Creating a Unified System of Transfer
Massachusetts Community Colleges: Pathways to Student Success
April 1, 2016

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Background and Introduction
Current Transfer Landscape

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
# Current Transfer Landscape

## MassTransfer System-wide Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System-wide Benefits</th>
<th>Completing Gen-Ed Transfer Block</th>
<th>Completing Associate’s Degree Eligible for MassTransfer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.0+ GPA</td>
<td>2.0+ GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatic satisfaction of most or all gen-ed requirements</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranteed transfer of credits</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No application fee</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No application essay</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guaranteed admission, space permitting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>100% tuition waiver (Effective Fall 2016)</td>
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</table>
Specific courses may only transfer as elective credit.
Specific courses may not count in a major.
There are gaps in course offerings.
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.
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.
Current Transfer Landscape

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.
Seamless System of Transfer

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.
MassTransfer Course Equivalencies

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
Mass Transfer Pathways
MassTransfer Pathways

MassTransfer Pathway Map

- 34 cred.
  - Gen-Ed MassTransfer Block

- ~18 cred.
  - Foundational Courses for Major

- ~8 cred.
  - Electives & Additional Courses

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

First Six Disciplines—Fall 2014

- Foundational courses identified for six disciplines:
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Economics
  - History
  - Political Science
  - Psychology
MassTransfer Pathways
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.
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.
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
MassTransfer Pathways

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
MassTransfer Pathways

Demo: Web-Based Student Interface

Demo Website
MassTransfer Pathways

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
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**.
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.
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.
Questions?

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