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Hi. My name is Gershom Ranga and I am a student at Wilbur Wright College. I currently serve as President of the Student Government Association, Chair of the City Colleges of Chicago District Council, and an Executive Board Member of Illinois Board of Higher Education - Student Advisory Committee (IBHE-SAC)

MAY 8 - 1998

Speaking from a students point of view, I strongly support the direction that Chancellor Watson is taking with regards to raising the graduation grade level of general education ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~the~~ ^{the} courses from a "D" to a "C." There are several reasons why I support his direction

- 1 City Colleges of Chicago is presently at a very crucial stage especially in our efforts to attract local high school students. The high school counselors also need to be assured of City Colleges of Chicago credibility in both education and transfer rate.
- 2 Some students work toward achieving minimum requirements in a course. This would push them to work harder to receive a passing grade.
- 3 The degree of credibility of City Colleges of Chicago would rise both on a citywide and statewide level.
- 4 It would allow our graduates who go directly into the workforce more marketability with a higher grade level. Employers would be less hesitant and more eager to hire our students, instead of reluctantly doing so because of political and/or community pressures.
- 5 Push students to work harder now rather than wait further down the road when they break under pressure and probably fail.

Please do not misinterpret me. I do not believe that the entry standards should be raised. *any higher than they receive* In fact, I will oppose any suggestions to that effect. I believe that apart from a great system, and a high level of educational excellence, we should also serve by helping those who want to progress. City Colleges of Chicago is the last chance most students have. We should be conscious, however, that if we do not raise our *academic* standards, our students will be adversely affected in the long run, especially with higher levels of educational requirements, standards and technology.

Discussion on a similar subject was brought up at our last IBHE-SAC meeting at Chicago State University, May 2-3, where I argued against dropping standards for selected groups as well as granting funding for those groups to continue on in higher education. The motion failed, showing that the majority of student leaders across the great state agree on this point. We should be raising and not dropping criteria in this age of such advanced technology. If we do not do this now, from a students standpoint, I believe that CCC will soon reach a point of being more of a detriment than a help for Chicago's students.