



MEMORANDUM

TO: Jim Purcell
Commissioner, Office of Postsecondary Education

FROM: Donald H. DeHayes
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

W. Michael Sullivan
Chair, Faculty Senate

DATE: October 19, 2016

SUBJECT: Transfer Policy

Thank you for sharing your thoughts and recommendations in regard to transfer policy for the higher education system in Rhode Island. We have shared this draft policy with our Faculty Senate leadership, Transfer Resource Center, Admission Office, and Provost Office staff. We certainly agree with the intention of streamlining the transfer process for students and establishing a fluid and viable path to degree completion for each student. We also acknowledge that the common general education platform that you proposed has some similarity to the new general education program that is now in effect at URI, which was the result of a major effort and hard work on the part of many dedicated faculty at our institution.

The recent draft “revised transfer policy,” however, has raised several areas for concern. In summary, some of our concerns relate to aspects of the general education program, the common course numbering system, the change in acceptance of a D grade rather than a C, and the acceptance of associates degrees and credits that are more technical. There also appears to be some contradictions, perhaps unintended, in the draft policy language that we believe should be clarified. Given the academic relevance and importance of such policy revisions, it is critically important to us that we engage with our faculty shared governance practices and structures in defining and implementing any changes. To that end, we would be pleased to meet with you and your staff and, if you wish, our colleagues from CCRI and RIC to discuss the draft policy and work together to produce an effective policy moving forward.

The University of Rhode Island is committed to our transfer student population and values our relationships with CCRI and RIC in this important academic endeavor. Over the past several years, URI has taken the lead for the system for the Rhode Island Transfers (ritransfers.org) website and the Transfer Evaluation System (TES). In addition, we have developed robust transfer plans both through JAA and program to program plans to foster a seamless transition from CCRI to URI. We have also enhanced transfer course articulation between URI and CCRI and URI and RIC. Each semester, our Transfer Resource Center staff and advisors go to the various campuses of CCRI to meet with students to help provide advising and assistance. Finally, in launching our new general education program, we

worked with CCRI faculty and advisors prior to the launch of our program to ensure clarity and consistency for students. As you know, we value and respect transfer students and have a long standing relationship, participation, and collaboration within the RI system and your office.

We look forward to an opportunity to meet with you and to discuss both our concerns and the opportunity to further enhance the pathway for transfer students in the higher education systems in RI.

Cc: President David Dooley