COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Cabrillo must be for all students

By Susan Stuart
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It’s possible the reporter who wrote on Cabrillo College’s enrollment didn’t understand the complex new rules about students repeating a class, but the administration may not have given a complete accounting to the reporter.

The Student Success Act enacted by our legislators did indeed limit to three the number of times a failing student could retake a class in order to pass it. That is called Repetition Restriction.

Later in that year (the summer of 2012, when budgets were stretched and before Proposition 30 was approved statewide restoring tax funds to community colleges) the Community College Board of Governors decided that Repetition Restriction didn’t go far enough to curtail the community college students who were repeating courses over again even though they passed the first time. This, they said, was potentially blocking new student enrollment in classes they needed for degrees or to transfer in a two-year timetable. So they established separate regulations, called the Repeatability Restriction, and by fall 2013 no student could pass a class, any class, and retake it for credit, ever, if he or she had already received a C or better.

Many of us, as instructors, students, community members have been working on this issue at the state level ever since. This is a huge factor in reducing enrollment at Cabrillo and community colleges statewide.

To ration education is antithetical to education itself. To not allow a C student to strive for an A; to restrict people from taking a class from a different instructor to get a different perspective on a subject; to say someone who took computer class in 2004 is not allowed to learn new programs; to say a student must become proficient in learning a musical instrument in one go-round; the list goes on and on. And the policy is killing many programs and denying many their best shot at quality education and self-improvement.

Steps have been undertaken to help repeal these onerous regulations on campuses and communities throughout the state. We would so appreciate our administrators acknowledging this mistaken pathway for education and help us. Community colleges are for community education for all our community. Anyone interested in helping should go to website cect.cabrillo.org and join the discussion.

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