2015 Transfer and Articulation Audit

Prepared by the
Department of Academic and Student Affairs
Nevada System of Higher Education

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Introduction

In March 2015, the Board of Regents' Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee requested a review of transfer and articulation policies and practices across the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). The audit was conducted as a result of concerns expressed anecdotally that the transfer process was often challenging for students. In conducting the audit, emphasis was placed on determining if a student could, considering the requirements for both degrees, earn a bachelor's degree after earning an associate's degree without taking extra credits. In other words, can a student transfer seamlessly? With the aggressive degree productivity goals of Complete College America in mind, as well as an interest in making sure students do not waste time and money taking courses that do not ultimately apply to the four-year degree they are seeking, this audit attempted to dig deeper into the current transfer and articulation policy and practices of the NSHE institutions with a focus on student success.

In reviewing this report, it is important to begin with definitions of "transfer" and "articulation." Pursuant to Board policy, unless a course is designated in an institution's student information system as non-transferable (typically vocational or community service), all courses are transferable. In essence, this means that the credits taken at one institution will be considered by another institution for meeting degree requirements. To describe courses as "articulated" goes further, and, in the context of this audit, indicates acceptance of credits toward the specific requirements of a student's chosen program of study. In general discussion, the distinction between "transfer" and "articulation" is often lost, but it is important to understand the difference in the two terms.

Transfer Audit Process

In Fall 2015, the NSHE Department of Academic and Student Affairs conducted its first full audit of the NSHE transfer policy since 2008. This audit differed from prior audits in that, in addition to examining Board policies and compliance by the institutions, it focused on the student experience and how the transfer process supports student success. The transfer audit included the following elements:

- Review of lower division enrollment and the status of a Fall 2013 transfer student cohort;
- Review of selected transfer agreements;
- Institution-level self-review of policy compliance;
- In-person meetings at each campus between System and institutional staff;
- Transfer student experience e-mail survey with follow-up phone calls; and
- Research on current national trends regarding transfer.

The audit process began in August 2015 with a review of lower-division course enrollment data for transfer students that graduated Spring 2013 with their associate's degree and transferred to a four-year institution Fall 2013. Follow up data regarding enrollment status as of Spring 2015 for this cohort were also reviewed.

At the end of August, a review of the published transfer agreements began. The agreements for ten percent of an institution's programs (randomly selected) and any new programs approved since the prior transfer audit in 2008 were subject to the review. In all, 261 agreements were reviewed across the seven teaching institutions. The agreements were reviewed throughout September and October. For each selected program the review was conducted based on each of the four community colleges'

associate's degree requirements. If there was a related emphasis, those degree requirements were considered as well. This review was by no means exhaustive, but attempted to gauge the extent to which transfer agreements and the year-by-year course outlines required by Board policy are working to support seamless transfer. This portion of the audit involved a review of the transfer agreements and course outlines with respect to the provisions of Board policy (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15). Essentially, the objective was to answer the question of whether or not the agreements and outlines are in place. In addition, the audit examined whether or not students pursuing an associate's degree would lose credits upon transfer to a four-year institution.

Also in October, the institutions received a survey to complete. The survey tool included the various policy points and provided an opportunity for the institutions to self-report whether or not they were in compliance with the policy and provide evidence of that compliance. The institutions were also asked to provide a list of students that began a bachelor's program in the Fall 2015 term after completing an associate's degree at one of the community colleges in the Spring 2015 term. This population of students was subsequently invited to respond to a survey about their transfer experiences.

In-person campus meetings were held at each institution throughout the month of November. Institution attendees included academic officers, transfer personnel, registrars, and advisors. Discussion questions were distributed to attendees prior to the meeting so that participants would be prepared for the conversation. Topics discussed included the overall transfer policy and process, student experiences, coordination with other NSHE institutions, the transfer agreements, and year-by-year outlines of course requirements. The discussion centered on the practical application of the policy as well as the student experience. These meetings resulted in a number of issues being identified, and many suggestions were discussed for improving compliance and the student experience.

Following the visits with the institutions, the student survey was emailed to transfer students identified by the institutions (graduated in Spring 2015 from an NSHE community college and enrolled at an NSHE four-year institution in Fall 2015). The survey was open for two weeks. One survey question asked if the student would be willing to talk to an NSHE staff member about their transfer experience. In December those students that indicated a willingness to receive a follow-up call were contacted. After two attempts, if a student could not be reached by phone, the additional questions were emailed.

The approach to this audit differed significantly from prior transfer audits conducted by the System Office, primarily in its focus on student success and the basic question of whether or not the current policies and protocols for transfer are working to support NSHE students in achieving their goals of bachelor's degrees.

Data Review of Student Status Following Transfer

In conducting the transfer audit, staff reviewed basic transfer data on the number of students that graduated with a transferable associate's degree in the Spring 2013 and then transferred to a four-year program beginning Fall 2013. These data are intended to provide a snapshot of student status within two years of transferring to a four-year institution.

Spring 2015 Current/Graduation Status for Fall 2013 Transfer Cohort									
Bachelor's Program Institution	# of Students in Fall 2013 Transfer Cohort	Transfer Status After Spring 2015							
		# Graduated	% Graduated	# Senior	% Senior	# Junior	% Junior	# No Enrollment	% No Enrollment
UNLV	247	60	24.3%	131	53.0%	24	9.7%	32	13.0%
UNR	189	49	25.9%	97	51.3%	16	8.5%	27	14.3%
NSC	28	7	25.0%	16	57.1%	1	3.6%	4	14.3%
Total	**464**	**116**	**25.0%**	**244**	**52.6%**	**41**	**8.8%**	**63**	**13.6%**

By the end of the Spring 2015 term, the vast majority of students (77.6 percent) either graduated or were classified as seniors and likely well on the path to graduation. Unfortunately, it is not possible to tell if these students lost credits along the way. The remaining 22.4 percent were juniors or no longer enrolled. Likewise, for the students that are juniors or are no longer enrolled, their status may or may not be related to their transfer experience.

In addition to reviewing the enrollment/graduation status of students in the cohort, staff reviewed the lower division coursework completed by these students in an effort to identify any obvious issues of noncompliance where students were required to re-take lower division courses previously completed at the community college. Of the hundreds of courses examined, there were only two to three instances that could have indicated a situation where a student was required to repeat courses previously completed at a community college. However, this is not a clear indication of noncompliance with the policy as a student may have decided independently to repeat a course to get a better grade. By the same token, after transfer, students are often required to take additional lower division coursework at the four-year institution because a bachelor's program may require only 40-42 credits, rather than 60 upper division credits. This applies to many disciplines across the universities, including the liberal arts, business, and others. In other words, there are situations where a transfer student will be required to take additional lower-division coursework that would otherwise not be required for the associate's degree. This situation is not uncommon and not necessarily indicative of a transfer that is not seamless.

In addition to the aforementioned data, on several occasions in the past the Board discussed whether or not it is prudent to consider a policy that limits transfer students to only those who have received a transferable associate's degree. As a result of these discussions, the following data were compiled:

Bachelor's Degrees Earned at Four-Year Institutions by the Number of Credits Earned at Community College (CC) (Fall 2008 Cohort of Degree-Seeking Students – all UG Levels)			
CC Credits Previously Earned**	**Number of Students***	**Number of Students with Bachelor's Degree as of 6/2014**	**Percent Earned Bachelor's Degree**
NSC			
< 24 credits	181	103	56.9%
24 + credits	155	86	55.5%
Associate's degree	276	187	67.8%
No CC credits earned	604	252	41.7%
UNLV			
< 24 credits	1,786	1,235	69.1%
24 + credits	1,475	1,101	74.6%
Associate's degree	1,364	1,069	78.4%
No CC credits earned	11,421	7,487	65.6%
UNR			
< 24 credits	1,434	1,149	80.1%
24 + credits	741	576	77.7%
Associate's degree	814	627	77.0%
No CC credits earned	5,386	3,858	71.6%
NSHE			
< 24 credits	3,401	2,487	73.1%
24 + credits	2,371	1,763	74.4%
Associate's degree	2,454	1,883	76.7%
No CC credits earned	17,411	11,597	66.6%

*Students with prior bachelor's degree removed from cohort.
**Remedial and ESL credits excluded for the purpose of determining credits previously earned. Students with community college enrollments after Fall 2008 excluded.
CC = Community College

These data indicate that the university or state college graduation rates for students with transfer credits earned at a community college exceed the graduation rates for students who began their studies at the four year institution, regardless of whether an associate's degree was earned prior to transfer. In fact, in some cases students who don't earn the associate's degree prior to transfer fare better than those that do earn the associates degree. Therefore, there is no evidence that a policy to limit transfers to students with an associate's degree only would increase the bachelor's degree completion rates for community college transfer students NSHE-wide.

Results of Transfer Student Survey

The Transfer Student Survey was emailed to 577 transfer students from a list provided by the four-year institutions. This list was limited to transfer students that graduated from an NSHE community college Spring 2015 and transferred to an NSHE university or state college for Fall 2015. The online survey was open for two weeks. During that time, 92 students (16 percent) responded. Of the 92 students, 18 students agreed to a follow up phone call in December from a System Office staff member. Eight students were reached by phone. After two attempts, the additional questions were emailed to the students that could not be reached by phone. Two students responded to this email. Graphical representation of the key results can be found in **Appendix A**.

In general, the responses to the student survey were positive.

- 78.3 percent of students surveyed indicated that they found the transfer process to be easy.

- Junior status was acknowledged by 73.9 percent of the students, while 15.2 percent were not sure of their status. The remaining 10.9 percent of students surveyed indicated they did not receive junior status.

- When asked about being required to retake courses previously completed at the community college, 83.3 percent said they did not have to retake courses. Of the students that received phone calls for additional questioning, three indicated having to repeat courses; however, the reasons for repeating courses varied. One student did not feel prepared to move on to more difficult courses, one had old AP scores that did not transfer over, and one had taken a lower division course that did not articulate to her upper division major requirement. Under these circumstances, the repeated courses were not required by the four-year program. Therefore they do not meet the intention of "repeated courses" as addressed in the policy.

- Advising was sought by 77.2 percent of the students responding to the survey. Those students received advising related to their transfer from the community college, the four-year institution or both. Timely and proper advising was critical to the relative ease of transfer that this cohort experienced.

Most issues experienced by students in the Fall 2015 transfer cohort, if any, were related to adjustment to the new institution rather than specific to the transfer process itself. This is a problem that has been identified nationwide, sometime referred to as "transfer shock" (Grites, 2013). Some of the comments from students surveyed include:

> *"Most of my problems were lack of information."*
>
> *"It was a big leap, having to go from classes of 30 students to a lecture hall of 200 was difficult. Also adjusting to new teaching strategies [was difficult]."*
>
> *"I just ran into a couple of problems when it came to meeting the new student requirements such as shot records and my transcript."*

"Having never used MyNevada, I found it very hard to register for classes. It would have been much easier with an advisor."

"I had some difficulty locating some things on the new campus. In fact, there are still some things I have not been able to find."

"[I was] unfamiliar with campus."

These student comments are echoed in the academic literature by researchers such as T.J. Grites who points out, "Students who transfer from two-year to four-year institutions are often unaware of the differences they will encounter. Students need to be made aware of these differences before transferring; and institutions need to prepare these students for how they must negotiate their new learning environment" (Grites, 2013).

The student survey revealed that many students were not aware of NSHE transfer agreements or the purpose they serve in ensuring that students don't lose credits upon transfer. Of the students surveyed, 53.3 percent were not aware of the transfer agreements or, if they were aware of them, did not use the agreement in their transfer process. At the same time, students who used them found the transfer agreements to be helpful, particularly when working with an advisor. Likewise, it is possible that although a student may not have been aware of the agreements, since the majority of students were working with an advisor, the advisor may have been using the agreement as a guide. The issue of student awareness is not an overwhelming problem, but it is clear that institutions can do more to promote the understanding and awareness of transfer agreements.

Summary of Audit Findings

Given the current Board policy (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15 [see **Appendix B**]), NSHE institutions are generally compliant in that a transfer student comes into the bachelor's program with junior status and having completed their general education requirements. In addition, with the exception of brand new and some limited entry programs, transfer agreements are available on each of the institutional websites; however, it is unclear the extent to which students are aware of them or how often they are used. This section of the report focuses on two categories of findings. The first is transfer hurdles, which are specific problem areas that are experienced System-wide. The second is a closer look at the actual transfer agreements and the year-by-year outline of course requirements mandated under Board policy.

Transfer Hurdles

Timing of Curriculum Changes. Collaboration and communication between departments at each institution and the timing of curricular changes and catalog production are two frequent hurdles to a smooth transfer experience for students. System-wide, there is not a consistent and concerted effort to communicate and collaborate regarding academic program changes. The vast majority of curricular changes are not being discussed between the NSHE institutions. For example, once a change is made to a program's requirements at the four-year institution, the community colleges, including advisors, are not always aware of the curricular change until it shows up in the new catalog. By the time the community colleges make corresponding adjustments to their academic programs, it can be a year or two later. The community colleges are often behind and trying to play "catch-up" with these curricular

changes. The lack of communication regarding curricular changes contributes to the misalignment of programs. Having misaligned programs can be a hurdle for transfer students and contributes to students taking credits that will ultimately transfer as general elective rather than degree applicable credits.

When campuses revise or update program curriculum, the transfer implications are not always considered. Although there are some disciplines that do advise the other institutions and some have worked to align their programs, even when this happens, the alignment tends to occur between one community college and one university, rather than considering all the institutions. In order to improve the student transfer experience, alignment efforts and collaboration among institutions must be strengthened.

Transcript Issues. The time required for associate's degrees to be posted by the community colleges to a student's transcript varies from institution to institution, but can take weeks or sometimes months. Since academic advising begins early, if the degree is not posted in a timely manner, proper waivers may not be in place and students may be misadvised. Likewise, non-NSHE transcript information is often manually loaded into the Student Information System. Considering the high volume, this can take several weeks before all transfer information shows in the student's academic advising report. This delay in the posting of degrees and transcript information is due, at least in part, to limited institutional resources.

Transfer Agreements/Articulating Associate's Degree Intact

Transfer Agreements. For each selected program, the transfer agreement review was conducted from the perspective of the four community colleges' associate's degree requirements. In other words, in following a transfer agreement, could a student earn the associate's degree in the first two years and not lose any credits toward the bachelor's degree? The purpose of the review was to determine if a student could, considering the requirements for both degrees, earn a bachelor's degree after earning an associate's degree without being required to take extra credits. If all of the associate's degree requirements could be met without needing extra credits, or exceeding the number of available general electives in the four-year program, that was considered "achieving" (or meeting the requirements for) an associate's degree. If there were not enough credits to reach 60 articulated credits or if more general elective credits were needed to fill requirements of the community college, then that was considered 'not achieving an associate's degree'.

Of the 276 transfer agreements reviewed, 128 (46.4 percent) achieved an associate's degree, 104 (37.7 percent) did not achieve an associate's degree, and 44 (15.9 percent) were undetermined as the agreement was not accessible at the time of review.

The transfer agreements themselves, as well as the information contained on them, vary from institution to institution. Each institution has a different format to their transfer agreements; some vary even by college within a single institution. Terminology can be different from one institution to another as well. Agreements are not developed collaboratively between "both the baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and the associate degree-granting institution" as required by Board policy (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15). Rather, the agreements are developed by the four-year institutions and the community colleges have a chance to review them after the fact. Collaboration could be improved if this review occurred at an earlier stage in the development process. Due to the timing issues previously noted, these reviews often occur after the new catalog year has started.

In general, when establishing the transfer agreements, the bachelor's program requirements tend to drive the process. They do not always take into account the specific requirements or prerequisite courses for the associate's degrees. Frequently, only those courses that match the bachelor's program are listed on the agreements. Also, agreements may list courses that would satisfy a general education requirement at the four-year institution, but not necessarily satisfy a general education requirement at the two-year institution. A student could potentially pick a course from the agreement and then find that it did not meet the requirement for the associate's degree. This appears to indicate a disconnect between the two-year and four-year institutions.

Another issue is that there is a lack of consistency with regard to acceptable courses within the various general education categories. For example, COM (Communications) 101 meets the humanities requirement at some institutions, but it does not at others. This is particularly disadvantageous to students that transfer prior to completing an associate's degree because only students who complete the associate's degree have protection in Board policy that guarantees satisfaction of general education requirements at the four-year institution.

Year-by-Year Course Outline for Bachelor's Degrees. Board policy requires that transfer agreements must include a year-by-year outline of required coursework, including general education and degree requirements, in which the course of study leading to the baccalaureate degree includes the first two years of coursework that will result in completion of the requirements for the associate's degree (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15, Subsection 1.g). In other words, the policy requiring year-by-year outlines was intended to provide for the transfer of the associate's degree intact –without losing credits. During the audit, it was found that these four-year plans are not consistently part of the transfer agreements. In addition, a separate provision in Board policy states that completion of the transferable associate's degree does not guarantee satisfaction of all state college or university lower-division requirements, except for general education requirements (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 15, Section 15, Subsection 1.e), thereby conflicting with the intent of the year-by-year course outlines. Due to the conflict in the policy and the lack of collaboratively created year-by-year program outlines, there is significant potential for students to lose credits upon transfer, as the four-year institution is not obligated to articulate all of the lower-division coursework completed at the community college.

One final note, as far as the actual agreements and year-by-year course outlines are concerned, is that students do find them helpful when they are used. This is especially true if used early and in conjunction with an advisor. The two-year institutions need to focus more effort on introducing students to the transfer agreements, possibly the idea as well as the opportunity to transfer the associate's degree as a whole. All NSHE institutions are increasing transfer information on their websites, in their orientations, and during their advising appointments, but there is room for improvement.

In order to avoid common areas of confusion for transfer students, clarification should be provided so that students understand the difference between AA/AS/AB (transferable associate's degrees) versus an AAS (non-transferable degree), general education versus major degree requirements, etc. It is important to keep in mind that terminology at different institutions can vary as can academic policies, such as campus repeat policies. Assisting students to transfer, not just to complete the appropriate coursework, but with campus requirements and logistics in mind, will go a long way to improving NSHE transfer student experiences.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forth in an effort to support a student's ability to transfer "seamlessly." Although is it understood that some recommendations could be construed as benefiting the community colleges and others as benefiting the universities and state college, the goal of striking a balance between the two is paramount to this process. In the end, the driving force is to recommend avenues of exploration that are expected to support student success.

Recommendation No. 1. Correct the conflict in Board policy to clarify that the year-by-year course outlines required in Board policy (*Handbook,* Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15, Subsection 1g.) are intended to preserve the transferable associate's degree upon transfer to a four-year institution, such that the first two years of the outline result in the associate's degree and no credits are lost upon transfer by students following the appropriate outline. This recommendation will require a revision to Board policy and sufficient time for the year-by-year course outlines to be fully developed. The Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs recommends that at least 18 months be allotted to the institutions to develop the required outlines and that after such time that the outlines are developed, the System Office will again audit the institutions to ensure compliance with Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15, Subsection 1g.

Recommendation No. 2. Revise Board policy regarding the honoring of catalog years upon transfer within the 10 year catalog limitation for the universities and state college (Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 17 and 37). Specifically, Board policy (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 21) currently allows institutions to make exceptions to the catalog year provision when the student has an approved transfer agreement on file with the four-year institution. The proposed revision would give all transfer students the option to graduate under the catalog year they began at the two-year institution or choose one of the other options provided in Board policy. While both the four-year and two-year institutions would continue to strongly encourage students to utilize the transfer agreements to ensure a smooth transfer, such a policy revision would protect those students who are not aware of the transfer agreements but are basing their coursework upon the four-year institution's catalog from the year they first enrolled at the community college.

Recommendation No. 3. Address the timing and communication of curricular changes. It may be necessary for all NSHE institutions to follow a standard curricular timeline in order to allow for the community colleges to adjust their program requirements accordingly, updated transfer agreements to be published, and advisors to be properly informed. These matters will be best addressed through the Articulation Board. The discussion should include improving inter-institutional curricular and discipline communication channels and whether a shared curricular timeline that is either System-wide or regionally-based would be beneficial. In addition, System staff will work in collaboration with the Articulation Board to establish standardized transfer agreement templates.

Conclusion

According to the Community College Research Center (CCRC), "the largest barrier to bachelor's completion for community college students was loss of credits upon transfer" (CCRC, 2015). While NSHE institutions do put a considerable amount of time and effort into implementing and complying with transfer policies, the Board's overall intent of having the associate's degree transfer intact and apply to

bachelor's programs is not yet fully realized. It is clearly not enough to have credits transfer as general electives, especially since there are many bachelors' programs with few or no general electives available. In addition, there is a relationship between the proportion of earned credits a student successfully articulates and his or her ultimate success: "Students who transferred almost all of their community college credits were 2.5 times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than students who transferred fewer than half of their credits" (Monahan & Attewell, 2015).

Following a transfer agreement early in their academic program along with regular advising does help to make the transfer process more "seamless" for students. In addition to the recommendations listed above, the institutions should help students become more aware of the opportunity for transfer as well as the existence of the transfer agreements. Once a student decides to transfer, additional assistance before, during, and after the transfer will aid in the transition to the new learning environment. Advising students of the differences between campus policies will help them to be better prepared. Welcoming transfer students to the various campus activities, including student orientation, will help them feel like they belong. Advisors at each institution working together to create a smooth transition will go a long way to eliminating some of the confusion they experience and will ease their "transfer shock" (Grites, 2013).

In the 2006 transfer audit, one of the recommendations was to increase the communication between institutions. While it would seem that this has not yet been accomplished by the NSHE institutions, it remains a crucial component in working towards the goal of "seamless transfer" between NSHE institutions. By improving the coordination of curricular cycles, the institutions will create a more collaborative environment that is conducive to regular communications. By coupling this with a concerted effort to promote transfer, focusing on the preparation and transition by students to a new learning environment, and ensuring that the associate's degree is transferred intact, the NSHE would gain transfer pathways that are easy for students to navigate and provide the greatest number of degree-applicable transfer credits. With more degree-applicable transfer credits, the NSHE should see more degree completions, and those degrees should be completed in less time as well. "Transfer is seen as a pathway to a four-year degree by millions of students, highlighting again, the value of time and investment in the improvement of this academic gateway" (Handel, 2013).

References

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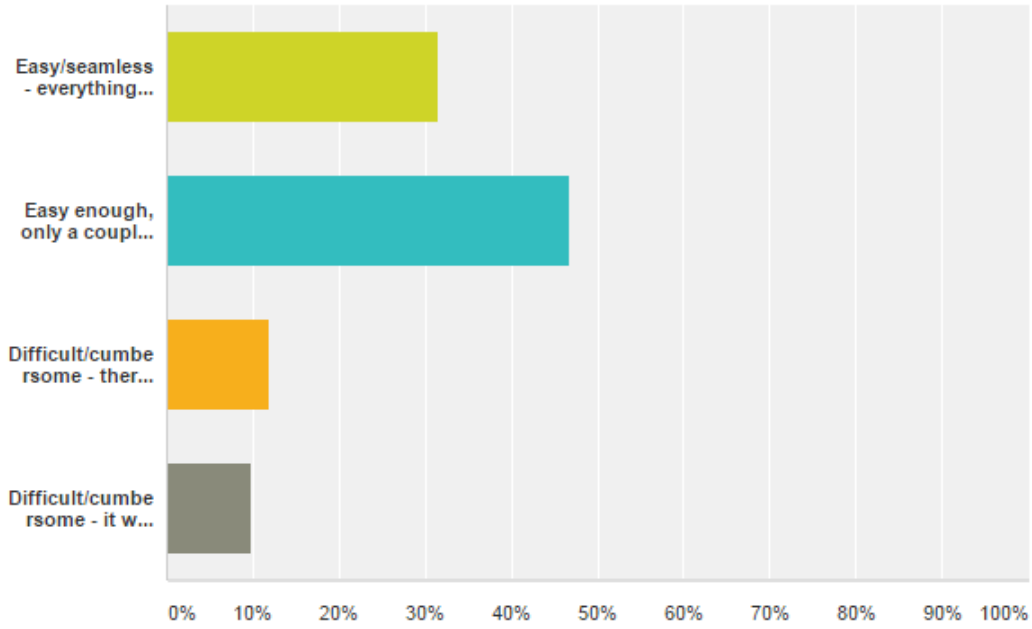
Appendix A

Was your transfer experience easy/seamless or difficult/cumbersome?

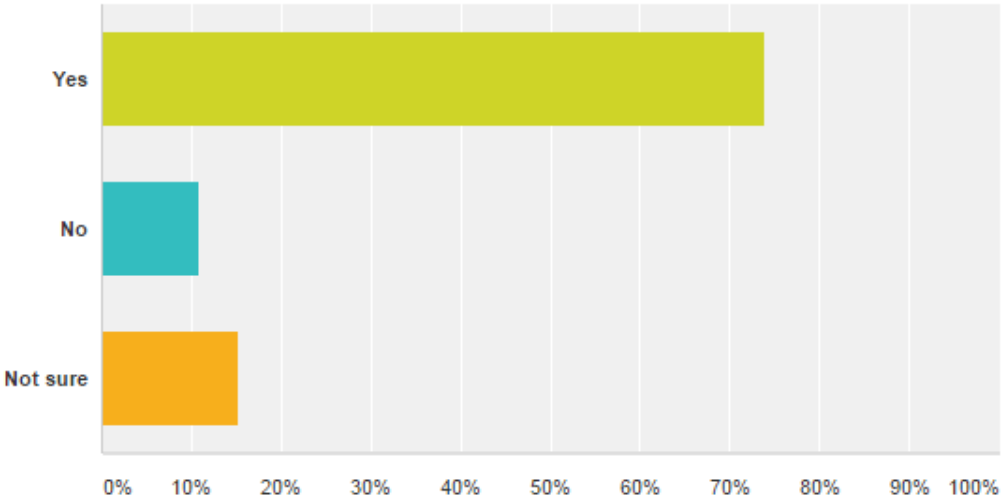
Answered: 92 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Easy/seamless - everything worked out OK	31.52%	29
Easy enough, only a couple of problems along the way	46.74%	43
Difficult/cumbersome - there were a lot of problems	11.96%	11
Difficult/cumbersome - it was practically impossible	9.78%	9
Total		92

Did you have junior status upon your arrival at the university/state college?

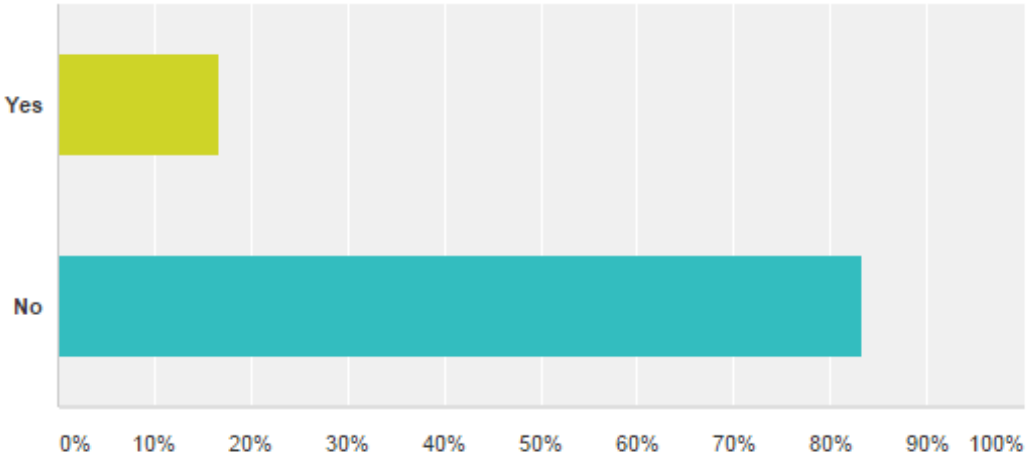
Answered: 92 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	73.91%	68
No	10.87%	10
Not sure	15.22%	14
Total		92

Were you told you need to re-take any courses that you already successfully completed at another institution?

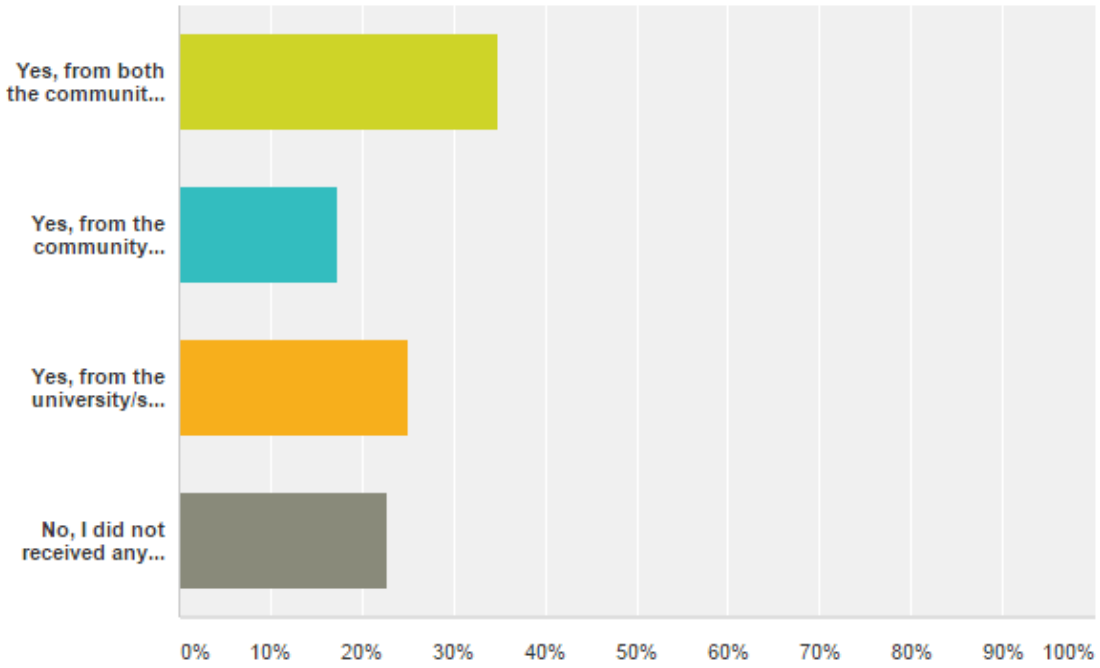
Answered: 90 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	16.67%	15
No	83.33%	75
Total		90

Did you receive any academic advising related to your transfer?

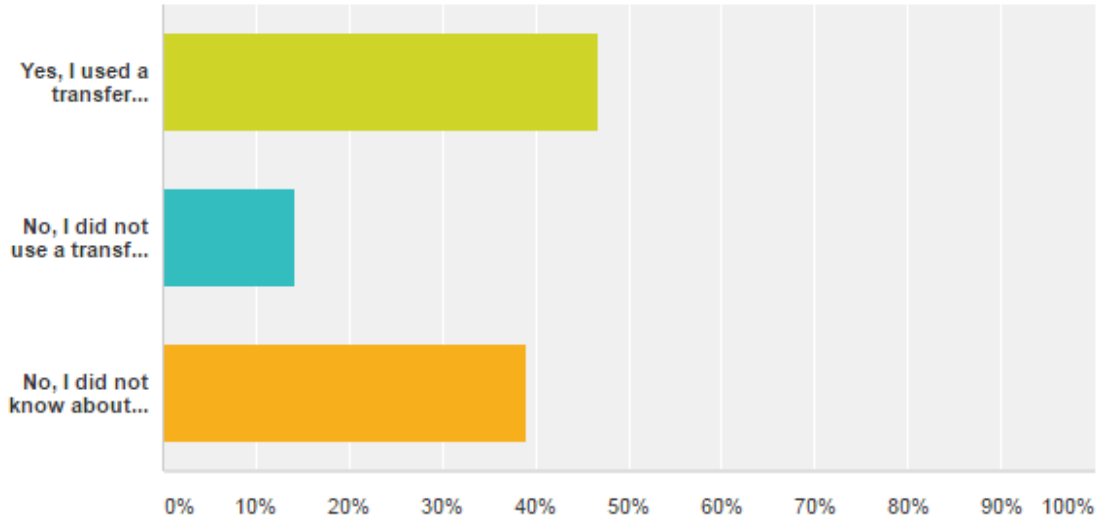
Answered: 92 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes, from both the community college and the university/state college advisors.	34.78%	32
Yes, from the community college advisor only	17.39%	16
Yes, from the university/state college advisor only	25.00%	23
No, I did not received any advising related to my transfer	22.83%	21
Total		92

While selecting and taking courses at the community college, did you follow a published transfer agreement from your transfer institution?

Answered: 92 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes, I used a transfer agreement	46.74%	43
No, I did not use a transfer agreement although I knew about them	14.13%	13
No, I did not know about transfer agreements	39.13%	36
Total		92

Appendix B

Board of Regents' Handbook
Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15

Section 15. NSHE Transfer and Admissions

Transfer students to the State College and universities may be admitted under the following alternatives:

1. Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Business Degree Graduates The primary basis for admission to upper-division study with full junior status of transfer students from an NSHE community college to any other NSHE institution shall be the associate of arts, associate of science, and the associate of business degrees.

    a. The completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business degree at a community college automatically fulfills the lower-division general education requirements at any other NSHE institution.

    b. Associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business graduates will have completed a minimum of 60 credits of baccalaureate level courses.

    c. Baccalaureate students who have completed NSHE associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree shall complete a minimum number of credits at the accepting NSHE institution. This minimum number shall be set by the baccalaureate degree granting institution.

    d. Baccalaureate level courses included as part of the associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree will transfer to any other NSHE institution at a minimum as general elective credit.

    e. Completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, or the associate of business degree does not guarantee satisfaction of all State College or university lower-division requirements except for the lower-division general education requirements.

    f. All baccalaureate academic majors at a university or college must have current transfer agreements with NSHE community colleges. These agreements must provide clear information for community college students as to those courses that will transfer efficiently to another NSHE institution within each major. Information on these agreements must be available to all students on each campus.

    g. Transfer agreements shall be developed by both the baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and the associate degree-granting institution. Transfer agreements must include a year-by-year outline of course requirements, including general education and degree requirements, in which the course of study leading to the baccalaureate degree includes the first two years coursework that will result in completion of the requirements for an associate degree.

    h. Transfer agreements shall be updated to reflect any changes made in baccalaureate majors or associate degree requirements as they occur.

i. The receiving institution will evaluate all university and college parallel courses attempted at the community college *(and any other educational institution attended)* and compute an overall admission grade point average in accordance with the institution's transfer policies.

j. For associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business graduates, if the overall transfer grade point average computed by the receiving institution is less than a 2.0 grade point average, the student shall be placed on probationary status until such grade point deficiencies are corrected.

2. Other Associate Degrees

Other associate degrees and certificates may be awarded by a community college for programs that have requirements different from the associate of arts, associate of science, associate of business, or a primary objective of transfer. A student with an associate degree other than an associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business is not guaranteed junior status at a receiving institution.

3. Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Applied Science Degrees

a. The Bachelor of Applied Science degree is a four-year occupationally specific degree that is intended to respond to the needs of the workforce. A student with an Associate of Applied Science degree in a program approved by the Board of Regents seeking a Bachelor of Applied Science degree is guaranteed junior status upon transfer to another applicable NSHE institution.

b. Transfer agreements must include a year-by-year outline of course requirements, including transfer general education and degree requirements, in which the course of study leading to the Bachelor of Applied Science degree includes the first two years coursework that will result in completion of the requirements of an associate of applied science degree.

4. Non-Associate Degree Admissions

a. Approved baccalaureate level courses shall be transferable to another NSHE institution at a minimum as general elective credit.

b. Community college students should be strongly encouraged to complete their lower-division programs and an associate degree before transfer, but qualified students may apply for transfer at their own discretion.

c. An applicant who does not satisfy university admission requirements upon graduation from high school must complete the equivalent of 24 semester credits in baccalaureate level courses with an overall grade point average of at least 2.50 at a community college or other accredited institution and must place into college-level English and mathematics courses or have completed college-level English and mathematics prior to transfer to qualify for university admission.

d. An applicant who does not satisfy State College admission requirements upon graduation from high school must complete the equivalent of 12 semester credits in baccalaureate level courses with an overall grade point average of at least 2.00 at a community college or other accredited institution to qualify for State College admission.

e. A course with a “D-” grade or better will be accepted for transfer provided the institution specific overall grade point average established in subsections c. and d. above is maintained. Transfer courses with a “D-” grade or better will count towards a bachelor’s degree in the same manner as “D-” grades or better obtained by students enrolled in the lower-division at a State College or university. Credits from courses transferred with a “D-” grade or better count towards credit earned for a baccalaureate; however, it is at the discretion of the department or college offering the major as to whether courses with “D-” grades in the major satisfy requirements in the major field.