

To the Members of the Academic Senate committee:

I am writing this statement to argue in support of the passage and approval of RESOLUTION: FA 17.01 STEM Program resolution that was introduced in an earlier senate meeting, and is up for second reading at the present senate meeting. Unfortunately, due to my participation in an ACCJC Evaluation site visit, I am unable to attend this meeting.

My reasons for wanting to see this resolution moved forward for approval includes the vital importance and the track record of success of the STEM program in providing access to opportunities for students to achieve excellence -- through the attainment of prestigious internships, scholarships and successful transfer to highly competitive programs in STEM fields. The administrative decision to discontinue the program, was impulsive, ill-advised, and the rationale for the decision has never been made clear to anyone as far as I know. The fact that current administrators are not able to provide this rationale leads me to believe it was the actions of a single dean rather than an institutional decision, and that senior administrators permitted this to happen without the collegial consultation of faculty experts and in violation of established policy governing such matters is particularly disturbing.

However, this action that took place in the spring 2017 semester is the latest in a historical pattern of such decisions. There have been similar instances where programs were subject to the whims of administrators, whose actions resulted in the complete dismantling of programs. Two such examples involved the Learning Communities initiative, and the Cooperative Work Experience Program. Both programs had been built and maintained by faculty as a result of years of painstaking work, overcoming numerous obstacles to serve large numbers of students. In both cases, administrators imposed radical changes or restrictions to programs while disregarding the expertise of faculty who built the program. In the case of learning

communities, these actions undercut the trust and goodwill of faculty who abandoned the initiative altogether. In the case of the Work Experience program, the dean issued a "Cease and desist" order to the faculty member and completely shut down a program that served over 100 students every semester.

It is time for the faculty to stand as one and say ENOUGH to these actions. The damage to the 90+ STEM students who were abandoned by this decision is irreparable. The historic record of such decisions is clear -- programs that are arbitrarily subject to sudden shutdown or radical change do not survive such actions. We have the opportunity to potentially recover the STEM program, and ensure that future actions are not repeated by this administration or future administrations. I urge the academic senate to vote to approve and adopt resolution FA 17.01 and send a clear message that we support preserving and expanding access to students in all of our programs.

Respectfully,

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