



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education
February 3, 2015 at 2:00 pm

by
John Morton
Vice President for Community Colleges, University of Hawai'i

HB 981 – RELATING TO COLLEGE-CREDIT EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS

Chair Choy, Vice Chair Ichiyama and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) appreciates the interest of the legislature in college-credit equivalency programs. UH recognized the importance of these programs and has taken steps to create a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) program to ensure that students are able to gain college credit for learning outside the traditional college classroom.

PLA consists of four types: equivalency exams, non-collegiate sponsored education, credit by exam, and portfolio-based assessment. UHCC Policy #5.302 was established in November 2013 to ensure system-wide definitions. Each of the Community College (CC) campuses is now in the process of identifying which forms of PLA are appropriate and which academic programs best align with each of these methods. It is important that individual faculty from each of the seven CCs work with their respective programs at the bachelor's level. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by nine Chancellors in the summer of 2014 to ensure consistency in awarding credits and to maintain the credibility of college-level learning. The Chancellors are also working to provide seamless transfer of credits within the UH system when students pursue a bachelor's degree program. UH Mānoa is joining the Steering Committee in February.

The University continues to communicate with current and potential students about these opportunities to gain college-credit equivalency through our brochure and website: <http://uhcc.hawaii.edu/priorlearning/>. Dates and other details about the Student Information sessions to be held in late February are available at this website.

We believe that the PLA process outlined above demonstrates that we have established policies and procedures for the awarding of credits for college-level learning gained from work or other life experiences. Therefore, we do not believe that this bill is needed at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.