

Creating a Unified System of Transfer

Massachusetts Community Colleges:
Pathways to Student Success

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MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

Background and Introduction

National Conversations About Transfer

- Reports and Articles
 - Movement of Students
 - Student Success – Graduation Rates
 - Time to Graduation
 - Cost of Higher Education
 - Financial Aid Related Issues

MassTransfer System-wide Policy

	Completing Gen-Ed Transfer Block	Completing Associate's Degree Eligible for <i>MassTransfer</i>		
	2.0+ GPA	2.0+ GPA	2.5+ GPA	3.0+ GPA
System-wide Benefits				
Automatic satisfaction of most or all gen-ed requirements	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guaranteed transfer of credits	✓	✓	✓	✓
No application fee		✓	✓	✓
No application essay		✓	✓	✓
Guaranteed admission, space permitting			✓	✓
100% tuition waiver (Effective Fall 2016)				✓

Reasons to Create a Course Equivalency Database

- **Specific courses may only transfer as elective credit.**
- **Specific courses may not count in a major.**
- **There are gaps in course offerings.**

Reasons to Create Transfer Pathways

- **Most common transfer student** within public system is **one transferring from a community college to a state university or UMass campus.**
- Currently **50%** of those transfer **prior to earning 60 credits / associate's degree.**
- **Facilitating transfer benefits students,** sending institutions and receiving institutions.
- Currently over **2600 different articulation agreements.**

Reasons to Create a Common Reverse Transfer Pathway

- Currently reverse transfer opportunities are only in place between some public four-year universities and some community colleges.
- The practices and policies are variable where reverse transfer opportunities currently exist.
- With a common reverse transfer policy, students will be better able to plan.
- A consistent reverse transfer pathway allows for DHE to better implement, support, and promote it.

In Progress: Filling the Gaps in MassTransfer

- Course and elective equivalency **mapping system** across all of public higher education.
 - Examine transfer policies to increase commonality.
- **Establish Statewide major-specific MassTransfer Pathways** for community college students.
- Create **one reverse transfer policy** for all of Massachusetts Public Higher Education.

MassTransfer

MassTransfer

General
Education Block

Course
Equivalencies

Academic
Transfer
Pathways

Reverse
Transfer

Commonwealth
Commitment

MassTransfer

Course Equivalencies

Course-to-Course Equivalencies

- Uses a **common course numbering system** which maps actual course and elective equivalencies between institutions.
- **Respects each institution's internal processes** for determining transfer credits and their course numbering conventions.
- **Accommodates** special circumstances and course versions.
- Initial focus on college-level MassTransfer Block courses and transfer from community colleges to public four-year institutions.
- **Representatives** from every Massachusetts public higher education institution.

Current Status and Next Steps

- Nearly **10,000 courses** in the database
- **Annual Updating**
- **Expand database** to include new course areas which are needed for future MassTransfer Pathways
- Continue to move toward **more common institutional transfer policies**

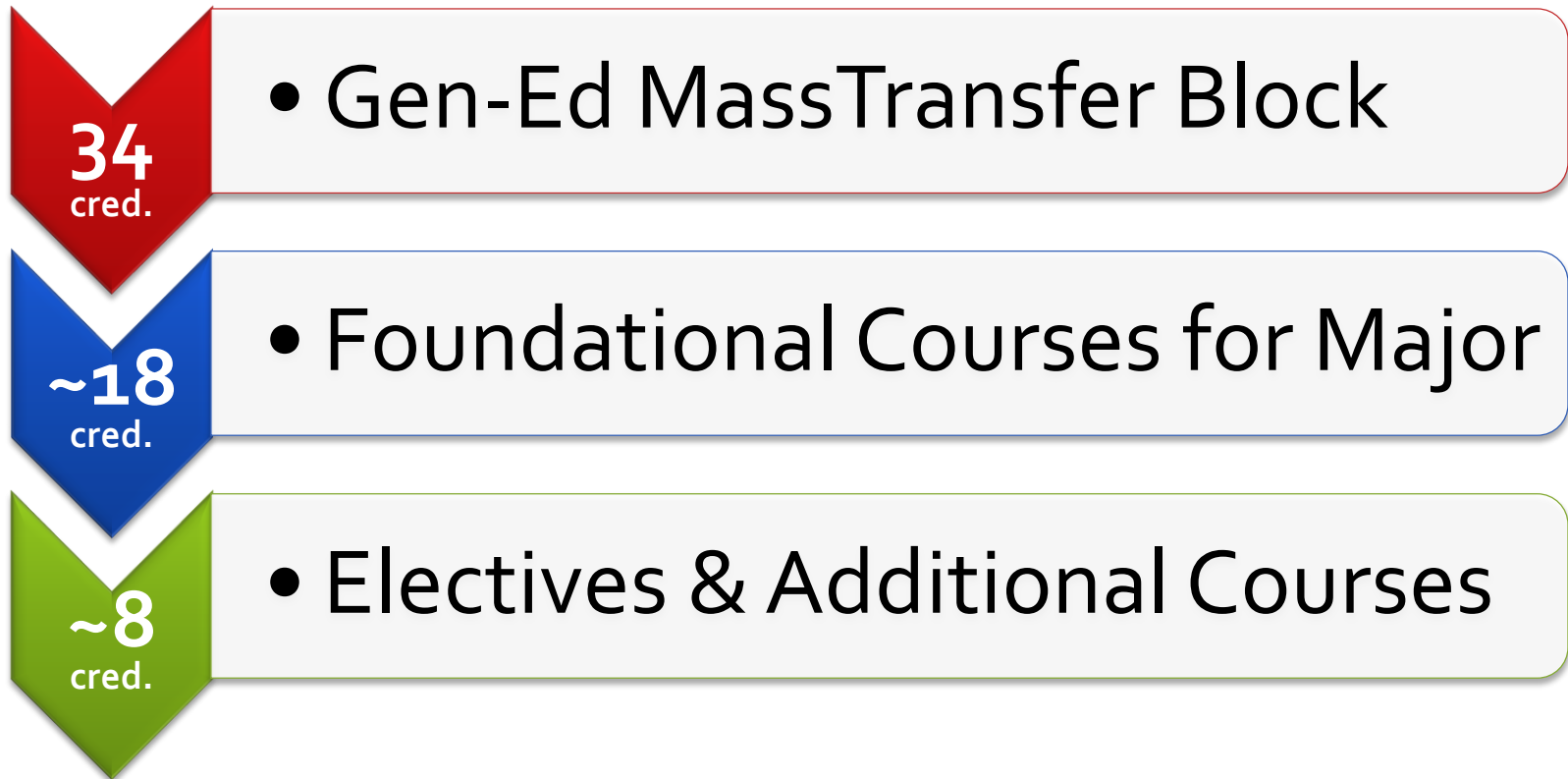
MassTransfer Course Equivalencies

Database and Administrative Site

[Demo Website](#)

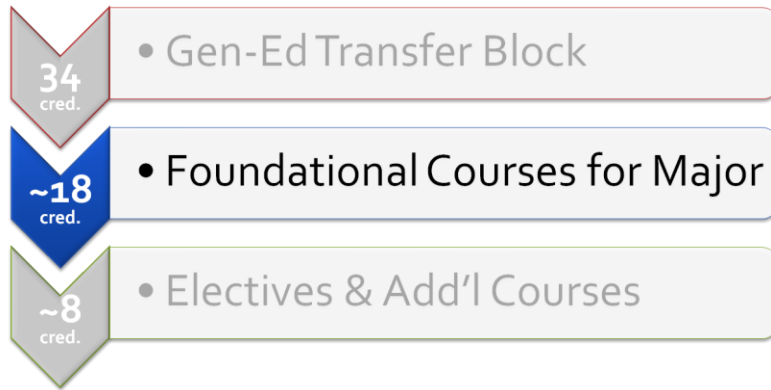
MassTransfer Pathways

MassTransfer Pathway Map



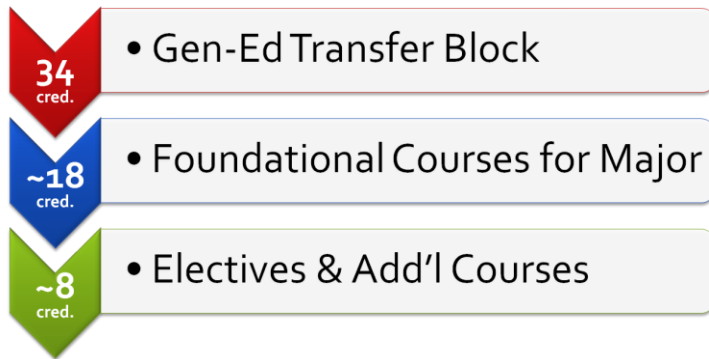
= first 60 credits needed to fulfill freshman & sophomore requirements in major

First Six Disciplines—Fall 2014



- **Foundational courses** identified for six disciplines:
 - ✓ Biology
 - ✓ Chemistry
 - ✓ Economics
 - ✓ History
 - ✓ Political Science
 - ✓ Psychology

First Six Disciplines—Spring & Fall 2015



- **60 credit maps** have been developed by four-year institutions and are now being vetted by community colleges.
- Community colleges working to **align existing programs** to statewide maps.

Next 10 Disciplines—AY2016

In October 2015, over 300 faculty and staff from across the Commonwealth came together to begin work on 10 new majors:

- ✓ Business
- ✓ Criminal Justice
- ✓ Communication & Media Studies
- ✓ Computer Science
- ✓ Early Childhood Education
- ✓ English
- ✓ Liberal Arts
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Sociology
- ✓ STEM Foundational Degree (with an emphasis on natural and physical sciences)

Spring and Summer 2016: Complete foundational courses and maps to 60 credits.

All Disciplines

- The 16 total disciplines will capture **70% of all transfer students**, according to current data
- **AY2016:** Development of **shared learning outcomes** for mapped disciplines beginning (long-term project)

MassTransfer Pathways Website Reorganization

Website Reorganization

- **Summer 2015:** Began reworking MassTransfer website to accommodate Academic Transfer Pathways & MAST work
- **August 2015:** Held focus group with transfer advisors
- **October & November 2015:** Ran usability testing with BHCC & MWCC students
- **Spring 2016:** Designing and testing will continue

Demo: Web-Based Student Interface

Demo Website

Next Steps

- **Website launch in June 2017** with first six disciplines
- **AY2016 – 2017**
 - **Build 60-credit pathway maps** for AY 15-16 disciplines and add to website
 - Convene faculty in new disciplines including **nursing** and **engineering** (contingent upon funding)

Reverse Transfer

Reverse Transfer (Currently Being Developed)

Background

- Students who **transfer from a two-year to a four-year institution** who **do not earn** an associate's degree.
- **Credits earned** at the four-year institution are **transferred back** to the community college and **counted towards the associate's degree**.
- Once **degree requirements are met**, the **community college confers the associate's degree**.
- DHE staff, in **collaboration with campuses and external stakeholders**, have begun **developing a statewide policy** in an effort to continuing building a **seamless system of transfer**.

Massachusetts Statewide Policy Benefits

- **Students gain the opportunity to earn an associate's degree**, while working on their bachelor's degree, **without requiring any additional time or expense.**
- Completion of the associate's degree ensures that students whose pursuit of a bachelor's degree is interrupted **receive a college degree documenting** the work they have completed thus far.
- Community colleges, state universities and UMass campuses **enhance their retention and graduation rates** by affording students the reverse transfer option.

Massachusetts Statewide Policy Highlights

- The Reverse Transfer Agreement will **establish general guidelines** for students, community colleges, state universities and UMass campuses.
- Currently drafted guidelines state students:
 - Must have earned **at least 30 college-level credits at the community colleges** before matriculating at a four-year institution.
 - Must have earned a **cumulative grade point average of 2.00** at the community colleges.
 - Must earn grades on courses taken at the state universities and UMass campuses **sufficient to meet community college transfer credit minimum grade requirements**.
 - **Will not receive *MassTransfer* benefits** after completing their associate's degree requirements at a four-year institution.

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Questions?

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