



## KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

### SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE February 9, 2016

#### **SB 388**

#### **Blake Flanders, Ph.D. President and CEO Kansas Board of Regents**

Good afternoon Chairman Abrams and Members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to provide neutral testimony concerning SB 388.

The Kansas Board of Regents currently has policy regarding College Level Examination Program (CLEP) credit earned and the transferability of that credit to all other state universities. Additionally, at the Regents' annual retreat this past Fall, the Board included among its goals for the 2015-2016 year, to further the implementation of credit for prior learning in Kansas, with an emphasis on serving active and veteran service members and their families.

On February 17, 2016, both the System Council of Chief Academic Officers and the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee are scheduled to discuss and advance a revision of this policy after an extensive review of the issue.

I am in strong agreement regarding the importance of our higher education system acknowledging credit for prior learning as we look to increase the flexibility and ease with which a student can successfully complete the degree program of their choice while still upholding the quality and vigor that is expected from our public universities and colleges.

There are three amendments we would like to offer in order to address standards and accreditation practices.

First, the bill currently does not define successful passage of an exam administered through this program (line 8), however the American Council on Education (ACE) has assigned "credit-granting recommended scores" for each CLEP exam and it would be our recommendation that this definition be included in the bill.

The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated CLEP processes and procedures for developing, administering,

and scoring the exams. The scores recommended by ACE are equivalent to a grade C in the corresponding course, which meets the expectation of this bill's authors which assume a "pass/fail" grade be granted.

Second, for a number of exams, the current practice at some of our institutions is to award additional course credit for a higher score. Therefore it is our recommendation that the number of credit hours to be awarded (line 11) be modified to read "at least equivalent to the minimum number of hours granted for the equivalent course offered by the institution."

Lastly, the Higher Learning Commission, which is the accrediting body for all of the public universities and colleges in Kansas, requires that at least 25% of any degree be earned from the institution awarding the degree. Therefore, we request amendment to line 14-15 which acknowledges this limitation.

Recommended language for all three of these requests has been provided.

Thank you for your consideration.

AN ACT concerning postsecondary education; relating to the awarding of credit hours for degree completion.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:

Section 1. (a) On or before January 1, 2017, the state board of regents shall adopt a policy requiring state educational institutions to award the appropriate number of credit hours to any student enrolled in such institution who has successfully passed an exam administered through the college level examination program (CLEP) and received a credit-granting recommended score as outlined by the American Council on Education. Such policy shall include the following:

- (1) The number of credit hours to be awarded shall be at least equivalent to the minimum number of credit hours granted for the equivalent course offered by the institution ~~based on the type of exam~~;
  - (2) an institution shall not limit the number of credit hours that may be awarded to a student beyond the limitations placed on such institution by their regional accrediting agency;
  - (3) credit hours awarded for exams in the subject of the student's major course of study shall apply towards the student's degree program major course of study, and all other credit hours shall apply towards general degree requirements;
  - (4) credit hours for exams shall be listed on the student's transcript as pass/fail;
  - (5) all exams listed on a student's transcript shall be included on such transcript if the student transfers to a different postsecondary educational institution, and if the subsequent institution is a state educational institution, then the credit hours for such exams shall be applied in accordance with this section; and
  - (6) any other provisions related to the awarding of credit hours based on CLEP exam results deemed necessary by the board.
- (b) Commencing July 1, 2017, each state educational institution shall award credit hours to enrolled students who have successfully passed a CLEP exam in accordance with the policy adopted by the board pursuant to subsection (a).
- (c) As used in this section, the terms "state board of regents" and "state educational institution" shall have the same meaning as those terms are defined in K.S.A. 74-3201b, and amendments thereto.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.