

Best Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems

ALL ROADS LEAD TO GRADUATION? A CONVERSATION ABOUT STATE ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER POLICY

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESS

IDAHO COLLEGE ACCESS SUMMIT

JUNE 28, 2011

Terminology

- **Transfer:** Process of moving a student's credits across different institutions.
- **Articulation:** Institutional policies or other structures that are implemented to encourage, facilitate, and monitor the student transfer process.

“The difference between the two terms is perhaps most easily perceived as one between the ‘who’ and the ‘what’.” - Ignash and Townsend (2000)



Why Do We Care About Transfer?

- National Educational Attainment Goals
 - “By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.” (President Obama, February 24, 2009)
 - “To increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.” (Lumina Foundation for Education)
- Economic Competitiveness
- Budget Constraints and Productivity



A Lot of Students Transfer

- Of first-time bachelor's degree recipients, almost 60 percent attend more than one institution (1999-2000).



Sources: Katharin Peter and Emily Forrest Cataldi, *The Road Less Traveled? Students Who Enroll in Multiple Institutions*, NCES 2005-157 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2005), 33



A Lot of Students Transfer

- State examples
 - Minnesota (2009-2010)
 - 16,309 students (MNSCU)
 - California (2007-2008)
 - Almost 55,000 students →CSU
 - About 14,000 students →UC
 - Washington (2005-2006)
 - Almost 33,000 students
 - North Dakota (Spring 2004-Fall 2004)
 - 1,446 students (North Dakota University System)
 - Additional 259 students (National Student Clearinghouse)

Sources: Colleen Moore and Nancy Shulock, *Crafting a Student-Centered Transfer Process in California: Lessons from Other States* (Sacramento, CA: Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2009), 1; Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, *Transfer and Articulation in Higher Education* (Olympia, WA: Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2009), 3; Student Credit Transfer Analysis Presentation (May 19, 2010) - http://www.mnscu.edu/board/materials/2010/may19/aud-03-ola_handout.pdf); North Dakota University System Transfer Migration Study (March 2006) - <http://www.ndus.nodak.edu/uploads/document-library/1490/TRANSFER-MIGRATION-STUDY.PDF>.



It's Not Clear that the Transfer Process Works



"You've earned 232 credit hours at the community college, which, after taking everything into consideration, will translate into 2 full hours of transferable credits."



Best Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems

- Lumina Foundation for Education
- **GOAL:** To develop a deeper understanding of how states coordinate their articulation and transfer programs for students who move from two-year to four-year institutions.
- Partners
 - Hezel Associates
 - WCET – WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies



The Project

- Literature Review
- Comprehensive Study
 - “Promising Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems”
- Survey of Web Portal Administrators
 - “Higher Education Web Portals: Serving State and Student Transfer Needs”
- State Policy Summaries in the State Policy Inventory Database Online (SPIDO)
- Meeting of Web Portal Stakeholders (April 2011)



Promising Practices – Five Thematic Areas

- Statewide Collaboration
- Communication of Policies
- Academic Policies
- Use of Data
- Additional Promising Practices



Statewide Collaboration

- Develop a statewide, standing committee.
 - **Massachusetts:** Commonwealth Transfer Advisory Group
 - **Minnesota:** Transfer Oversight Committee
- Involve faculty in policy development and implementation.
 - **Arizona:** Discipline-specific articulation task forces
 - **Wyoming:** Travel support as an incentive for participation



Communication of Policies

- Establish a statewide office or official to facilitate statewide transfer.
 - **Montana:** Director of Transferability Initiatives
- Designate campus personnel as contacts.
 - **Nevada:** Articulation coordinator
- Convene or establish a presence at established conferences, summits, etc.
 - **Texas:** Transferpalooza
- Build a strong presence on the Web.
- Include student feedback.
 - **Alaska:** 800 number and anonymous email address



Academic Policy

- Provide clear transfer pathways for community college students who have selected a major.
 - **Colorado:** 60 plus 60 agreements
- Develop a pathway for community college students to meet general education requirements.
 - **Arkansas:** State minimum core
- Implement guaranteed admissions policies.
 - **Florida:** Admission to upper division at a state university



Use of Data

- Evaluate transfer and articulation policies and statutes.
 - **North Dakota:** Transfer Migration Study
- Assess student success through quantitative measures of individual student-level indicators of performance.
- Expand the reporting of results.
 - **Florida:** Evaluation and reporting by four different entities



Additional Promising Practices

- Publish a transfer student bill of rights.
 - **Colorado**
- Establish financial assistance programs that actively support transfer.
 - **Kentucky**
- Provide funding incentives to institutions that perform well in terms of student transfers.
 - **Oklahoma**
- Provide alternative pathways to degree completion.
 - **Nevada**



Lessons Learned

- States vary in how they approach transfer and articulation.
- Overall, there is little evidence of what actually works.

These are indeed PROMISING practices!



Remaining Challenges

- Developmental education courses
- Postsecondary enrollment/dual enrollment courses
- Courses taken too long ago
- Lack of course transfer for those applied toward AAS degrees
- Data entry errors?
 - Minnesota: Two percent of 2009 students may have lost some transfer credits due to data entry errors



Survey of State and System Web Portals

How do states and higher education systems use websites, web portals, and other web-based tools to help students navigate the transfer process?



Criteria for Inclusion in Survey

- Credit transfer information specific to at least 3 or more public state institutions.
- Services or tools for the user beyond links/pointers to legislation, agreements, or institutional websites.



Survey Respondents (24 out of 37)

Figure 1. Transfer Portals Reported in Survey

AL	Statewide Transfer & Articulation Reporting Systems (STARS)	IN	TransferIN.net	OR	Oregon University System
AZ	Arizona Transfer	KY	GoHigherKentucky	PA	Pennsylvania Transfer and Articulation Center (PA TRAC)
AR	Arkansas Course Transfer System	MA	MassTransfer	SC	South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Center (SC TRAC)
CA	Articulation System Simulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer (ASSIST)	MI	Michigan Transfer Network	TX	Transfer 101 (University of Texas System)
FL	Florida's Advising, Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS)	MN	Minnesota Transfer	VA	State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Transfer Tool
HI	UH System Course Transfer Database	MT	Montana University System	VA	Virginia Education Wizard (VA Community College System)
IL	iTransfer	NH	NH Transfer	WI	UW Transfer Information System (University of Wisconsin System)
		NC	College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC.org)		
		OH	Credit Transfer		
		OK	Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education		



Major Survey Topics

- Sectors represented
- Budget and operations
- Commercial products
- Use of web-based resources and tools
- Role of Institutions
- Measuring Impact and Effectiveness
- Future Plans



Institutional Sectors Represented

- State public institutions
 - Participation required (16 sites)
 - Similar sites exist (5 sites)
 - Incentives to participate? (None)
- In-state privates and non-profits – a trend to include in many
- Out-of-state institutions – especially where high level of transfer occurs



Funding Sources for Development and FY 2010 Operational Budget

Figure 3. Funding Sources for Portal Development

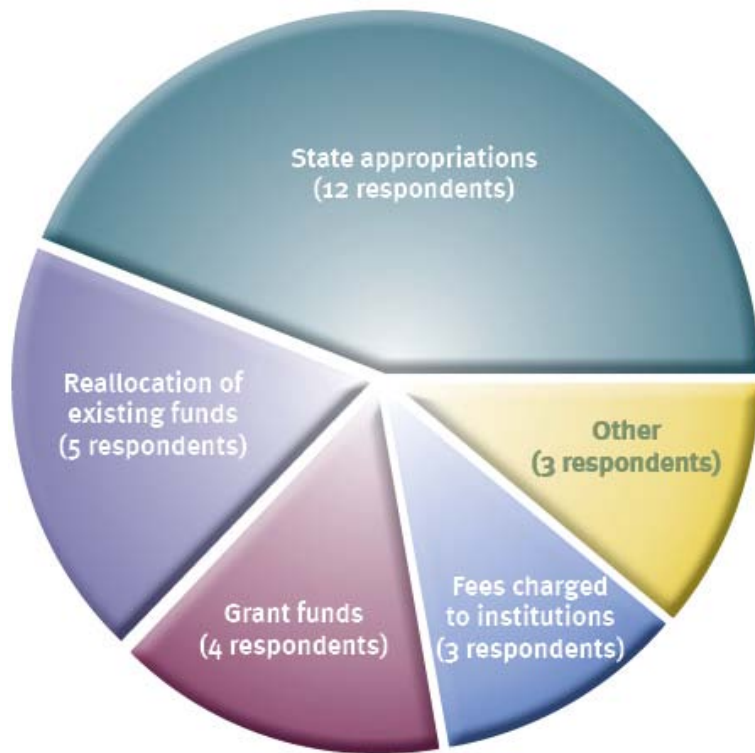
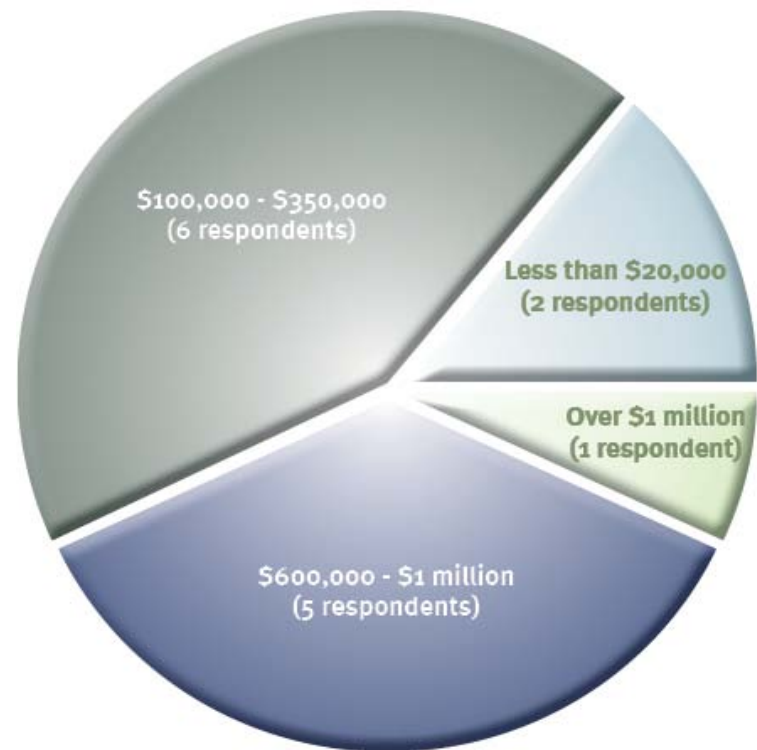


Figure 4. FY 2010 Operating Budget



Commercial Services or Home Grown?

- Commercial products/services (10 of 24)
- Custom built software programs (12 of 24)
- Commercial providers
 - Academy One (AR, PA, SC)
 - Decision Academic (NC)
 - College Source/redLantern/u.select (AZ, IL, IN, KY, MN, OH, OR)



Functions, Resources and Tools

- **User Accounts:** login, portfolio, email communications, etc.
- **Transfer Resources and Tools:** course equivalencies, articulation agreements, credit transfer guides, transfer of the general education core
 - Static tables vs. customizable?
- **Other tools:** online applications, e-transcript, link to online course catalog, find an advisor, career planning, financial aid forms



Student and Faculty User Accounts

	Available or Planned	Not Available & Not Planned
Students	12	12
Faculty	14	10
Parents	6	17



Does Portal Meet Usage Expectations?

- More than half launched within past 5 years; many just beginning to evaluate impact.
 - Better than expected – 55%
 - Meets expectations – 30%
 - Lower than expected – 15%



Building a Successful Web Portal

- Recruit state and institutional champions.
- Engage stakeholders early.
- Understand metrics for reporting.
- Build on established policies and agreements.
- Take advantage of existing culture of collaboration.
- Regularly communicate with stakeholders.
- Invest in marketing.
- Audit your web presence.
- Tell your story.



What's to Come?

- More research and evaluation
- New technologies and applications
- Consistency with statewide goals
- More refinement of solutions



Current Context in Idaho....

- Applied for Completion Innovation Challenge
 - Competitive grant to develop and implement innovative, statewide strategies to substantially increase college completion
 - 10 \$1 million, 18-month implementation grants
- Articulation and transfer is a focus
 - Refining current Board policy
 - Standardizing institutional practices
 - Creating a central web portal



Let's talk specifics...

- What strategies might Idaho consider as the state moves toward the CCA goals?
- Can you identify any policies or practices that need to be re-examined in order to make the system more seamless for students?
- Are there any policies or practices currently in place that impede or hamper transfer pathways?



For More Information

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