



STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Colorado Commission on Higher Education

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Colorado Commissioners of Higher Education

FROM: DHE Academic Affairs Staff

DATE: March 29, 2007

SUBJECT: Summary of Meetings to Discuss 2010 Higher Education Admission Requirements

RURAL CAUCUS

At the March 2006 Commission meeting, the Rural Caucus contended that the main roadblocks to the districts implementing the 2010 HEAR included declining enrollment and therefore reduced funding; the difficulty in recruiting and paying competitive wages to the qualified teachers that would be necessary to increase the math offerings at the high schools; shifting more resource to math and foreign language would lead to a further depletion of the arts, physical education and vocational education in the high school curriculum; and the alternatives available to the rural district to meet the requirements are not funded properly and to some districts are not viable options.

In September 2006, The Rural Caucus forwarded to staff *Rural School District Study: The Impact Of The Higher Education Admission Requirements On Colorado's Rural School Districts* ([attached](#)). The study is the result of a survey completed by rural school districts. Conclusions concerning the impact of the 2010 requirements on those districts that replied include:

- The breadth of education that will be offered in Colorado's rural high schools will decrease;
- There will be a drop in rural Colorado students applying for and attending the state's four-year higher education institutions;
- High school graduation rates may decline.

Recommendations to the Commission include:

- Postpone the Phase II college entrance requirements until such time as the effectiveness of the Phase I requirements can be evaluated, or allow each college/university to use the Phase I entrance requirements as a base line but to set its own entrance requirements, if it so chooses, above and/or beyond Phase I;
- Develop a weighted admissions system that takes into account the rigor of a student's particular area of pre-collegiate study;
- Allow more flexibility in the types of courses that satisfy the entrance requirements, i.e. accounting as a valid math class;

- Engage in a collaborative dialogue that highlights and promotes what is working in K-12 and higher education but that also takes a realistic look at areas in which and ways in which we can improve P-16;
- Take part in the discussions currently being promoted by CASB and other organizations to address what we want our students to know and be able to do when they receive a high school diploma;
- Work with the CRSC to draw attention to the need for a statewide communications network and associated policy structure that can provide accelerated learning opportunities for all of Colorado's students;

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Over the course of several months DHE staff discussed the admission policy and the goals of the policy. Some of the discussion focused on HEAR in relation to the admission index. Several comprehensive change models were presented to the academic council. All models presented included coursework requirements for admission. Although the discussions concerned a comprehensive change to the admission policy, DHE staff is not ready to bring forth major revisions soon. In regard to the 2010 HEAR implementation, an outcome of the discussion was allowing the institutions more flexibility in the admission process during implementation. Also, the Academic Council concluded that coursework should be a component in the admission process, and a move towards the 2010 requirements should continue.

DEANS AND DIRECTORS OF ADMISSION

During the summer of 2006 four meetings were held with the Deans and Directors of Admission. During these meetings one topic of discussion was the implementation of 2010 HEAR. During the discussion the group shared some obstacles that could hamper admitting students in 2010.

1. Requirements of foreign language could disqualify many applicants
2. There would be potential difficulties in reaching enrollment goals at some institutions
3. Course rigor should be a component of the admission policy, but flexibility at the institution level should be available

DATA ADVISORY GROUP

The Data Advisory Group - composed of Institutional Research Directors from the higher education institutions raised concerns about the implementation of HEAR requirements, in terms of documentation, and data collection. How will the transcripts of recent high school graduates be reviewed and quantified for purposes of determining whether the student has or has not met the HEAR requirements. Specific to the 2010 HEAR, this group was concerned with the projected high number of students not meeting requirements (over 1/3 at some institutions according to current first time freshman applicants) and how this will impact the institution's admissions window, or if the window is or should be applicable with HEAR.

STATE WORLD LANGUAGE ADVISOR COUNCIL (SWLAC)

In a meeting with DHE staff, representatives of the SWLAC expressed their support of the 2010 HEAR. Their support is based on the concepts put forth in "The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College". The SWLAC recognize that there are concerns that need to be addressed on the delivery of foreign language coursework in high schools. Among others, the solutions to these challenges included:

- Funding a test out option to demonstrate proficiency for student who do not or cannot take coursework.
- Utilization of online coursework to meet the requirements (although SWLAC recognized that online is not ideal for foreign language course delivery)
- Fund a plan for teacher recruitment through loan forgiveness and other mechanisms.
- Facilitate a method for native speakers of foreign language to acquire teacher licenses.