as professionals in service of their communities, their institutions, and their students.

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# DEIA: Not all Initiatives are Equal

by Evan Hawkins, FACCC Executive Director

**For the past few years, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) initiatives have been ubiquitous within our colleges, associations, policies, and in nearly all professional development offerings.** Our community colleges serve the most diverse and economically disadvantaged higher education students in the state. It is imperative that each of our institutions is focused on eliminating equity gaps and dismantling systemic racism. This is why FACCC has prioritized DEIA work in everything it does and will continue to do so. While we continue to emphasize this necessary work, we also need to reevaluate our approaches, their effectiveness, room for making improvements, and the consequences of not doing so.

Much of what we would today call DEIA training began in the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the civil rights movement. At the time, government agencies took the lead and were followed by corporations due to the passage of new laws. While it was undoubtedly a major step in the right direction to have these trainings institutionalized, the following decades have been inundated with ineffective instruction and initiatives. The

effectiveness of DEIA initiatives has been studied extensively in the public and private sectors with mixed results. The research on the unintended consequences of poor training is concerning with evidence showing the counterintuitive activation of racial bias.

A 2018 white paper from the journal *Anthropology Now* reviewed extensive data on antibias and diversity training in corporate and academic settings. The review outlines the negative consequences of ineffective—and counterproductive—DEIA training. For example, field and lab studies have shown that asking people to acknowledge and interrupt stereotyping can potentially reinforce stereotypes by making them “more cognitively accessible to people.” A 2018 study in the *Journal of Social Psychological and Personality Science* found that study participants exposed to messages of multiculturalism increased their beliefs in “race essentialism”—the notion that racial differences are valid, biologically based, and immutable. Deconstructing stereotypes and promoting multiculturalism are key pillars in the equity work that faculty do on our campuses, but the data shows that if done incorrectly, these practices can unintentionally amplify racial differences.


Furthermore, the *Anthropology Now* white paper outlined how employees react negatively if they feel coerced into DEIA training. It’s no secret that many institutions offer it specifically to demonstrate a well-meaning but superficial ideal of inclusive workspaces, and to achieve protection from discrimination lawsuits. As a result, employees may perceive outside training as being forced by external pressures. If DEIA training is seen as a compulsory requirement, they will likely become defensive; however, if employees know that it is internally supported and led by colleagues it can be more successful. The research shows that DEIA initiatives work best when they are bottom-up instead of top-down, and engage local decision-makers to solve equity challenges themselves. At best, mandatory external training engages only those who are already interested in DEIA work (i.e., preaching to the choir) but, at worst, makes the neutral employee potentially hostile toward DEIA work.

This research demonstrates the need for effective training and initiatives because the consequences of getting DEIA wrong are dire. As faculty leaders on our campus-

es, we are in unique positions to promote effective internal DEIA practices. While our institutions spend exorbitant resources on outside consultants and rubber-stamping practices of external and corporate-funded “equity advocates,” the evidence demonstrates that this is not necessarily the most effective vehicle of long-term effective change. As scholar Pamela Newkirk notes in her book *Diversity, Inc.: The Failed Promise of a Billion-Dollar Business*, most organizations that take this approach fall far short of their rhetoric. We must ensure that our colleges don’t make this mistake.

FACCC is committed to effective equity work based on the knowledge that systemic racism exists, and the belief that our colleges should be on the front lines of dismantling it. We need to reflect on our efforts and reconsider when the data shows that our approaches aren’t effective. While many well-meaning outside organizations have shaped how our colleges and communities approach DEIA initiatives, we must acknowledge the decades of data that reveal the ineffectiveness of the top-down approach. However, we still need to do more than reject this approach—faculty should take leadership roles in creating long-term DEIA initiatives within their colleges and associations.

Faculty members play an important role in ensuring that our institutions prioritize effective DEIA practices and in criticizing trainings that do not work toward this goal. Rethinking our strategies and approaches to equity is essential to understanding the big picture. For example, a 2020 paper in the *American Journal of Political Science* found that “gaining union membership between 2010 and 2016 reduced racial resentment among white workers.” Unfortunately, faculty—and unions particularly—have too often been an afterthought in state-level DEIA initiatives and public policy. Worse, some outside groups have used anti-union messaging to claim that union leaders don’t care about equity. Despite all of this, faculty and union leaders have an opportunity within their campuses and organizations to prove how bottom-up, faculty-led, and student-centered approaches can create systemic change on our campuses. Doing so is in the best interests of our students and communities, and also will allow faculty to be more effective advocates who take leadership roles in the creation of productive DEIA initiatives. ■



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# Legislators We Like

(and why we like them):

# Past, Present, and (hopefully) Future

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By John Fox, Ph.D., Foothill College

## Among FACCC's values is "the expertise, experience, and professionalism of all faculty, full- and part-time, as the primary force for advancing the mission of California Community Colleges."

While we hope that everyone embraces this value, it is not the case when fights over the faculty's role in shared governance, system funding, equity, and curriculum occur in the California State Legislature. Despite this, many legislators have been champions of California Community College faculty. The ones featured here have words and deeds that demonstrate a belief in FACCC's core values. They are to be lauded but, more importantly, serve as models for other legislators to emulate.



Perhaps the best friend of California community college faculty was Assemblymember **John Vasconcellos** (1932–2014), author of the landmark bill AB 1725, which was signed into law in 1988. This law transformed community colleges in a myriad of ways, one being the establishment of faculty playing a role in the governance of colleges. Although the term "shared governance" is not in AB 1725, it explicitly states that there should be administrators "who value institutional governance based upon a genuine sharing of responsibility with faculty colleagues."

Driven by an interest in humanistic psychology, Assemblymember Vasconcellos' authorship of AB 1725 reflected his wider personal and political philosophy: "My major goal over all these years has been unity, unity between who I am as a person, and who I am politically, my commitment to a multi-cultural, nonsexist, cooperative and caring political system." [i]

AB 1725 passed almost unanimously and was signed by Republican Gov. George Deukmejian. As Brian Murphy, chief policy consultant and negotiator for the bill said:

*"The crafting of the legislation itself was an exercise in shared governance, as John secured state funding for two commissions that brought administrators and faculty and trustees together to negotiate the language that would legislate new roles and responsibilities for faculty, alongside everything else. John believed that the new structures would only work if they were crafted through participation."*

California Community Colleges are better because of AB 1725, but it should serve as a baseline for improvement rather than the end goal.



Another champion, who is retiring this year, is Assemblymember **Jose Medina** (D-Riverside). In addition to his many bills that support community college students, he gains special recognition for his advocacy on behalf of part-time faculty.

"Being a part-time faculty member in the California community college, it is a rough road with no or very little office hours, no opportunity to meet with students...and... sometimes not even having the respect of other faculty members at their own institutions." [ii]

He has supported pay equity and health insurance for part-time faculty, sponsored legislation supporting the negotiation of re-employment preference for part-time faculty and, most recently, authored AB 1856, which calls for an increase in the part-time load from 60–67% to 80–85% of the full-time load.

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**These legislators and candidates demonstrate an understanding of community college faculty as professionals who advance the mission of California community colleges, and as educators who do their best work for students when economically and professionally supported.**

John Martin, chair of the California Part-Time Faculty Association, says “Medina is by far, at this time, the top legislator in Sacramento in the last several legislative sessions, because he understood our part-time issues within the California Community College system... CPFA will miss him.”



Perhaps the lawmaker who picks up where Assemblymember Jose Medina leaves off is Assemblymember **Evan Low**, another friend of part-time faculty who sponsored AB 706, which allowed part-time faculty to transfer their sick leave benefits from one district to another. Low’s partnership with Assemblymember Medina includes the co-sponsorship (with several others) of the ethnic studies requirement, Cal Grant reform, and the defunding of Calbright College, an online-only public institution. A graduate of De Anza College and a strong advocate of the LGBTQ+ community, Low co-authored (with Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula) AB 2315, which allows students, staff, and faculty to declare a name or gender identification of their choosing and (with few exceptions) not require them to use their “legal” name or gender.

Patrick Ahrens, president of the Foothill-De Anza District Board of Trustees, said “Assemblymember Evan Low has a deep passion for public service, and a vision for our community grounded in his own lived experience and belief in the transformative potential of our students, faculty, and staff. At this pivotal moment in our state’s history, we need bold leadership and policy proposals.”

Representing the California Senate, we have Senator **Nancy Skinner**, chair of the Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, as well as the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. Winner of the 2022 Legislator of the Year award from California Community College Independents (CCCI), Senator Skinner also has been a strong advocate for part-time faculty. This is fitting for a legislator who, as a graduate student at UC Berkeley, cofounded the union now representing graduate student instructors.

Jeffrey Michels, president of CCCI, said, “Nancy Skinner has been a huge supporter of our community college system, students, staff, and faculty. Under Nancy’s leadership, we have won more funding for full-time hires and part-time pay and benefits. She has been a true leader on these issues, wading through propaganda to get at the facts when it comes to college spending.” Her support for students extends to college athletes through her sponsorship of SB 26, which expedited the Fair Pay to Play Act so athletes could earn money from their name, image, and likeness. Whether it’s for community college faculty, student-athletes, or graduate student employees, Nancy Skinner works to ensure that those who make the system work are fairly compensated.



Senator **John Laird** of Santa Cruz, FACCC’s Legislator of the Year in 2022, has strongly supported community colleges on the budget side. In response to cuts in the education budget, Laird ran for Senate in 2010 in support of the issue of funding public education in California. He is a critic of the so-called Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) and the flaws in the hold-harmless provisions. As he stated in a subcommittee hearing in February, “We’ve got this situation where the [funding formula] is cutting substantially college districts in high-income areas, and so they get a double whammy. They can’t hire people... and they are going to be cut substantially, so someone has to address this issue.”[iii]



Former FACCC President Debbie Klein relayed this story about Senator Laird:

*“I met John Laird when he was a trustee at Cabrillo College back in 2001. That was my first year teaching at a community college, and I was a part-time anthropology instructor and my department’s representative for our faculty union. My colleagues and I asked John to participate in a collegewide panel about part-time faculty working conditions. Not only did John listen, understand, and care about the systemic inequities inherent in part-time faculty working conditions, but he championed our message that faculty working conditions are students’ learning conditions. Fast forward twenty years, and John continues to fight to keep our community colleges alive, thriving, and appropriately funded. Like no other legislator I have worked with, John Laird gets it: our students succeed when, and only when, our faculty are fully supported.”*



This coming election provides an opportunity to elect legislators who will fully support faculty:

- FACCC’s endorsements include **Esmeralda Soria** (AD 27), a part-time faculty member in political science at Fresno City College, and a member of the Fresno City Council. On Soria’s political candidate page on Ballotpedia, she says, “I have a long track record of advocating for good education for all. As a Fresno City Council member, I helped expand Fresno City College cam-

pus into the city’s two most low-income neighborhoods. And, I also helped create a scholarship fund for DREAMers at Fresno City College.”[iv]

- **Eric Guerra** (AD 10) is a former Capitol staffer who earned a Staff Achievement Award from FACCC. Guerra helped to establish the Legislative Community College Caucus and advocated for undocumented students in the Los Rios Community College District.
- Labor leader **Liz Ortega** (AD 20) is a former political director of AFSCME 3299, representing the largest University of California workers, and served as former executive secretary-treasurer of the Alameda Labor Council. Her endorsements include many labor unions, especially in education and health care.
- **Lola Smallwood-Cuevas** (SD 28) is an educator, labor organizer, and the project director at UCLA Labor Center. She is a co-founder of the Los Angeles Black Worker Center and, like Liz Ortega, has strong support from labor unions.

These legislators and candidates demonstrate an understanding of community college faculty as professionals who advance the mission of California community colleges, and as educators who do their best work for students when economically and professionally supported. We hope you appreciate them as much as we do, and consider supporting them in their campaign efforts this fall. ■

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***The author would like to thank everyone who contributed to this article, and especially FACCC Executive Director Evan Hawkins for his guidance.***

[i] P. 664 in Fishel, Jeff. 1992. “Leadership for Social Change: John Vasconcellos (D-CA) and the Promise of Humanistic Psychology in Public Life.” 13, 4, Dec., Pp. 663-692.

[ii] “Assemblymember Jose Medina comments on EdSource investigation into adjunct working conditions.” EdSource Feb. 2, 2022. Retrieved August 16, 2022, from <https://edsource.org/2022/assemblymember-jose-medina-comments-on-edsource-investigation-into-adjunct-working-conditions/669962>

[iii] California Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 hearing, February 16, 2022. <https://www.senate.ca.gov/media-archive/default?title=sub&startdate=&enddate=>

[iv] [https://ballotpedia.org/Esmeralda\\_Soria](https://ballotpedia.org/Esmeralda_Soria)



# No Better Time for State-Wide Advocacy

by Wendy Brill-Wynkoop, President, FACCC, College of the Canyons

**A decade ago, I participated in faculty leadership training through the National Education Association.**

Through this training, I worked with faculty from other states, including Florida—a state I realized has a strikingly different higher education governance structure than our own.

I was shocked by the absence of faculty power in Florida's academic senates, the almost nonexistent unions, the lack of academic freedom in and out of the classroom, and how the politicians determined the curriculum. Recently, Florida reached new extremes when the governor and legislature banned public K-12 elementary school teachers

from holding classroom instruction regarding sexual orientation and gender identity.

It's hard to imagine California's liberal Legislature taking such harsh actions; however, our Legislature spent the last decade handing down many initiatives rooted in short-term political goals. Simultaneously, faculty have found themselves stripped of their rights and responsibilities to provide a solid educational foundation for students.

Taking its cue from the 2010 White House Summit on Community Colleges, the 2012 California Community College Student Success Task Force made poor policy recommendations during the Great Recession of 2008,

when it cut funding and turned down hundreds of thousands of students wanting to attend community colleges. Instead of investing more in our public education system to ensure that education remained accessible and affordable for all, our policymakers chose to narrow our mission and limit who we serve to support “equitable access” only for students who could “achieve success.”

In the last decade, the shift to student success has created policies that support full-time students who attend college straight out of high school and have a goal to transfer. Degrees that lead to transfer, dual-enrollment programs, completion-based funding, college promise for full-time students, the redesign of remedial education, and common course numbering have been bolstered or implemented. Even AB 705 (Irwin 2017), which began as a homegrown faculty initiative to reduce lengthy remedial pathways by providing access to transfer-level course work, is now limiting the ability of colleges to provide students with access to preparatory courses.

In his 2012 article, “Closing the Door, Increasing the Gap,” Dr. Gary Rhoades predicted:

“The productivity policy push is leading community colleges to focus on those students who are most likely to succeed. That makes for quite a shift from the historic Statue of Liberty type mission of these colleges. In the name of ‘we can’t do everything’ colleges are engaged in an exercise in probability. But since we know it is middle- and upper-middle-income Anglo students who are most likely to succeed in community colleges, it is actually an exercise in privileging the already advantaged. To move in this direction is to defeat the purpose and give up on the fundamental mission of these colleges. Yet in the name of being ‘realistic,’ that is what colleges and state systems are doing.”

Due to the mandates and initiatives that hurt students on nontraditional paths, equity gaps have remained, and enrollment has declined significantly for older students and students of color. Without a dramatic shift in the rhetoric and focus of community college policies, we will lose students, lay off faculty and staff, and close colleges.

The legislature has often dismissed the voices of California Community College (CCC) faculty and other CCC system practitioners. Special-interest nonprofit organizations with powerful lobbyists funded by corpo-

rate foundations have backed the decade of legislative mandates and convinced our legislators that these policies are best for our students.

### **So what do we do about it? Faculty must take action—now.**

- 1. Faculty must be involved in the state advocacy process.** FACCC and the ASCCC have partnered to grow our faculty advocates. Learn how to advocate for community colleges on the state level, and develop the confidence to connect with local and statewide representatives.
  - **FACCC/ASCCC February's Advocacy Webinar** (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7GpFrD5tgk>)
  - **Attend the FACCC Advocacy & Policy Conference** in March 2023
- 2. Get your civic engagement on!** Following this upcoming election, over a third of our elected representatives will be new to the state legislature. Make sure our legislative FACCC champions are elected by **volunteering your time to help with their campaigns.**
- 3. Legislators are elected to create and pass legislation.** Working through FACCC and the faculty unions, **faculty need to help propose and sponsor new legislation** that promotes equity among our students, like increasing per-student funding, prioritizing student basic needs and mental health, capacity at UC/CSUs, supporting equal pay for part-time faculty, and providing faculty resources and opportunities for professional development.

**If you support FACCC, you can help amplify the faculty voice by expanding our ability to lobby at the Capitol.**

**Join our 2022-23 FACCC Membership Drive** (<https://www.faccc.org/membershipdrive>) to contribute to our mission.


**FACCC: Every faculty a member, every member a FACCCtivist!**



# Politics, Pendulums, and AB 1705

## Opposing AB 1705 Does Not Mean Opposing Acceleration

By Troy Myers, Sacramento City College



AB  
1705

**Millions of Californians** suffer from the generational effects of racism. These effects are widespread, including higher poverty rates in communities of color and lower academic outcomes. The California Legislature, informed by a group of self-designated “advocates,” presented a solution in the form of [AB 1705 \(Irwin 2022\)](#), a bill requiring almost all students be placed in transfer-level math or English.

So why do I, FACCC, and the Academic Senate, oppose AB 1705?

AB 1705 promises to level the playing field for students of color. But the bill’s sweeping, all-or-nothing, top-down approach will not serve our most vulnerable student populations. Ultimately, AB 1705 removes student choice: pre-transfer preparation in math and English, in whatever form, will no longer be an option in our open-access institution for almost all students, whether they would benefit from such assistance or not.

Supporting responsible acceleration does not mean supporting AB 1705’s reduction and elimination of critical pre-transfer math and English coursework. AB 1705 has been described as an AB 705 clean-up, but it is better explained as a clean-house bill that would impede the faculty’s ability to address the distinct needs of at-risk math and English learners.

In my experience as an accelerated English faculty member at Sacramento City College, I have seen at-risk students who would likely wash out in long developmental pathways, or achieve transfer-level outcomes in conventional writing courses. Acceleration, done well, does not entail shoving every student into transfer-level courses unless they are “highly likely to fail.”

The California State Legislature generally passes bills with the intention of benefiting students. However, in the case of AB 1705, lawmakers do not seem willing to rely on complete

data, accept guidance from the experts, or (as required by law) honor the recommendations of the Academic Senate. For this bill, the Legislature has chosen to listen exclusively to foundation-funded “reform” groups, almost none of which are led by working community college faculty.

I want to emphasize that the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges was told in March by Assemblymember Irwin’s office that our role in the discussion was over and, moving forward, only amendments from the “advocates” would be considered. Further, my colleagues at Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) tell me that their requested substantive amendments were not included in the bill that is sitting on the governor’s desk. The ASCCC also has been excluded from the conversation, in violation of the standing orders that dictate the collegial processes of the Board of Governors.

Unreflective of reality, AB 1705 takes a singular, neatly marketed interpretation of placement and acceleration, and etches them into statute. Many districts, under strong pressure from the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, are already operating at or close to the bill’s narrow prescriptions. So how are their students faring? Data from those colleges is available on the Chancellor’s Office website. If we look closely, in first-year outcomes we see some pockets of success, yes, but also sprawling swaths of catastrophe. Frankly, the statistics from early AB 1705 implementation demonstrate the havoc that this bill will wreak if signed.

### **AB 1705 and the Titanic**

I take this section’s title from [a presentation by Daniel Judge](#), a professor of mathematics at East Los Angeles College. Judge made this relevant in April of this year, using success data from 2019–2020. That was the first year that Los Angeles Community College District implemented the sweeping changes the Chancellor’s Office was

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insisting upon after the passage of AB 705—changes that are enshrined in AB 1705. Judge looks at math acceleration in colleges throughout the LA District, the largest district in California and one with a high population of students of color. In every college he examined, the student success data is shocking. Not puzzling or question-begging, but shocking.

Judge noted that enrollment went up in transfer courses that year, especially in math, naturally leading to a greater number of students completing transfer math in their first year. This outcome, which was higher throughout, is perennially emphasized by those who support 1705. But what was the cost? Among Hispanic students at Los Angeles Mission College, 176 additional students attempted transfer-level math and only 11 students completed it. An *additional 165 Hispanic students did not succeed* in transfer-level math and were left with substandard grades on their permanent academic records.

Every student group had increased fail rates in transfer math at Los Angeles Mission College, and the success gaps between white students and students of color grew. At Los Angeles City College, during the same one-year period, the number of all students who attempted transfer math surged from 220 to 1,010, and the number of completers also rose, from 130

to 313. These are significant gains. But the number of students who failed at the transfer level exploded *from 98 to 697*. That's 697 people who were left with failing marks on their transcripts. Disaggregated data reveals that, among Hispanic and Black students, 587 students attempted the transfer course in Fall 2019 and, for both groups, only 106 successfully completed. A total of *481 students of color failed* transfer math. For African Americans, only one additional student completed transfer math after pre-transfer courses were eliminated, and *31 additional Black students failed*.

Judge looked at colleges across his district, and he noted that a student was more likely to survive the Titanic disaster than to pass transfer math the first year after the elimination of pre-transfer courses.

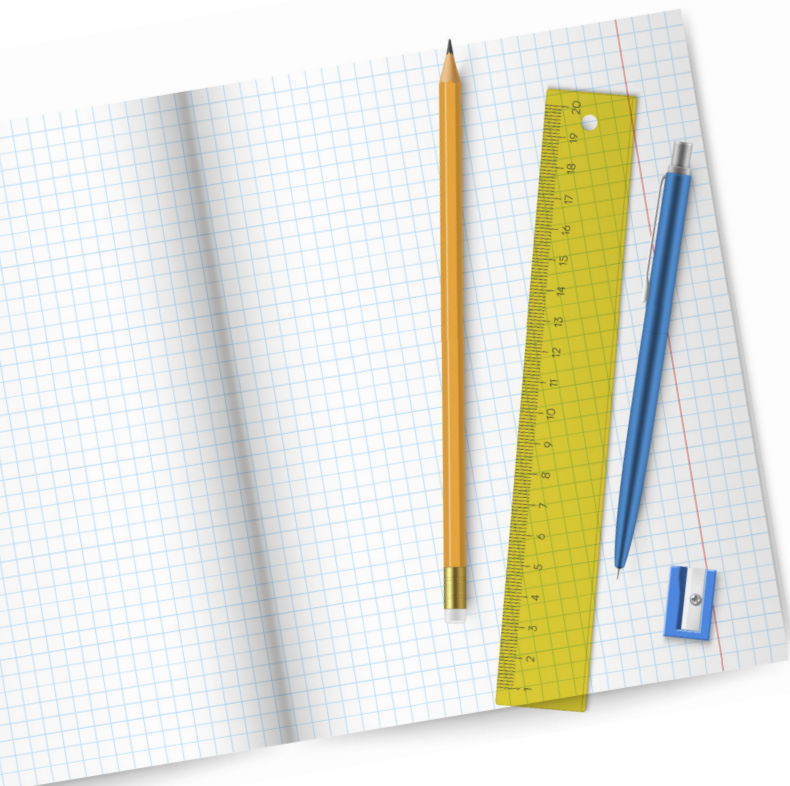
What went wrong? I have neither the discipline expertise nor the local reference to say, but what is apparent is that those colleges, those faculty, and those students were not ready for the sweeping and structural changes that AB 1705 is about to make law. And who pays the price? Thousands of community college students, many of them students of color.

Data like this should make any policymaker tap the brakes! Frankly, I am astonished that it has not.

### Students Who Fail at Transfer Level

We cannot cheer as we point to the additional students who succeed in transfer-level courses and disregard the enormous amount of additional students who fail.

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), which aims for non-partisan reporting, published [a generally positive report](#) on first-year AB 705 outcomes. They emphasized access and numbers while excluding other data and, notably, that their report was funded by some of the same foundations behind the crafting of AB 1705. However, the PPIC data also shows that we are losing students who do not successfully complete transfer-level courses, many of whom are not returning to community college. The PPIC observes that just 40% of the 56,600 students who were enrolled in but failed to complete college composition in Fall 2019 had re-enrolled as of Fall 2020. Further, “more



than half of the students who did not re-enroll did not return to the system at all...only 16% of initially unsuccessful students successfully completed college composition by Fall 2020.” One possible reason for this troubling outcome, the PPIC notes, is *inadequate co-requisite support*, which, as with any responsible acceleration program, requires resources, functional professional development and, critically, faculty buy-in, which in turn requires faculty to be treated like professionals. Without faculty enthusiasm and subsequent professional development opportunities, blanket acceleration will fail students and teachers alike.

Ironically, AB 1705 offers no ongoing resources for co-requisite courses or professional development. Programs that have shown success, as in my department, are expensive, but not every college will support the additional costs locally. Faculty cannot reinvent curricula to meet both the requirements of the bill and the needs of students overnight, and my friends most involved with acceleration are wondering why no funds are currently attached to the demands AB 1705 (and AB 705) require.

### Part-Time Students

As an individual instructor, I supported the bulk of AB 705 in its final language because it allowed for local innovation until the Chancellor’s Office, in conjunction with the advocates, took control. However, one issue remains in any policy that rewards first-year completion of transfer English and math—the majority of our students, at last count about 65%, attend part-time, and both bills, along with the promised funds and the funding formula, push colleges to get students through in a single academic year. Better ideas were presented to Irwin’s office when she was working on AB 705, such as rewarding colleges that got students through in their *first 30 units*, or what a full-time student might accomplish in two semesters. These suggested changes would not have penalized students whose work or family responsibilities pressure them to go part-time.

These suggestions were ignored, and AB 1705 continues with this difficult-to-accept position. Even if half

“ The full-time metric might work well at a private, liberal arts college, but providing higher status to full-time students (who, as a class, tend to do better) is irresponsible in our system.

of our students could not attend full-time without a negative impact on the rest of their lives, or even a third of students, that would mean several hundred thousand students and their colleges would be harmed every year, as the new funding formula and this bill will do. The full-time metric might work well at a private, liberal arts college, but providing higher status to full-time students (who, as a class, tend to do better) is irresponsible in our system.

### The Pendulum and Placement

It is ironic that the longstanding phrase used to describe effective student placement in Title 5, “multiple measures,” was, almost overnight, defined by the Chancellor’s Office as a single measure, high school GPA.

The elimination of commercial college placement tests, such as Compass, has not been questioned by English faculty in my experience, and it is reasonable to believe that high school grades predict college grades for many students. But in many cases, they are not an accurate predictor. My high school grades would not have qualified me to be a transfer level student; it was the placement essay I wrote that included a Keats poem I wrote from memory that got me into transfer writing.

Faculty who teach English know that accurate placement, even with the inclusion of a high school grade

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point average (GPA), remains difficult. The combination of high school GPA and a writing sample would be two assessments on the way to “multiple,” at least. A conversation with a faculty member or faculty counselor would be a third. The more I interact with accelerated English students, the more I see that third item to be a critical piece. Correct placement is critical for student success, and students’ lives and prior academic experiences are multi-variegated. I suppose it’s harder to sell the truth than a simple, one-size solution.

Some English departments used to place students, using a written sample before that assessment was stripped by the Chancellor’s Office after 705. Under AB 1705, any such assessment will not be allowed. Does research support such a change?

Fortunately, some research on the utility of a writing sample for placement is being done. In 2019, three faculty members from the University of California, Irvine—Jane S. Nazzal, Huy Q. Chun, and Carol Olson (who is the director of the University Writing Project at UCI)—conducted a study on placement accuracy

using a writing sample alongside high school GPA. They chose a large, urban district in California, one with more than 50,000 students, and they surveyed 13 sections of freshman composition over two semesters.

They came to the same conclusion my colleagues in English have: lengthy pre-transfer sequences have not shown a positive effect. However, their study and other research cited show the value of a *trained reader-scored* writing assessment in placement, especially for at-risk learners. They note that an academic writing sample is how the UC system places its students into their writing courses. They conclude by arguing that such written assessments are “effective in identifying groups of students with varying levels of writing proficiency”—which, I would think, seems obvious. Further, their study showed “no linear relationship” between high school GPA and writing competency as measured on the written assessment. They note that while high school GPA “is strongly associated with college GPAs and useful for predicting certain facets of students’ college performance ... it is very weakly associated with students’ level of writing proficiency.”

Perhaps most troubling, Olson and her colleagues note that while students place one or two levels below transfer using a written assessment rank closely in terms of skill set, the lowest-scoring students present a large gap between their writing fluency and those who placed higher. This means, of course, that if we are to remain open access, our least-prepared students may require some pre-transfer skill-building—something AB 1705 means to end with an almost evangelical vengeance.

Is the UCI study the final word? Its authors admit it is not. But how can the Legislature pass a bill that will codify such dramatic changes when recent research is inconclusive, if not contradictory? I offer one possibility: perhaps it is because the foundation-funded “advocates” are selling a product, and, to make the sale, they need to be the only salesperson at the door. Perhaps it is because the state Chancellor’s Office has partnered with their mission. And perhaps it is because the Legislature and its staff did not take the care to listen to the real experts.

“ Faculty aren’t arguing for a return to a lengthy pre-sequence, but the simple solution AB 1705 promises is too simple for the complexities of the communities we serve.



## The Need for Complete Data

In defense of those at the Capitol, good data explained well is not always easy to find.

At first glance, the Chancellor's [Transfer Level Gateway Completion Dashboard](#) shows clear, even substantial gains in transfer English and math outcomes for all students in California since AB 705, including students of color.

We see upticks.

We see closed achievement gaps. This is true for the entire state, for regions, and for many individual colleges. However, if you click on the menu to the right to unselect "all students" and instead select students who "started at transfer level," the default placement AB 1705 has now made law, in most cases those gains disappear.

Instead, using the Chancellor's Office data, including spring semester 2020 when failing students received excused withdrawals because of the pandemic, we see that White and Asian students are faring reasonably well without transfer instruction, while other marginalized students are flailing. Sure, more students are completing transfer-level courses when everyone is tossed into the sink-or-swim pool, but the failure rates are higher and the achievement gaps are larger.

### "It's the Law..."

How is the Legislature, Board of Governors, and the Chancellor's Office moving ahead on AB 1705 without support from the Academic Senate, FACCC, or unions? Surely, if those responsible for these bills want acceleration to work, they would've reached out to faculty as professional equals. Instead, some individuals have absorbed the anti-faculty rhetoric coming from the advocacy groups outside of the community college system.

Faculty who argue for local control of acceleration are being categorized as intransigent, racist, elitist, self-seeking, backward, and lazy. This unfair stereotype is consistent with the language used in a 2018 *Capitol Weekly* article written by a member of the Board of Governors who perpetuated anti-faculty



rhetoric by using the phrase "ivory tower."

In my experience, faculty care about students. All you have to do is look at the heroic efforts to serve students during the recent pandemic. That should be proof enough of the strength of our commitment and professionalism, as well as the adequacy of our experiences as evidence against AB 1705.

I present the following to illustrate the larger rhetoric. At a public meeting to explain AB 705 just after its passage, one of the leading faculty reformers, in response to questions, concerns, and pushback, went back on themselves with the stunning phrase, "It's the law, motherf\*\*\*ers."

The belief that faculty must be forced into acceleration and agree that no course below transfer level can ever serve any student is the background noise between and behind every line of AB 1705.

### Is the Post-Pandemic the Time?

In the years following AB 705's passage, we faced two years of pandemic and the subsequent influx of high school students who had completed their final months and years online, regardless of their instructors' levels of preparation for that modality.

For my accelerated students as a whole, the pandemic also meant working more hours under greater family demands; it meant health scares, emergencies, and hospitalizations of caregivers and wage-earners. At

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# Successes, Failures, and Forward Momentum: A Look Back at the 2021–2022 Legislative Session

By Stephanie Goldman, FACCC Associate Director

## Between the record-breaking funding levels and the prolonged pandemic, the 2021–2022 Legislative Session was one for the history books.

Despite fears that the pandemic would cause a significant recession, California prospered and the Department of Finance, Legislature, and governor worked hard to allocate funds and avoid the archaic Gann Limit. In addition to appropriating unprecedented funding to our system, the Legislature and governor supported some faculty and student-centered bills while also passing controversial bills at odds with the recommendations of system stakeholders.

Proposition 98 was flush with money leading to fully funding long-time FACCC priorities, including full-time faculty hiring, part-time faculty office hours and health care, and the growth of true student equity groups, like Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), and California Community College Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) programs.

FACCC's carefully crafted bill packages also saw some significant wins. In 2021, the governor signed FACCC-sponsored AB 1326 (Arambula), which requires a county human services agency to designate at least one employee as a staff liaison to serve as a point of contact for academic counselors and other professional staff at a campus of an institution of public higher education located within the county.

This year, Gov. Newsom signed AB 2315 (Arambula), a bill requiring community colleges to allow students, faculty, and staff to use their chosen name on all non-legal documentation. AB 2315 is the result of faculty contacting us after they had to fight their own battle with their district to use their chosen name.

FACCC also sponsored Senate Resolution 45 (Min), a resolution recognizing the importance of academic freedom, and an audit relating to full-time faculty hiring funding and how districts have used that funding. Both measures were passed.

While FACCC is incredibly excited about those successes, we faced some challenges with our cosponsored legislation.

AB 375 (Medina 2021) and AB 1856 (Medina 2022) were nearly identical bills that would have increased the percentage of hours a part-time faculty member could work from 67% of a full-time schedule to 80–85%. Both bills flew through the Legislature but Gov. Newsom consecutively vetoed AB 375 and AB 1856 on the grounds of part-time healthcare coverage and costs.

Frustrated but encouraged by the historically large state budget, FACCC and the other members of the Council of Faculty Organizations prioritized advocating for \$200 million for part-time faculty healthcare throughout the 2022 budget year. The \$200 million survived the spring's budget hearings and was a part of the 2022–2023 budget package; however, despite arguments to the contrary, the governor believed that

more funding is required to support increasing the part-time faculty load.

FACCC also cosponsored several part-time faculty equity bills, a faculty obligation number bill (FON), and a bill to defund Calbright. The part-time faculty equity bills, AB 1269 (Garcia 2021) and AB 1752 (Santiago 2022), died in Assembly Appropriations. AB 1505 (Rodriguez 2022) would have rebenched the FON to current levels had it not died in the Senate Appropriations Suspense File. AB 2820 (Medina), the annual bill to defund and dissolve Calbright, died before being taken up in the Senate Education Committee. These were frustrating setbacks, but we will continue to fight for part-time faculty equity and the elimination of Calbright.

Sponsoring and cosponsoring bills is just part of FACCC's advocacy efforts. With the rise of influential outside advocacy groups, FACCC has had to channel significant energy into opposing misguided transfer-related legislation. Among the bills FACCC opposed were AB 928 (Berman 2021), AB 1111 (Berman 2021), and AB 1705 (Irwin 2022).

AB 928 created yet another transfer oversight body attempting to streamline students into associate degree for transfers programs, regardless of their goals, while requiring the development of a single transfer pathway for the California State University and University of California systems. Despite opposition from all faculty

groups, the Chancellor's Office, and other stakeholder groups, this bill was signed into law and is currently being implemented. AB 1111, the common course numbering system bill, was similarly signed into law despite major concerns with implementation.

This year is best defined by the battle over AB 1705, which was inaccurately touted as an AB 705 "clean up" bill. Most faculty groups, including FACCC and the Academic Senate, fought tooth and nail against this bill, which would require almost every student to take transfer-level courses, regardless of their academic goals and whether or not they would be successful in those classes. Furthermore, the bill did not include any support for faculty, despite efforts from faculty groups. We utilized data taken from the Chancellor's Office Dashboard and the experiences of our incredible faculty; however, most of the Legislature disregarded our concerns and passed the bill to Gov. Newsom's desk where he signed it on Friday, September 30.

Watching misguided bills become law was frustrating and continues the trend of Sacramento-induced "initiative fatigue," but we can't stop fighting for our students. Wins and losses are inevitable in the Capitol, but it's up to us to continue making our voices heard.

Have a great bill idea that would improve the California Community Colleges for the better? Now is the time to let FACCC know. Email us at [info@faccc.org](mailto:info@faccc.org). ■

# YEAR IN REVIEW



## FACCC Voter's Guide | November General Election

### Constitutional Officers

Governor Gavin Newsom      State Treasurer Fiona Ma  
 Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis      State Attorney General Rob Bonta

### California Assembly Districts

- |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>2</b> Jim Wood (D)             | <b>44</b> Laura Friedman (D)        |
| <b>4</b> Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D) | <b>45</b> James Ramos (D)           |
| <b>6</b> Kevin McCarty (D)        | <b>46</b> Jesse Gabriel (D)         |
| <b>7</b> Ken Cooley (D)           | <b>47</b> Christy Holstege (D)      |
| <b>10</b> Eric Guerra (D)         | <b>49</b> Mike Fong (D)             |
| <b>14</b> Buffy Wicks (D)         | <b>50</b> Eloise Reyes (D)          |
| <b>15</b> Tim Grayson (D)         | <b>51</b> Rick Zbur (D)             |
| <b>16</b> Rebecca Baver Kahan (D) | <b>52</b> Wendy Carrillo (D)        |
| <b>17</b> Matt Haney (D)          | <b>53</b> Freddie Rodriguez (D)     |
| <b>18</b> Mia Bonta (D)           | <b>54</b> Miguel Santiago (D)       |
| <b>20</b> Liz Ortega-Toro (D)     | <b>55</b> Issac Bryan (D)           |
| <b>22</b> Jessica Self (D)        | <b>56</b> Lisa Calderon (D)         |
| <b>24</b> Alex Lee (D)            | <b>57</b> Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D)   |
| <b>25</b> Ash Kalra (D)           | <b>58</b> Sabrina Cervantes (D)     |
| <b>26</b> Evan Low (D)            | <b>60</b> Corey Jackson (D)         |
| <b>27</b> Esmeralda Soria (D)     | <b>62</b> Anthony Rendon (D)        |
| <b>28</b> Gail Pellerin (D)       | <b>65</b> Mike Gipson (D)           |
| <b>29</b> Robert Rivas (D)        | <b>66</b> Al Muratsuchi (D)         |
| <b>30</b> Dawn Addis (D)          | <b>67</b> Sharon Quirk-Silva (D)    |
| <b>31</b> Joaquin Arambula (D)    | <b>69</b> Josh Lowenthal (D)        |
| <b>36</b> Eduardo Garcia (D)      | <b>73</b> Cottie Petrie-Norris (D)  |
| <b>37</b> Greg Hart (D)           | <b>76</b> Brian Maienschein (D)     |
| <b>38</b> Steve Bennett (D)       | <b>77</b> Tasha Boerner Horvath (D) |
| <b>40</b> Pilar Schiavo (D)       | <b>78</b> Chris Ward (D)            |
| <b>41</b> Chris Holden (D)        | <b>79</b> Akilah Weber (D)          |
| <b>43</b> Luz Maria Rivas (D)     |                                     |

### California Senate Districts

- 2** Mike McGuire (D)
- 6** Paula Villescaz (D)
- 8** Dave Jones (D)
- 10** Aisha Wahab (D)
- 14** Anna Caballero (D)
- 16** Melissa Hurtado (D)
- 20** Caroline Menjivar (D)
- 24** Ben Allen (D)
- 26** Maria Elena Durazo (D)
- 28** Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D)
- 30** Bob Archuleta (D)
- 34** Bob Umberg (D)

### Board of Trustee Endorsements

#### Los Angeles Community College District:

Sara Hernandez  
 Kelsey Iino  
 Steve Veres

#### San Francisco Community College District:

Vick Chung  
 Anita Martinez  
 Susan Solomon

#### Santa Monica College

Tom Peters

#### College of the Desert

Ruben Perez  
 Aurora Wilson

#### Peralta Community College District

Louis Quindlen

times, it meant death in my students' immediate families. And at this crucial juncture, we want to make informed decisions about changes for students who struggled academically and personally through an unprecedented global shutdown. The truth is that our students likely need consistency and extra support more than anything, and AB 1705 is a step away from this.

Too many unanswered questions remain. Enrollment is down across our system in the wake of COVID. We are trying to recruit students back into classrooms. How do enrollment and retention fare in math and English compared to the overall declines? What does the data from two years of the pandemic (data still not available on the Chancellor's Office website) look like?

In English, the transfer course outcome is an academic research paper. Does this mean that students who come to community college for vocational training need to write an academic research paper in MLA format to succeed? What will those students do now? Where will they go?

### **The Reality Our Students Know**

The overt exclusion of faculty, the powerful lobbying efforts of the "advocates," incomplete acknowledgment of existing data, the distrust of faculty and faculty groups at the Chancellor's Office, and the willingness of the Legislature to dramatically alter the experience of our least-prepared students without engagement with the Academic Senate, is a perfect storm. With the passage of AB 1705, reform groups are cheering over their massive victory for "equity." Other states may follow their own laws, eliminating all pre-transfer level courses. Only time will reveal the human cost, wounds, avoidable mistakes, and foolish shortcuts of this unprecedented level of deceit and arrogance.

Faculty aren't arguing for a return to a lengthy pre-transfer sequence, but the solution AB 1705 promises is too simple for the complexities of the communities we serve.

Recently, I met with a dozen accelerated students individually and asked why they were in this class. Some had decent high school GPAs but chose the

support course because of pronounced writing anxiety, poor experiences, and low grades in high school writing courses. Two had definite mental illnesses and were striving to get sufficient care. One teenager moved from out of state a year ago, and was stuck with large medical bills, struggling to get retroactive Medi-Cal. Several of my students worked full time. Some were recovering from addictions. Many young students had young children of their own. At least one student told me outright that he had to work to help pay his family's rent.

If advocates for higher education want to make a genuine difference, we must see an explosive, energetic, and tireless drive to put free money and resources into the hands of community college students. The Cal Grant should be much larger, and federal financial aid must be increased. Universal access to high-quality medical and mental healthcare must be as accessible to students on our campuses as it is at UCs and CSUs. Students should have access to child care and public transportation. Money should never be the reason a student falls through the cracks.

And yet poverty is the insidious, ubiquitous cancer that drags our students down and back. When children are falling, it is our responsibility to build a system that will catch them. If the country wants to follow in California's footsteps, we must lead in these areas. Top-down, cookie-cutter solutions like AB 1705 are neither representative of the CCCs nor indicative of responsible government intervention. ■



# Recruit a Member

## 2022 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Calling all FACCC members! Our 2022 Membership Drive has begun. From now through June 2023, help us grow the FACCC community to further promote academic freedom, retirement benefits, student basic needs, and other policies that impact faculty and their students.

### Grow the faculty voice in Sacramento!

#### Recruit a Member and Win!

- Prime FACCC Swag
- Gift cards
- Grand prize drawing entry: air and hotel accommodations for one week in Hawaii

#### Strengthen our voice!



Visit our website for additional information and membership drive rules.

#### FACCC Champ Levels:

##### FACCC Membership Sponsor

By sponsoring one new FACCC member, they'll receive a free 2022-23 membership from us and you'll receive:

- a \$10.00 Starbucks card
- Prime FACCC swag

##### FACCC Membership All-Star

Sign up 10 new FACCC members and you'll receive:

- a special FACCC lapel pin
- a shout out on our website, Weekly Newsletter, or social media pages

##### FACCC Membership MVP

Sign up 20 or more new FACCC members and you'll receive:

- a special gold FACCC lapel pin
- free admission to FACCC's 2023 A&P Conference (hotel accommodations included)
- a shout out on our website, Weekly Newsletter, or social media pages
- your name entered in a raffle for grand prize trip to Hawaii

*\*See our website for membership drive terms & conditions  
[facc.org/membershipdrive](https://facc.org/membershipdrive)*

Questions? Contact Herlim Li, FACCC Membership Coordinator: [herlimli@facc.org](mailto:herlimli@facc.org)



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