

To the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York

June 8, 2011

I would like to register my strongest possible opposition to the forthcoming “Resolution on Creating an Efficient Transfer System.” The university clearly needs to improve its methods of transferring credits from one comparative college to another and increasing overall graduation rates. The proposed plan, however, by creating a fast and easy track to degrees threatens to diminish drastically the quality of all our graduates. As someone who has taught in the university for over thirty years, I am well cognizant of the harsh reality that many—if not most--of our incoming students desperately need remedial work to improve their general knowledge. As it is now, I find students in my upper level courses who locate Germany in the middle of Africa, have no idea what century the American Civil War took place, and don’t know that World War I occurred before World War II. With these proposed changes, such students will end up actually graduating with bachelor degrees. With our present curriculum, most of them catch up with remedial education by the time they graduate. The remedy is not to make education easier but to raise standards, develop more coherent core curriculum, and, most important of all, provide better counseling in high schools about which colleges are more appropriate for individual students.

It is widely believed that these proposals, if they go through, will create a two-tiered system. I believe this is wrong. It will instead create a one tiered system where all degrees will eventually become worthless once prospective employers realize their hires can not write clear sentences and think that World War I happened after World War II. This fast track proposal will be a major disservice to all our past and future graduates.

Yours sincerely,

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