

We oppose the proposed change to Pima Community College's admissions requirements.*

48 former Faculty, Administrators and Board Members at Pima Community College—their service years spanning the period 1968-2011—are appealing to members of the College's current Board of Governors to sustain Pima's historic commitment to open enrollment. The Faculty in this number represent many disciplines and services; the former Administrators include 3 College Presidents, 3 Campus Presidents, 1 Campus Executive Dean, 1 Senior Associate Chancellor, 1 Dean of Admissions and 1 Campus Dean of Student Services; the former Board members are, to this day, community leaders.

This is in opposition to Chancellor Flores' June, 2011 Report in which he announced that, as of Summer of 2012, the following will be required for admissions: a high school diploma or GED diploma and scoring "above a minimum level established by Pima Community College on college assessment examinations" in math, writing and reading.

The opening sentence of the Statement of Philosophy, adopted unanimously by the founding Pima County Junior College District Board, May 17, 1967, stated that the College "provides an open door to educational opportunity. It is more interested in what a student is ready to do than in what he has done." That commitment, also expressed early as "taking students from where they are to where they want to go," has been repeated in the College's admissions practices and catalogues to this day, a commitment which continues to be embraced by other community colleges in Arizona, including the several in Maricopa County and one that was vigorously affirmed at the most recent meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Such a commitment is not represented in Chancellor Flores' characterization of the proposed policy change. At the January 13, 2011 PCC Board of Governors meeting "open door" was described as meaning "that if you've completed the first 12 years of high school or can demonstrate that you've completed it in another fashion, or are ready for college, the door's open."

In contrast to this, for instance, is a 1980 review of the "Pima College Story" which reported that the college "wanted education to be within the reach of all adults who desired it, whether they had a high school diploma or not, whether they were 18 or 78." Even more recently, a former administrator wrote that "I very strongly endorse the support of maintaining the open admissions policy at Pima Community College. That is why we always endorsed the phrase 'community colleges democratized higher education for all those who wished to pursue post-secondary education.' That is why community colleges have always been so successful. As we all know, our success is embodied in the open admissions policy."

Finally, as a very recent faculty retiree expressed his concern in this matter, "closing the door on education is not what the College was founded upon, and it is not how it contributes best to the community in difficult times." Indeed, the College from its inception and, hopefully, to this day, has been eager to encourage and enable students, regardless of the difficulties or limitations of their educational history, to experience the advantages of learning whether or not they completed degree or certificate requirements.

The proposed change would violate the intent of Pima County residents who established the College.

* Revised as of July 11, 2011