Program History

The 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education established transfer from community colleges to baccalaureate institutions as a central element in providing broad educational opportunity. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, successive major legislative and education system initiatives have established or altered the framework for implementing transfer and articulation in California. Major pieces of legislation with this focus resulted in the development of a common general education curriculum transferrable to both the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems and support for transfer centers in 1986 (AB 1725) and further significant reforms to the transfer process were adopted in 1991, 2000, and 2006. In 2010, SB 1440 was enacted, establishing the Associate Degree for Transfer that guarantees admission into the CSU system at junior status for students who complete 60 units of general education and major preparation requirements that have been agreed upon by community college and CSU faculty. Furthermore, students who transfer with one of these degrees are guaranteed the opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree with no more than 60 additional units. More than 2,000 new degrees in 25 disciplines have been established by community colleges to afford students the benefits of this program. More information can be found at: www.adegreewithaguarantee.com.

Description

Providing lower-division instruction that prepares students for transfer to a baccalaureate granting college or university is a fundamental component of the community college mission. It enables students who are not eligible for admission to the UC or CSU directly from high school to establish eligibility by performing well in community college courses and provides substantial cost savings for families and the State because of the lower cost of community college education. Significant effort and resources have been invested in creating an infrastructure that supports transfer – course articulation; Transfer Centers established on community college campuses to help provide the specialized counseling and guidance that students desiring to transfer need; and the negotiation of transfer-related policies and agreements between the community colleges and the UC and CSU systems, as well as with the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

Course articulation is the process of developing a formal, written agreement that identifies courses, or sequences of courses, that are comparable between two campuses and acceptable in lieu of lower division courses at the receiving campus to meet baccalaureate general education, major, and elective course requirements. The responsibility for the review of course content to determine comparability rests with faculty in the discipline where the course resides at each institution. Once faculty complete the review of course content and agree on comparability, the course articulation can be formalized. Articulation Officers at each campus play a key role in coordinating and facilitating the faculty-to-faculty agreement and other components of the articulation process.
To facilitate the transfer and articulation process, the Chancellor's Office works cooperatively with the University of California Office of the President, the California State University Chancellor's Office, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU). Members of the Chancellor's staff represent the community colleges on numerous statewide policy development committees and provide leadership on various intersegmental projects and efforts to promote articulation and increase transfer. An established communication network of transfer and articulation personnel provides two-way communication between the colleges and the Chancellor's Office, and helps the Chancellor’s Office advocate on behalf of the colleges to remove or reduce barriers to transfer.

**Students Transferred in 2012-13**

In the 2012-13 academic year, approximately 60,000 community college students transferred to either a UC campus (15,663) or a CSU campus (44,236). Another 28,500 students transferred to in-state private and out-of-state colleges and universities. Most students achieve upper-division status at the point of transfer, having completed at least 60 transferable units at a community college before going on to a baccalaureate institution to complete their degree.

**Critical Issues**

Access to classes, counseling, and slots available for transfer admission at UC and CSU campuses were major challenges for transfer students from 2009-10 through 2012-13. As all three of the state’s public higher education systems receive increased funding for classes and services, there is an opportunity to significantly expand the number of students utilizing transfer to earn a baccalaureate degree. This will require the state to provide community colleges with funding to support transfer-related activities and to fund capacity for students in the upper division at UC and CSU.