



EAB

Paving the Path to Transfer

Increasing Community College Transfer by Reducing Barriers to Enrollment

Enrollment
Management
Forum





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Barriers to Enrollment

Enrollment Management Forum

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Supporting Members in Best Practice Implementation

Resources and Services Immediately Available to Forum Members

This publication is only one example of our work to assist Enrollment Management Forum members. We support our members by discussing research and implementation support mapped to individual needs, by helping educate campus stakeholders on enrollment priorities, and by providing online access to data and analytics tools.

For additional information about the services listed below—or for an electronic version of this publication—please visit our website (eab.com/EnrollmentManagementForum), email your dedicated advisor, or email research@eab.com with "Enrollment Management Forum 'Paving the Path to Transfer'" in the subject line.



Online Data and Analytics Tools

The Enrollment Performance Diagnostic Platform enables members to benchmark their institution's admissions, enrollment, tuition, and student success performance against peer institutions. The Enrollment Data Registry allows members to download IPEDS enrollment, pricing, financial aid, and student success data.



Archived and Private-Label Webconference Sessions

Our website provides 24/7 access to our archive of webconferences featuring overviews and Q&As of recent research, including practices in this publication. Forum experts are also available to conduct live webconferences with your team.



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Members may contact the Enrollment Management Forum research team to review any of the research in depth, discuss planning and stakeholder buy-in, or troubleshoot implementation issues. Our staff conducts hundreds of telephone consultations every year.



Facilitated Onsite Presentations

Our experts will come onsite to lead interactive sessions that highlight research findings and facilitate group discussions. The content is tailored for a range of audiences, from campus leadership to enrollment managers' direct reports—the heads of financial aid, admissions, and the registrar.



All Enrollment Management Forum resources are available to members in unlimited quantity.

To order additional copies of this book or to learn about our other services, please visit us at eab.com or contact us at 202-266-6400.

Beyond the Enrollment Management Forum

In addition to the Enrollment Management Forum membership, EAB offers the Student Success Collaborative™, providing institutions with predictive modeling and best practice research to enhance student success, and the COE Forum, delivering best practice research and real-time market insights.

Student Success Collaborative™

The Student Success Collaborative™ (SSC) combines technology, consulting, and best practice research to help colleges and universities use data to improve retention and graduation rates. SSC is a proprietary predictive model that identifies at-risk students and an analytics engine that isolates systemic barriers to degree completion. SSC also provides advisors and other student success specialists with communication and workflow tools to transform insight into action and to provide administrators with customized change-management advice.

With SSC, institutions can identify, reach, and monitor students at scale while accessing data to measure intervention effectiveness.

SSC membership includes:

- Data analytics and predictive modeling
- A comprehensive, proven student success platform
- Dedicated consulting support
- Peer benchmarking and collaboration

COE Forum

Competition for share of the adult, working professional, and online student market has never been greater, as institutional pressure to achieve next-level enrollment and revenue growth intensifies. The COE Forum couples best practice research on ensuring the health of current operations with real-time market research to inform strategic growth.

COE Forum research terrains:

- Best-in-class marketing and recruiting
- Employer-focused market research
- Leading campus innovation



Contact Us

For additional information on SSC and the COE Forum, please visit eab.com or contact us at 202-266-6400.

Top Lessons from the Study

Market Trends Spurring Investments in Transfer Enrollment

Enrollment managers can look to the community college transfer market to meet key institutional objectives amidst a changing landscape for higher education. Investments in the community college transfer market benefit four-year institutions by:

Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments

Diversifying Enrollments in an Increasingly Competitive Recruitment Landscape

Four-year institutions are facing increasing competition for a flattening number of high school graduates. They can reduce reliance on first-time, full-time students and maintain selectivity at the front end of the funnel by increasing transfer enrollment.

Bolstering Tuition Revenues

Growing Institutional Revenues by Maximizing Tuition per Seat

Community college transfer students compensate for flattening tuition revenues by maximizing capacity utilization, ensuring full undergraduate enrollment across terms or divisions and, as a result, growing average revenue per student.

Increasing Diversity

Boosting the Enrollment of Underrepresented Minority Students

Institutions can overcome challenges posed by the targeted recruitment of underrepresented minority students by focusing on community colleges, the top postsecondary enrollment destinations for African American and Hispanic high school graduates.

Supporting Student Success

Improving Graduation Rates by Enrolling Students Likely to Succeed

Community college transfer students have proven themselves as safe bets, raising four-year institutions' graduation rates due to their higher likelihood to succeed relative to first-time, full-time freshmen.

Top Lessons from the Study

Our Insights on Increasing Community College Transfer

Reducing Barriers to Transfer Preparation

Deploying On-Site Advising Strategies to Improve Transfer Preparation

Of the nearly six million community college students who intend to transfer, only 30% follow through—leaving behind at least four million students annually who had intended to transfer. Increase community college students' likelihood to transfer by dedicating staff to course instruction, advising, and transfer pathing services at two-year campuses.

- **Practice 1:** On-Site Transfer Concierges—Permanent four-year recruiters stationed at community colleges to increase transfer awareness and advising
- **Practice 2:** Wraparound Advising Partnerships—Automated four-year advising for two-year students to minimize burdens on students and staff while promoting the transfer option
- **Practice 3:** Program-Specific Curriculum Alignments—On-site course instruction and advising by four-year staff to grow transfer into programs with high barriers to entry

Reducing Barriers to Four-Year Search

Targeting Transfer Recruitment to Reach Right-Fit Students Earlier

Four-year institutions lose transfer students before they start due to insufficient interactions between four-year recruiters and community college students. Streamline prospects' searches for four-year institutions with targeted recruitment and early, on-the-spot transfer admissions events.

- **Practice 4:** Priority Transfer Application Review—Instant admissions events held prior to community colleges' add/drop deadlines to grow applications, yield, and academic preparedness
- **Practice 5:** Phi Theta Kappa Recruitment Campaigns—Investments in the community college honors society to attract high-ability transfer students

Reducing Barriers to Transfer Enrollment

Restructuring Credit Evaluation to Address Transfers' Key Concerns

Transfer students lack answers to fundamental enrollment questions until after they've been admitted to a four-year institution, and in some cases even after they've enrolled. To move students from application to enrollment, transfer students' key questions must be addressed as quickly as possible: how much will it cost, how long will it take, and how many of my credits will count?

- **Practice 6:** Pre-admission Credit Evaluation—Advance credit evaluation to answer prospective transfers' key questions prior to enrollment
- **Practice 7:** Automated Credit Equivalency Estimator—Credit equivalency database to reduce the credit evaluation burden and speed service to students
- **Practice 8:** Self-Service Degree Forecast—Online credit equivalency estimator to provide time- and cost-to-degree estimates to students, even before they apply



The Transfer Enrollment Imperative

Investing in Transfer to Boost Institutional Priorities

INTRODUCTION

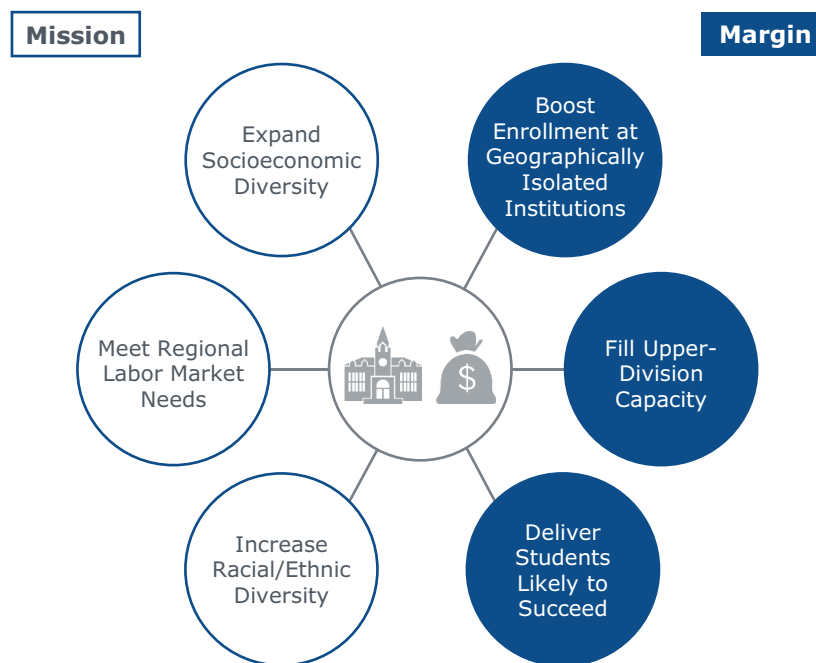
- Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments
- Bolstering Tuition Revenues
- Increasing Diversity
- Supporting Student Success

Hiding in Plain Sight

Community College Transfer Students Fulfill Commitments to Mission and Margin

In an environment of increasing competition for first-time, full-time students, growing pressure on tuition revenue, and stagnant state support, institutions are looking to community college transfer students to augment undergraduate enrollments and tuition revenues. Although first-time, full-time students remain the primary target for undergraduate recruitment at most four-year colleges and universities, community colleges provide a viable option to meet enrollment goals and to satisfy mission and revenue imperatives, including those delineated below.

Win-Win: Community College Transfers Benefit Four-Year Missions and Margins



As shown above, community college transfer students generate multiple benefits for four-year institutions. Specifically, increasing community college transfer enrollment helps fulfill four core imperatives:

1. Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments
2. Bolstering Tuition Revenues
3. Increasing Diversity
4. Supporting Student Success

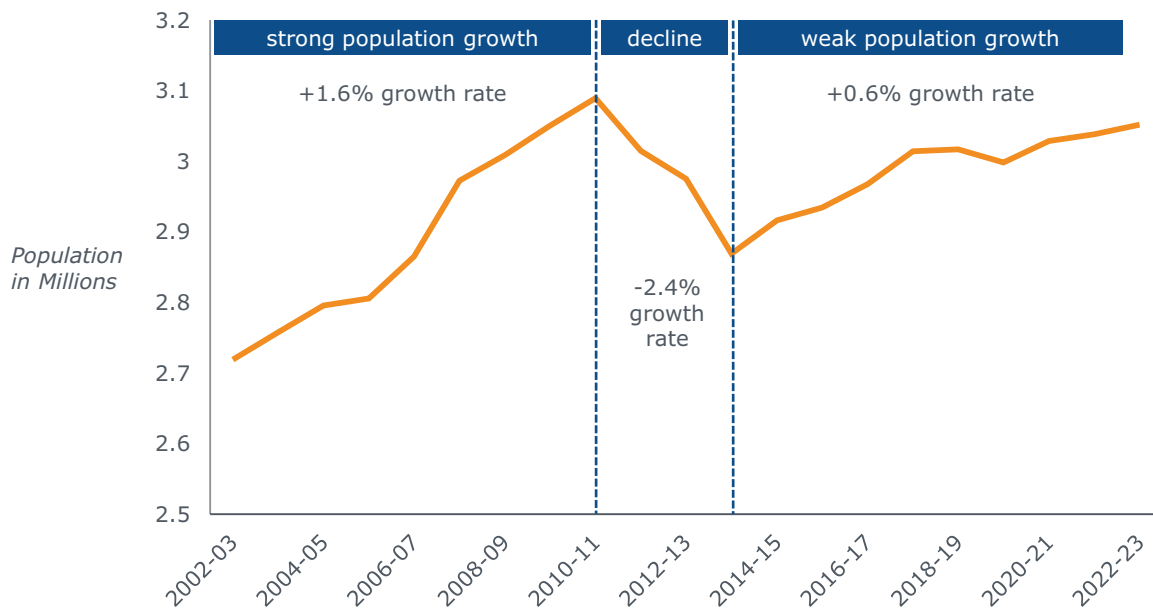
Imperative 1: Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments

Slowed Growth of High School Graduates Increases Competition for Students

The population growth that once fueled first-time, full-time enrollment is gone for the foreseeable future. The number of high school graduates dropped between 2010 and 2014, as shown below, increasing competition for prospective undergraduate enrollments. As a consequence, over 43% of four-year not-for-profit institutions experienced declining enrollments from 2007 to 2012, compared with just under 28% from 2002 to 2007. Although growth rates have rebounded, they will proceed at a slower rate. Institutions must look to non-traditional student segments to meet undergraduate enrollment goals.

High School Graduate Growth Rate Slows After Demographic Decline

Number of High School Graduates and Compound Annual Growth Rates



Source: "Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates," Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, Dec. 2012.

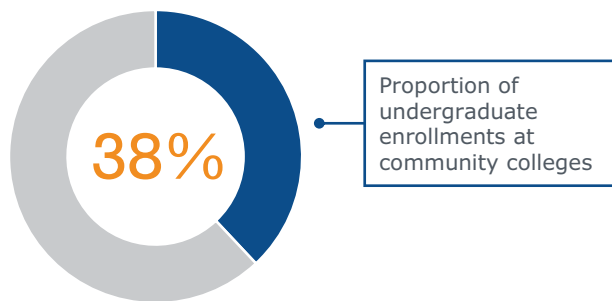
Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments

Transfers Represent a Large Number of Prospective Undergraduate Students

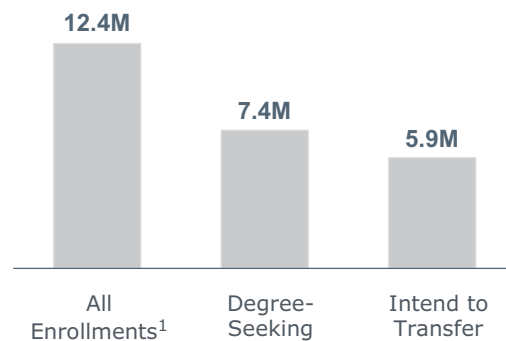
Over 12 million undergraduate students are enrolled at community colleges; of these, nearly six million indicate an intent to transfer to a four-year college or university. When compared to the number of entering first-time, full-time students at four-year institutions each year, the pool of community college transfer prospects is almost twice as large.

Community Colleges: A Sizable Source of Undergraduate Prospects

Share of Undergraduate Enrollments



Community College Students by Goal



Upper-Division Capacity: Opportunity Knocks

Community college students can fill capacity where it is needed most—in upper-division courses. The typical four-year institution faces anywhere from 10% to 20% greater capacity in upper divisions compared to lower divisions due to attrition, early graduation, study abroad, and internships.

1) Represents non-credit and for-credit post-secondary students below the graduate level.

Sources: "2015 Fact Sheet," American Association of Community Colleges, Jan. 2015; Davis Jenkins and John Fink, "What We Know About Transfer," Community College Research Center, Jan. 2015; EMF Analysis of IPEDS Data.

Imperative 2: Bolstering Tuition Revenues

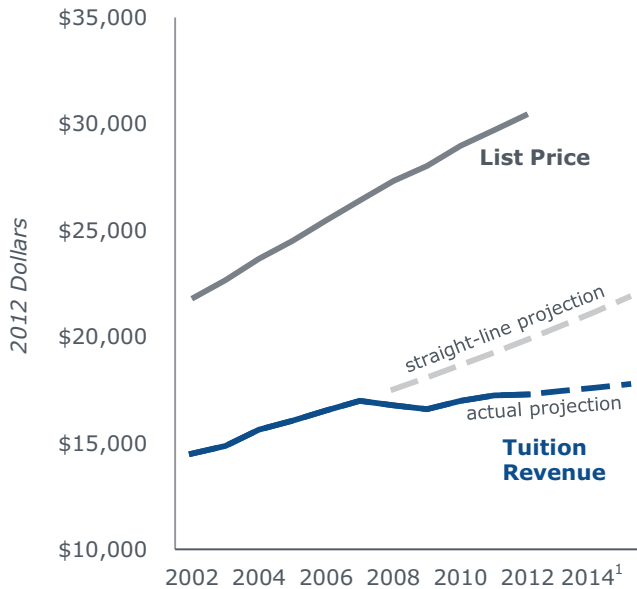
Tuition Revenue Growth Lags in Spite of Rising List Prices

One of enrollment managers' primary responsibilities is to meet tuition revenue goals. Unfortunately, a combination of increasingly cost-conscious consumers, demographic shifts, and declines in public funding make this task both more difficult and more important than ever before. As a result, many institutions are struggling to maintain the tuition revenue growth rates required for financial sustainability.

Tuition Revenue Growth Insufficient to Meet Tuition Revenue Demand

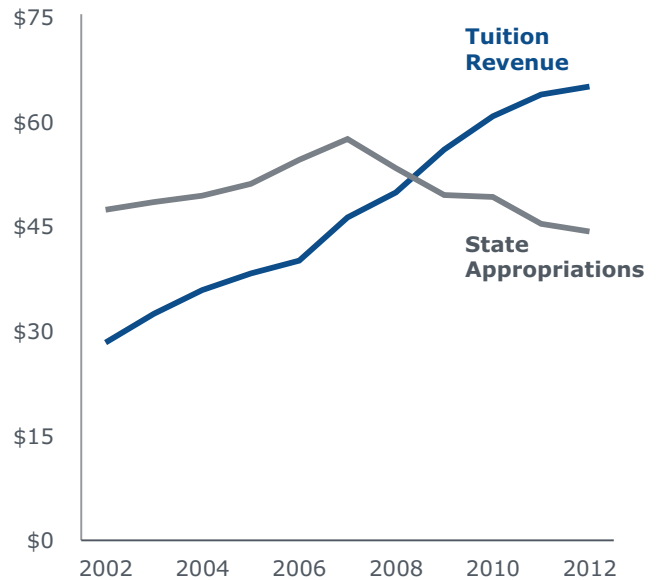
Privates: Tuition Revenue Growth Undermined by Rising Tuition-Discounting

Inflation-Adjusted per Capita Values for First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen, Four-Year Privates



Publics: Tuition Revenue Growth Just Compensating for Declines in Public Funding

Institutional Revenue by Source in Billions, Four-Year Publics



Tuition Revenue Squeezed: A Shared Challenge

Despite rising list prices, private institutions face insufficient tuition revenue due to increased tuition-discounting. Stagnating state funding for higher education has placed tuition revenues front-and-center for public institutions as well: average state appropriations have decreased by over \$2,000 per capita from 2002 to 2014 and, as shown above, any growth in tuition revenue merely compensates for this loss. Moreover, 48 states are projected not to grow higher education funding in the coming years due to investments in Medicaid spending—requiring public institutions to double-down on tuition revenue growth.

1) Denotes projected values.

Sources: Dan White and Sarah Crane, "Crowded Out: The Outlook for State Higher Education Spending," Moody's Analytics, Apr. 21, 2015; EMF Analysis of IPEDS Data.

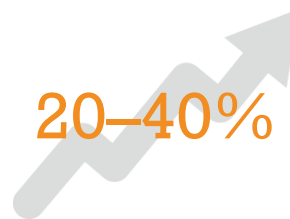
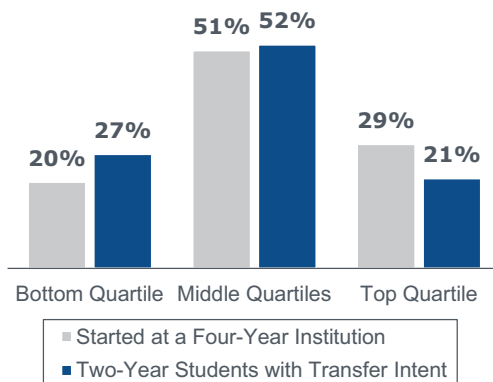
Bolstering Tuition Revenues

Maximize Revenues by Increasing Transfer Enrollment

Many universities mistakenly perceive community college transfer students as disproportionately low-income and in need of greater financial support. As a result, they focus undergraduate recruitment on first-time, full-time students while making comparatively minimal investments in community college transfer student recruitment, service, and support.

Transfer Students Primarily Middle-Income, Enroll at a Higher Price

Family Incomes of 2003-2004 Entering Cohort



higher average price paid by transfers than by first-time, full-time freshmen

“At every school I have consulted for, transfers have had greater ability and willingness to pay than freshmen, particularly because they’ve already saved so much money at the community college.”

*Vice President for Enrollment Management,
Private Master’s University*

Transfers Not So Different from First-Time, Full-Time Students

A comparison of two- and four-year entering cohorts reveals that transfer students have:

- **Stable Family Incomes:** Community college transfer students are primarily middle income, with 21% falling within the highest income quartile.
- **Outsized Revenue Potential:** Transfer students tend to yield higher tuition revenue per capita and are often less price-sensitive than first-time, full-time students given the money saved by first enrolling at community college.

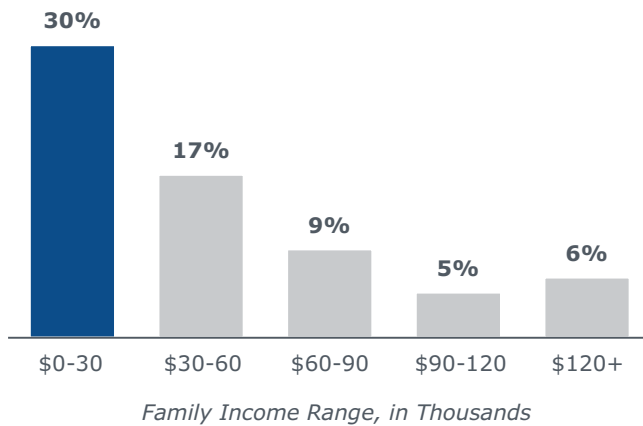
Imperative 3: Increasing Diversity

Demographic and Political Pressures Spur Diversity and Access Investments

Enrollment managers have long been responsible for ensuring the incoming class supports institutional commitments to diversity and access. But demographic and political trends serve to increase four-year access concerns: low-income population growth far outpaces other income bands and community colleges are a publicly endorsed, affordable access point to higher education for this population.

Fastest Population Growth in Lowest Income Bands

Population Growth by Family Income, 2000–2013



Growing Political Pressure to Increase Access

“For millions of Americans, community colleges are essential pathways to the middle class because they’re local, they’re flexible... and you can get a great education.”

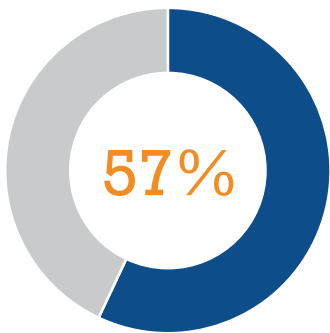
President Barack Obama

Increasing Diversity

Community Colleges Attract Fast-Growing, Diverse Student Segments

The community college system is the leading destination for the fastest growing student segments—low-income students and underrepresented minorities, many of whom are first-generation college goers. African American and Hispanic students, for example, are more likely to first attend a two-year institution than other racial and ethnic groups. Investments in community college transfer may be necessary to maintain equal access to a four-year education for all students and to meet enrollment and mission goals.

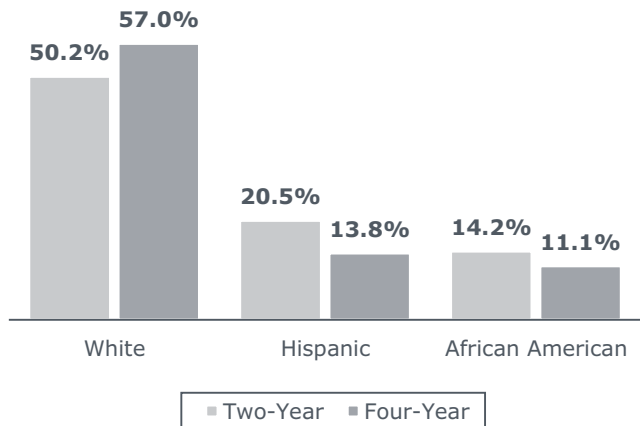
Proportion of Low-Income Enrollments at Community Colleges



57% of first-time students from family incomes below \$32,000 started at a community college

Enrollment Distribution by Race and Ethnicity at Two- and Four-Year Institutions

Enrollment Percentage by Race and Ethnicity, 2013

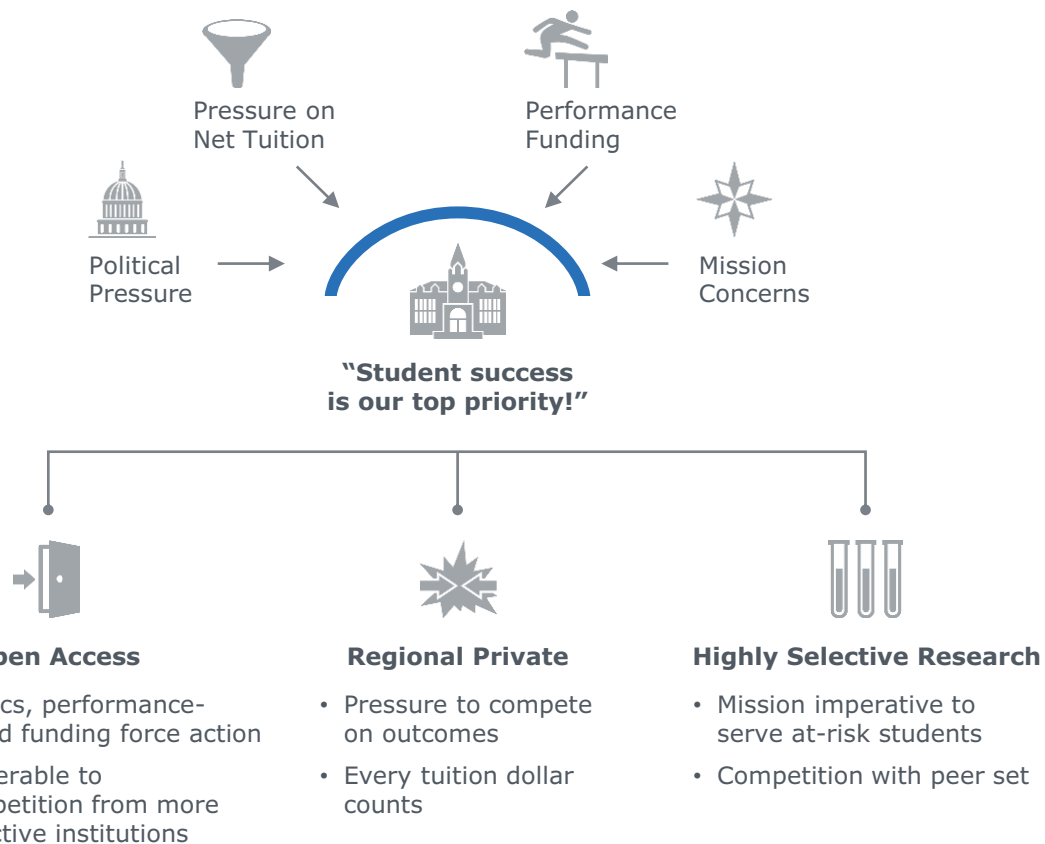


Sources: Lutz Berkner and Susan Choy, "Descriptive Summary of 2003–04 Beginning Postsecondary Students: Three Years Later," National Center for Education Statistics, July 2008; EMF Analysis of IPEDS Data.

Imperative 4: Supporting Student Success

Schools of All Stripes Feeling Greater Pressure to Invest in Student Persistence

Administrators across higher education have been calling student success a “top priority” for years, but pressures to improve success are growing. State governments are pushing for more completions even as state support declines, and are tying more funding to student success performance metrics. Slower revenue growth due to weak demographics and price-sensitivity also makes it crucial that institutions keep every student they recruit.



Student Success Anxiety Universal but Motivations Vary

- **Open Access Institutions:** Increasingly stressed by performance-based funding and under pressure from state politicians to improve weak completion rates. EAB analysis of IPEDS data suggests that these institutions are also losing their top students to more selective competitors.
- **Regional Privates:** Must improve retention to counteract flagging freshman enrollments. Some also aim to differentiate by branding themselves around student outcomes.
- **Highly Selective Research Institutions:** Even these institutions with high retention rates want to more consistently graduate the most at-risk populations, such as first-generation students.

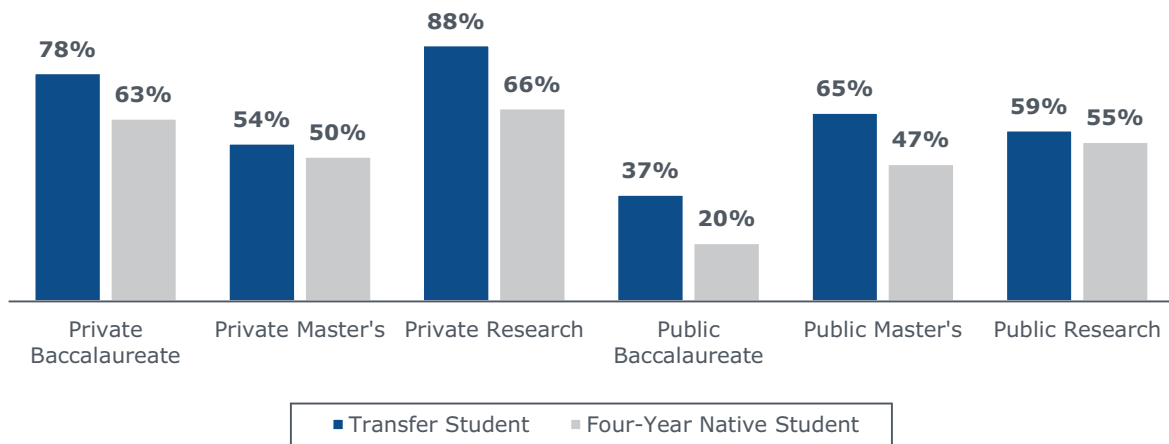
Supporting Student Success

Invest in Transfer Enrollment, Advance Success

Community college transfer students, especially those with associate’s degrees, have already demonstrated persistence. As illustrated below, a transfer student is more likely to graduate than a peer who started at the four-year institution. High transfer completion rates ensure both a steady tuition stream as well as continued access to government funding in an increasingly performance-based environment. For schools addressing student success imperatives, transfer students provide safe bets.

Transfer Students More Likely to Succeed Than Four-Year Natives

Six-Year Graduation Rates by Class and Sector, 2000–2010¹



”Transfer students are proven. You’re not taking a chance with them. Once they come to a four-year institution you know they want a degree. Transfer students are a great investment.”

*Frank Ashley
College Board*

Community Colleges: A Source of Students with Demonstrated Success

Transfer students from community colleges have already begun their college experience and, for most, any remedial work has been completed at the two-year institution. Renewed investments in the preparation and pathing of community college students to a four-year degree will only further improve their likelihood to succeed.

1) Data represent averages from EAB’s Student Success Collaborative™. Institutions were selected at random.

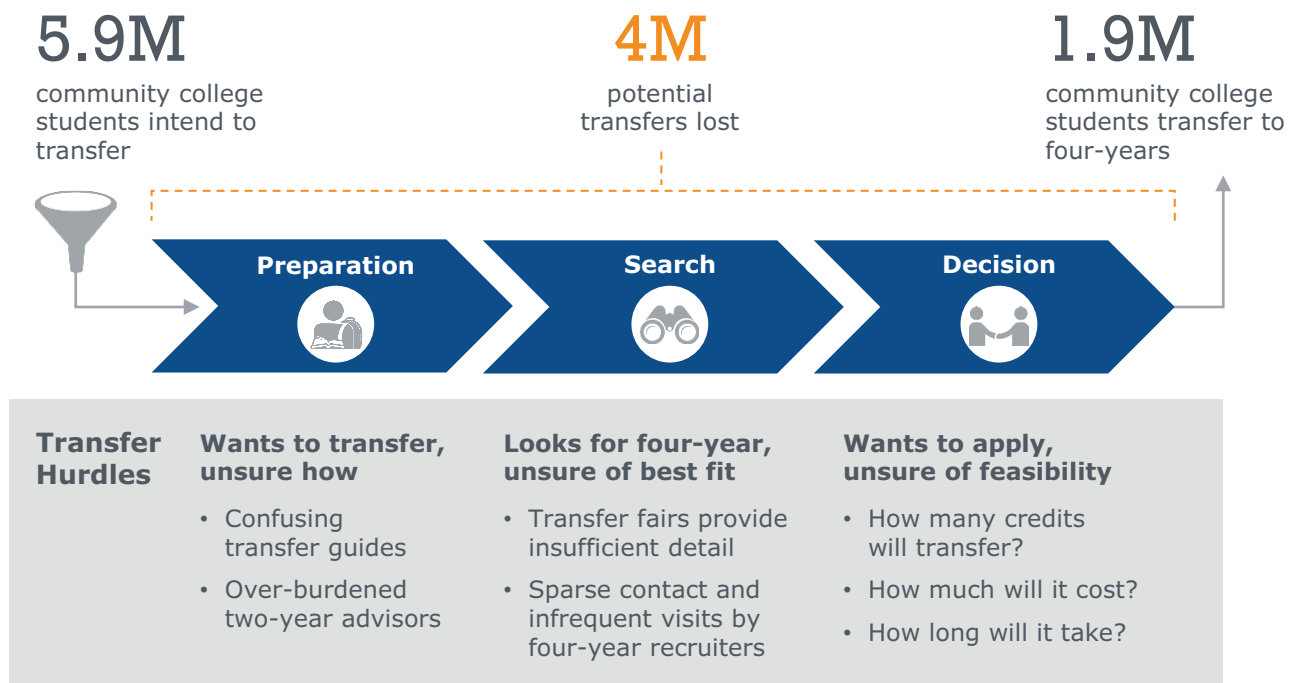
Sources: "Improving Student Transfer from Community Colleges to Four-Year Institutions," College Board, July 2011; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

Roadblocks Along the Path to Transfer

Four-Year Interventions Needed in Transfer Prep, Search, and Decision Making

While nearly six million community college students intend to transfer, only 30% follow through. This means that four-year institutions are missing out on millions of potential transfer students that fall out of the transfer pipeline.

Community College Students Face Barriers to Transfer at Every Stage



A Summary of Barriers Faced by Prospective Transfer Students

- **Preparation Stage:** Students lack sufficient guidance on four-year policies; many students end up taking too many of the same types of courses or not enough of others.
- **Search Stage:** Limited contact with recruiters leaves students unsure that the four-year institution will provide the right fit.
- **Decision Stage:** After identifying a four-year institution, students are hard-pressed to find answers to critical questions on credit transfer and time- or cost-to-degree.

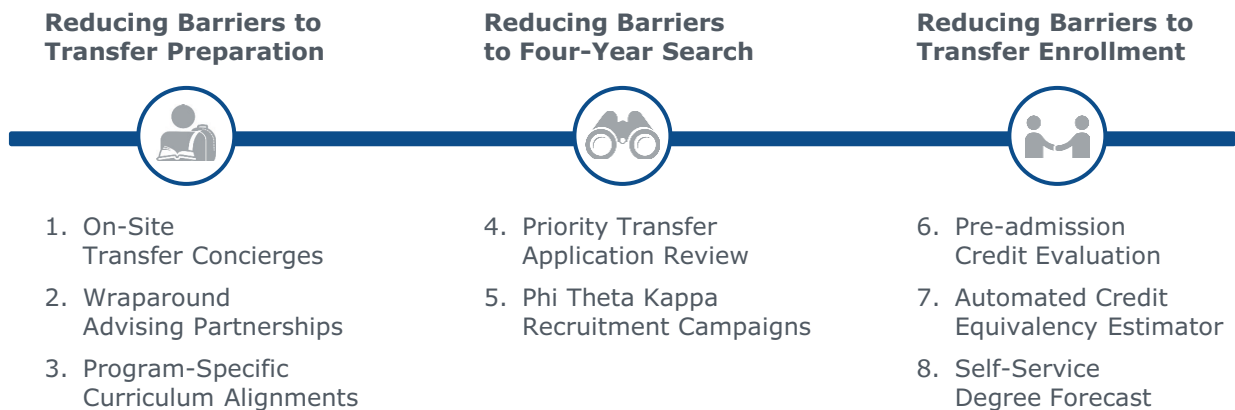
Sources: American Association of Community Colleges, "2015 Fact Sheet," <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Documents/FactSheet2015.pdf>; Davis Jenkins and John Fink, "What We Know About Transfer," Community College Research Center, Jan. 2015.

Practices for Reducing Barriers to Transfer

Streamlining the Transfer Process

By improving investments in two-year student recruitment, advising, and admissions, four-year institutions can widen their transfer pipelines to meet growing enrollment, revenue, diversity, and student success imperatives. To do this, four-year institutions must reduce barriers to transfer at all stages of the transfer student lifecycle.

Road Map for the Study



EAB's Brief Guide on Collaborating with Faculty to Build Transfer-Friendly Credit Evaluation Policies

Credit evaluation is often overseen by academic units, outside of enrollment managers' control. This book concludes with a brief guide on collaborating with faculty to nudge their compliance with transfer-friendly policies, enabling enrollment managers to better serve transfer students without usurping faculty control.

Key Takeaways from This Section

Meeting Mission and Margin Objectives by Investing in Transfer Recruitment

1 Differentiating Undergraduate Enrollments

- The number of high school graduates fell from 2010 to 2014 and has since grown at reduced rates, driving increased competition for prospective students
- Community colleges provide a large source of students—12.4 million students enroll at community colleges every year, with nearly six million indicating an intent to transfer
- Transfer students provide the additional benefit of filling upper-division capacity, where enrollments are needed most

2 Bolstering Tuition Revenues

- Increased discounting and declines in public funding have led to insufficient tuition revenue growth at both private and public institutions
- Community college transfer students demonstrate less price sensitivity than first-time, full-time freshmen
- Transfer students increase tuition revenue by paying more than first-time, full-time students and by filling empty upper-division seats

3 Increasing Diversity

- Domestic population growth is concentrated in the lowest income bands and four-year institutions must adapt to better reach these students
- Community colleges are the leading postsecondary destinations for low-income, underrepresented minority, and first-generation college students
- Investments in the community college transfer market meet institutional access missions by expanding racial, ethnic, and economic diversity

4 Supporting Student Success

- State and federal funding is increasingly tied to student success metrics, leaving four-year institutions concerned about admitting students likely to succeed
- Community college transfer students have proven their ability to persist throughout their first two years of college and are more likely to graduate than students who started at the institution as first-time, full-time freshmen



Reducing Barriers to Transfer Preparation

Deploying On-Site Advising Strategies to Improve Transfer Preparation

CHAPTER

- Practice 1: On-Site Transfer Concierges
- Practice 2: Wraparound Advising Partnerships
- Practice 3: Program-Specific Curriculum Alignments

1

Reducing Barriers to Transfer Preparation

Four-Year Advisement Needed to Prepare and Motivate Students for Transfer

An estimated 70% of community college students lack advising on which classes best prepare them to transfer to a four-year institution. Inadequate preparation often occurs because two-year advisors maintain heavy advising loads and lack familiarity with specific four-year institutions' transfer policies.

Lack of Advisement Undermines Transfer Preparedness and Motivation to Transfer



>70%

of entering community college students do not receive academic planning help from an advisor



39%

of transfers cannot articulate a single credit



13

average credits lost in transfer

“In theory, articulation agreements are a good idea—but what we found is that they didn't apply well to all students...[and] they could take a year or even two to put together. By then, the degree had changed.”

*Kim Houston
Admissions Recruitment Coordinator
University of Missouri, Columbia*

Credit Articulation Agreements Obsolete

Many four-year institutions develop articulation agreements to equip two-year advisors to prepare students—but these agreements quickly become outdated due to lengthy development processes and frequent degree requirement changes. Moreover, they cannot provide the nuance required for personalized transfer advising. To increase transfer enrollment, four-year institutions need to invest in on-site advising and academic preparation.

Sources: “Reclaiming the American Dream: Community Colleges and the Nation's Future,” American Association of Community Colleges, 2012; Sean Anthony Simone, “Transferability of Postsecondary Credit Following Student Transfer or Coenrollment,” National Center for Education Statistics, Aug. 2014; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

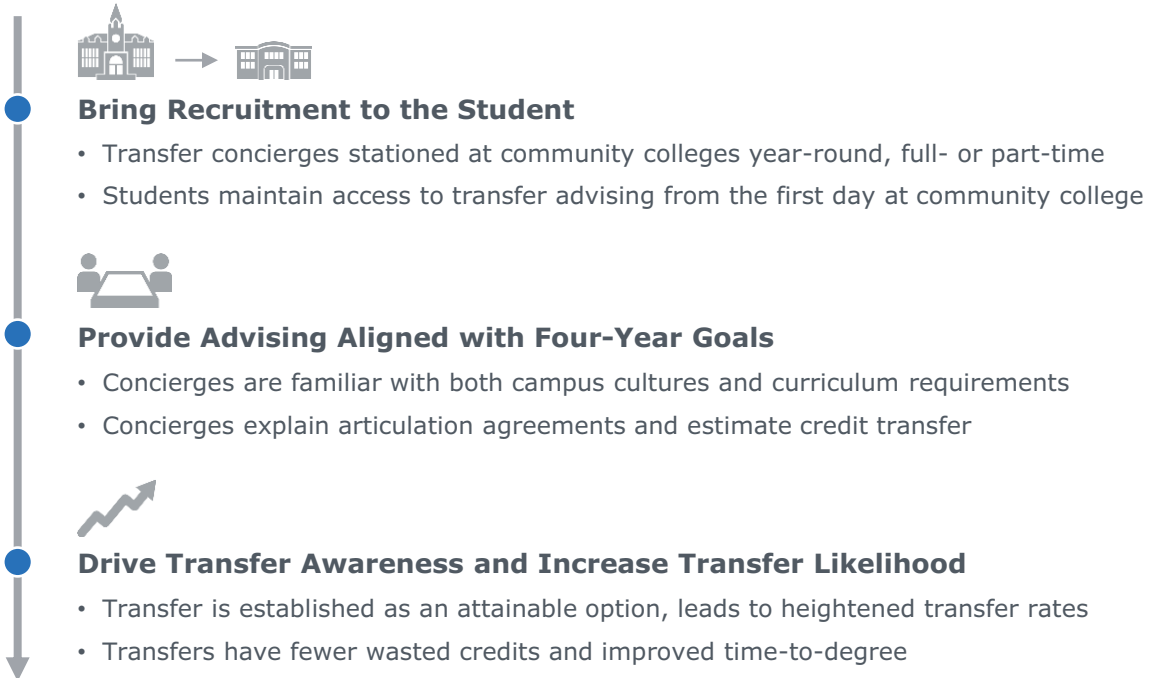
Practice 1: On-Site Transfer Concierges

Increasing Transfer Preparedness with On-Site Advisement and Recruitment

In-person interactions between four-year admissions staff and two-year students typically occur only once or twice per year. The University of Toledo increased these interactions by dispatching transfer concierges to its leading two-year feeder campuses. The concierges have predictable weekly hours and serve as on-site transfer advocates across these campuses.



Overview of University of Toledo's Transfer Concierge Service



The University of Toledo's concierges position Toledo as a favorable transfer destination for students down the road. Additionally, concierges strengthen Toledo's relationships with two-year administrators, who welcome four-year investments in their students' success.

On-Site Transfer Concierges

Transfer Concierge Service Grows Enrollment and Revenue

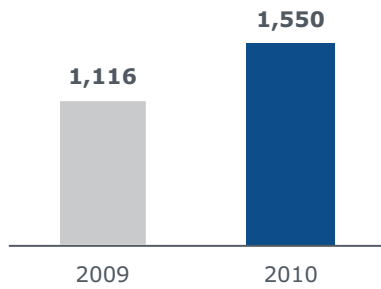
From 2009 to 2010, University of Toledo's transfer enrollment grew nearly 40%, bringing in an incremental 400 students and \$3 million in tuition revenue. Early success at its main two-year feeder campus inspired the university to expand on-site advisement and recruitment to eleven campuses across two states. Four transfer concierges now serve as transfer advocates across these 11 campuses, serving each campus either full- or part-time.



Transfer Concierge Service Success Drives Expansion to Additional Campuses

Growth in Transfer Enrollment

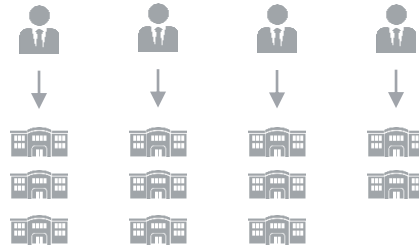
Full-Time Transfer Student Enrollment



\$3M in incremental tuition revenue from 434 additional transfer enrollments after \$160,000 in concierge staffing costs

Transfer Growth Inspires Expansion of Concierge Service

4 transfer concierges



11 community colleges served

Practice 2: Wraparound Advising Partnerships

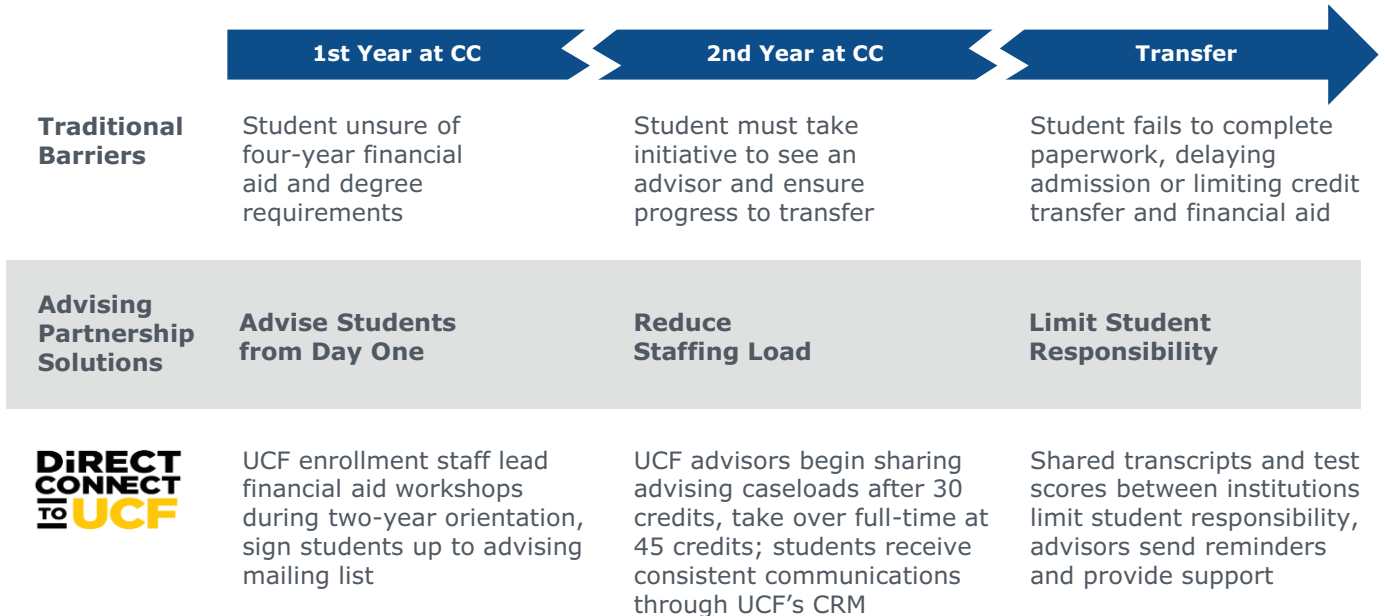
Two- and Four-Year Advising Partnership Hardwires Transfer Preparation

A predictable four-year presence on two-year campuses helps prepare students for transfer but it still requires them to seek out transfer guidance. The University of Central Florida (UCF) removed this burden through its DirectConnect program, which integrates its advising system with those of its community college partners. The DirectConnect program helps support two-year students beyond the transfer preparation stage by linking transcript and test score data between the community colleges and UCF, initiated with the student’s consent during community college orientation. This ensures that no students slip through the cracks while also reducing staff workloads.

By enrolling in the DirectConnect program, community college students automatically receive advising reminders, reducing students’ need to monitor transfer preparation. This automation also increases four-year staff’s access to data, allowing them to provide the best possible counsel. Through DirectConnect, UCF now provides ongoing financial aid education, advising, and transfer communications to students at six community colleges in a fifty-mile radius.



Overview of UCF’s DirectConnect Program



Sources: Denise-Marie Ordway, "DirectConnect to UCF Helps Minorities Earn Degrees UCF Regional Campuses," *The Orlando Sentinel*, May 11, 2014; UCF DirectConnect, <http://regionalcampuses.ucf.edu/directconnect/>; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

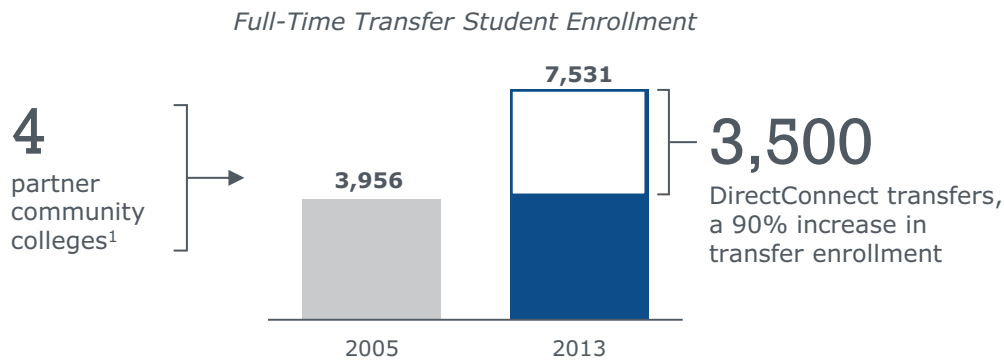
Wraparound Advising Partnerships

Advising Partnership Increases Transfer, Grows Student-Body Diversity

Over 36,000 students have transferred to UCF since the program's launch in 2006, almost doubling UCF's annual transfer enrollments while increasing selectivity. Strong program participation has increased UCF's diversity, with underrepresented minority students accounting for approximately half of all DirectConnect enrollments.



Advising Partnership Nearly Doubles Transfer Enrollments



Increased Visibility Improves UCF's Selectivity, Increases Campus Diversity

41,000

students have entered UCF through DirectConnect from 2006 to 2015

20

percentage point decrease in UCF's first-time, full-time freshman admit rates over ten years

49%

of entering DirectConnect students are underrepresented minorities

1) UCF DirectConnect now includes six partner community colleges; these data only reflect their original four partners.

Sources: Denise-Marie Ordway, "DirectConnect to UCF Helps Minorities Earn Degrees UCF Regional Campuses," *The Orlando Sentinel*, May 11, 2014; "2005-2006 Common Data Set," University of Central Florida; "A Regional Strategy to Build Pathways for Students," University of Central Florida and Valencia College, 2014, https://www.kctcs.edu/~media/System_Office/Transfer%20Summit%202014%20Photos/Kentucky-Transfer-ValenciaUCF%20Presentation.ashx; EMF Interviews and Analysis of IPEDS Data.

Practice 3: Program-Specific Curriculum Alignments

Filling High-Capacity Programs with Program-Specific Transfer Preparation

STEM programs at four-year institutions often have the highest upper-division capacity due to lower-division major-switching. They also have low transfer-in rates because transfers tend to lack the necessary courses and skills required. To fill upper-division capacity in its engineering programs with academically prepared transfers, the University of Florida partnered with Santa Fe College, a nearby two-year institution, to provide wraparound advising and academic preparation.

Rethinking Supply and Demand in Engineering



Two-Year Engineering Students Interested in Transfer



- Need additional STEM preparation and remedial coursework prior to four-year enrollment
- Lower-division engineering courses unavailable at the community college



Engineering Unable to Fill Upper-Division Seats



- Lower-division STEM attrition, major-switching
- Upper-division courses inaccessible to transfers lacking technical introductory courses

Overview of Engineering Partnership Between University of Florida and Santa Fe College

<p>1</p> <p>Rejected freshman Engineering applicants offered deferred admission pending initial matriculation at Santa Fe College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Florida manages admissions and enrollment • Santa Fe College oversees a student organization for program participants 	<p>2</p> <p>Dedicated on-site advisor monitors academic progress and transfer preparedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Florida advisor maintains office space on Santa Fe's campus • Advisor monitors students' academic progress and flags students when ready for transfer 	<p>3</p> <p>University oversees instruction of lower-division courses not offered by Santa Fe College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Florida faculty teach two lower-division courses not otherwise available • Santa Fe College faculty deliver non-Engineering coursework
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Sources: "The 2015 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence," The Aspen Institute, 2015; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

Program-Specific Curriculum Alignments

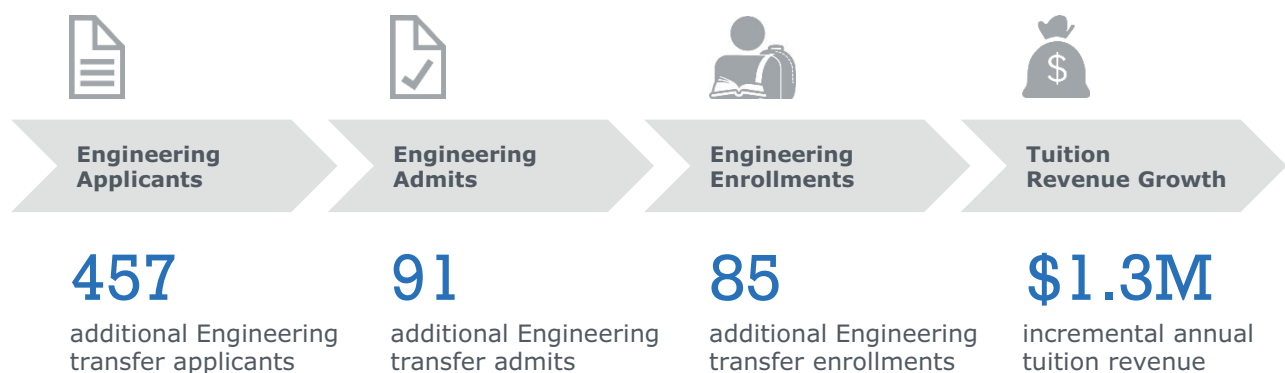
Engineering Transfer Pipeline Fills Upper-Division Capacity

The University of Florida’s curriculum partnership enables it to maintain full upper-division enrollment in Engineering. Additionally, the university’s presence on the community college campus attracts additional transfer inquiries in Engineering and incentivizes transfer preparedness, even among students not enrolled in the partnership.



Engineering Program Fills Upper-Division Capacity with Dual Admits

Increase in Transfer Applications and Enrollments from 2011 to 2014



“This collaboration gives us the ability to leverage available facilities and resources on both campuses to grow the number of UF graduates in four engineering specialties that are critical to meeting the demands of Florida’s burgeoning technology economy.”

Joe Glover
Provost, University of Florida

Sources: “2011–2014 Gator Engineering Applicant Data,” University of Florida Office of Admissions; “UF, SF College Team Up to Increase Enrollment in Engineering,” University of Florida Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, Feb. 19, 2013; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

Key Takeaways from This Section

Our Insights on Reducing Barriers to Transfer Preparation

1 Lack of Advising Leaves Two-Year Students Unmotivated or Unprepared for Transfer

- Heavy advising loads and insufficient familiarity with four-year policies result in a lack of transfer advising for community college students
- Community college students that lack transfer advising end up ineligible for transfer or lose significant credits in the process, increasing cost- and time-to-degree
- Transfer students lose an average of 13 credit hours in their transition, with nearly 40% of students unable to articulate a single credit

2 Incentivize Transfer with In-Person Advisement on Two-Year Campuses

- Providing transfer advising by four-year staff on community college campuses increases transfer awareness and preparation
- Hosting consistent transfer advising hours on community college campuses builds awareness among students and establishes a successful path to transfer from day one
- Offering curriculum oversight and required lower-division courses unavailable on community college campuses ensures a steady stream of eligible transfers into programs with high barriers to entry

3 Employ Automated Advising to Support Students and Streamline Staffing

- Integrating four-year and community college advising systems provides prospective transfers with consistent advising
- Linking advising systems with CRMs reduces four-year advisor workloads by automating standard reminders
- Sharing advising workloads between two- and four-year partners reduces each campus's staffing costs and ensures a seamless transition for students through shared advising notes, transcripts, and test scores



Reducing Barriers to Four-Year Search

Targeting Transfer Recruitment to Reach Right-Fit Students Earlier

CHAPTER

- Practice 4: Priority Transfer Application Review
- Practice 5: Phi Theta Kappa Recruitment Campaigns
- Targeted Transfer Recruitment Tool: CollegeFish.org

2

Reducing Barriers to Four-Year Search

Four-Year Interactions with Community College Students Fall Short

Unlike high school student recruitment, four-year institutions have few opportunities for buying segmented lists of names of prospective community college transfer students. As a result, four-year institutions struggle to identify and connect with students that intend to transfer. The limited interactions students have with recruiters leave them searching blindly for institutions that meet their baccalaureate goals, as depicted below.

Barriers to Four-Year College Search for Prospective Transfers

1 Limited Access to Information *Infrequent Recruiter Visits*



"I need to start applying to four-years but I just missed the last recruiter visit..."

2 Timing Constraints *Admissions Decisions Too Late*



"I thought I was on track but it looks like I will need to take a few more courses before transferring..."

4 Low Signal-to-Noise Ratio *Transfer Fairs Too General*



"I have a lot of four-year options but I am not sure which school is best for me..."

3 Lack of Options *Sparse Outreach from Privates*



"I do not know a lot about private universities so I think I will just go to the nearby public..."

Enrollment managers can engage students at early admissions events and conduct targeted outreach to high-ability community college students to reduce barriers to transfer enrollment.

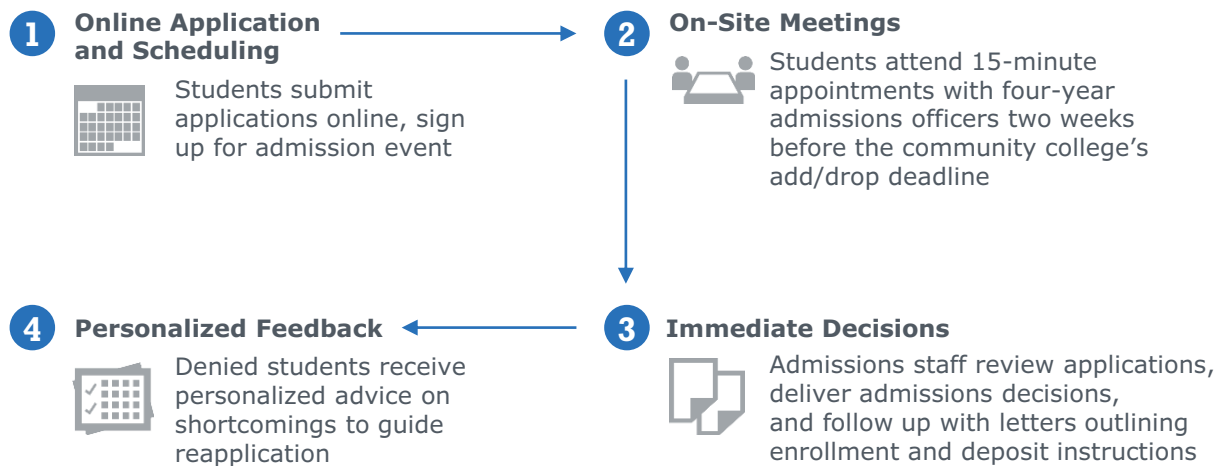
Practice 4: Priority Transfer Application Review

Making Early Admissions Decisions at Two-Year Campuses

Even students prepared to transfer fall out of the transfer pipeline due to confusing transfer application processes, inconsistent deadlines, or lack of contact with four-year admissions staff. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) addresses these issues by pushing transfer admissions decisions out earlier through priority application review events, conveniently hosted on two-year campuses. Admissions officers visit four nearby community colleges each September to provide on-the-spot, advance transfer admission decisions, one year prior to intended four-year matriculation. By admitting these students early and expediently, Virginia Tech is positioned as the earliest and the most streamlined four-year transfer option.



Overview of Virginia Tech's On-Site Priority Transfer Application Review



A Second Chance: Denied Students Can Reapply

Because priority transfer application review events occur before community colleges' add/drop deadlines and one year prior to intended four-year matriculation, denied students can course-correct and reapply by the traditional transfer application deadline, allowing them to remain in that same year's transfer pipeline.

Priority Transfer Application Review

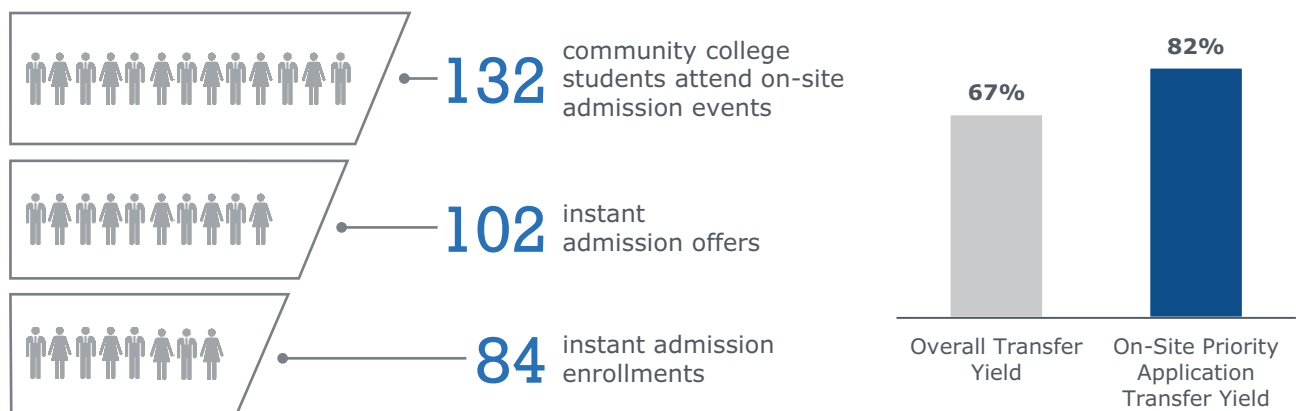
Priority Review Improves Yield, Extended to Remote Applicants

In addition to providing a valuable advising touch-point, priority application review events give admitted students an opportunity to speak one-on-one with four-year staff about future enrollment and deposit processes. As a result, transfer students admitted through early admission events yield at higher rates than other transfer admits.



On-Site Priority Application Review Yields Transfers at Higher Rates¹

Results from Virginia Tech's 2015 On-Site Priority Application Review



Scaling at Low Cost: Online Program for Remote Transfer Applicants

Following the success of priority application review events, Virginia Tech developed an online version of the program to expand its reach. Removing the on-site component allowed Virginia Tech to avoid costs associated with traveling to distant community colleges while still providing prospects with advance admissions decisions, advisement, and opportunities to course-correct.



Students submit priority applications online by early January, allowing time for advance decisions and course-corrections



Denied students receive emails identifying deficiencies to address before the next application deadline



Virginia Tech sends admission decisions to accepted students in early February, positioning it as the first and fastest four-year offer

1) In addition to priority review opportunities at community college campuses, Virginia Tech also hosts an Instant Decision Day at their own campus for prospective transfer students. Data shown include only on-site review opportunities.

Sources: "2014-2015 Common Data Set," Virginia Tech Office of Institutional Effectiveness; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

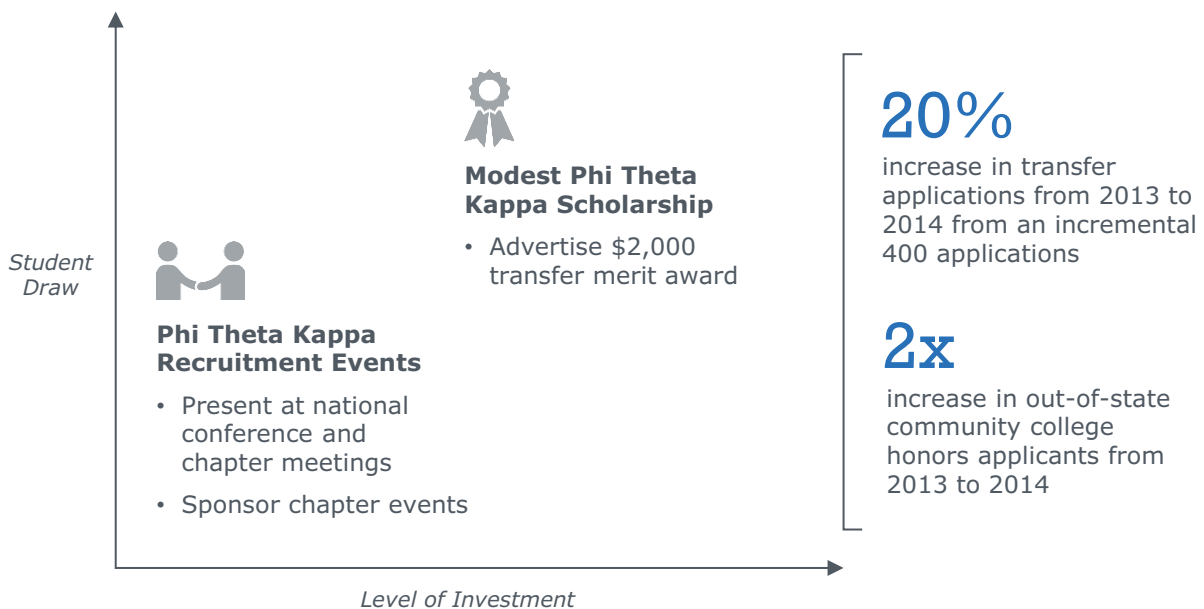
Practice 5: Phi Theta Kappa Recruitment Campaigns

Targeting Students Likely to Transfer Through Honors Outreach

Few opportunities exist for four-year institutions to identify community college students interested in four-year transfer. Targeting is especially challenging for private institutions, which must identify students interested in attending a higher priced four-year school. High-performing community college students may be more likely to transfer—especially to a private or out-of-state institution. Loyola Marymount University engages these students by targeting community college honors students through its Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) transfer recruitment campaign. PTK students are the most viable transfer targets, having maintained a 3.5 GPA or higher throughout their two-year experience.



Overview of Loyola Marymount’s Honors Transfer Recruitment Plan



Increase Touch-Points by Aligning Campus Visits with PTK Meetings

Loyola Marymount University schedules all community college recruitment visits to coincide with PTK chapter meeting dates: recruiters present at chapter meetings and promote a \$2,000 merit scholarship available to PTK transfers. To further increase reach and awareness, the institution sponsors national and regional PTK conferences. These small investments increased transfer applicants while doubling applications from out-of-state honors students.

Targeted Transfer Recruitment Tool: CollegeFish.org

Providing a Low-Cost Opportunity to Identify Transfer Prospects

While high-touch recruitment drives applications, its limited reach should be complemented by a high-volume approach to lead generation. CollegeFish.org is an accessible, low-cost option for targeting prospective transfer students. In addition to serving institutions through an online database of two-year students interested in transferring, the website serves students by providing consolidated information on subscribing institutions' transfer scholarships, application deadlines, and articulation agreements.



Overview of CollegeFish.org

- ✓ Matches students with institutions based on selected preferences
- ✓ Provides low-cost access to hundreds of thousands of students
- ✓ Delivers leads sortable by geographic region, GPA, program of interest, and honors student status

CollegeFish in Action: A Case in Point

A public four-year institution in the Southwest achieved substantial return on investment: hundreds of new transfer students have enrolled over a five-year period for an annual subscription fee of just \$3,000

Key Takeaways from This Section

Our Insights on Reducing Barriers to Four-Year Search

1 Sparse Contact with Four-Year Institutions Hinders Students' Four-Year Search

- Unlike prospective first-time, full-time freshmen, prospective transfer students at community colleges are difficult to identify
- Two-year students' first interactions with four-year institutions often take place after the student has applied for transfer, leaving little room for course-correction or relationship-building
- Transfer students are left to identify four-year transfer destinations with sparse information, often resorting to nearby institutions or dropping out of the transfer pipeline altogether

2 Drive Applications and Yield Through Early Transfer Admission Events

- Hosting on-site transfer admission events one year prior to intended matriculation attracts two-year students before they've connected with other four-year institutions
- Conducting transfer application reviews prior to community colleges' add/drop deadlines helps students grow transferrable credits
- Giving feedback to denied students in advance of community colleges' add/drop deadlines allows them to immediately course-correct and reapply

3 Reach Students Most Likely to Transfer with Targeted Honors Outreach

- Conducting targeted community college student name-buys grows the recruitment of students likely to transfer
- Developing partnerships with community college honors societies increases access to high-ability transfer applicants
- Scheduling community college visits to align with honors society fairs or chapter meetings facilitates high-touch, high-ROI recruitment interactions



Reducing Barriers to Transfer Enrollment

Restructuring Credit Evaluation to Address Transfers' Key Concerns

CHAPTER

3

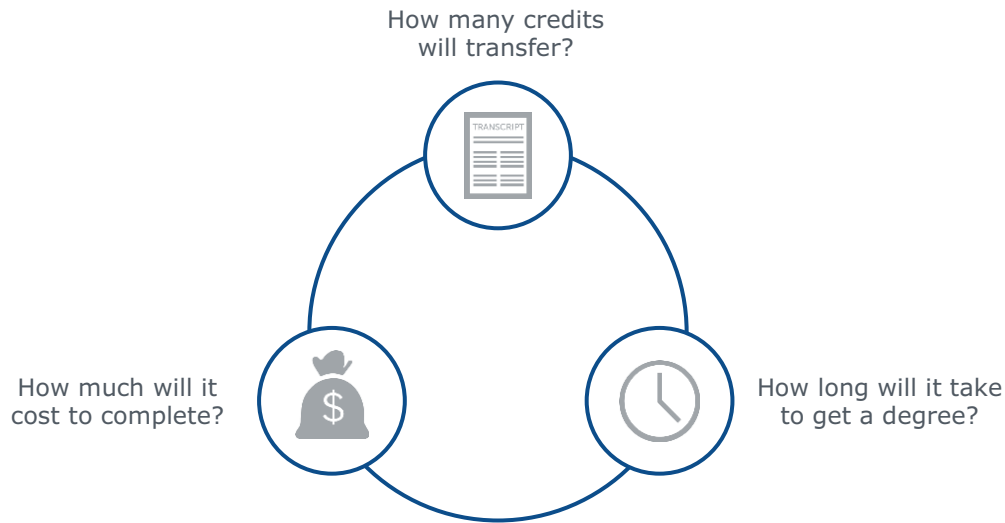
- Practice 6: Pre-admission Credit Evaluation
- Practice 7: Automated Credit Equivalency Estimator
- Practice 8: Self-Service Degree Forecast
- Building Transfer-Friendly Credit Evaluation Policies

Reducing Barriers to Transfer Enrollment

Answer Three Core Questions to Boost Transfer Yield

Transfer students lack key information at the admission decision stage. They often do not know how many credits will transfer or how long it will take to graduate until after they've been admitted or, in many cases, after they've enrolled at a four-year institution. To move admitted transfer students from application to enrollment, four-year institutions must address three fundamental questions in time to inflect students' enrollment decisions.

The Last Mile: Three Core Questions on Transfer Enrollment



“The three common threads for prospective student delays in decision-making are: I need to know what credits transfer, I need to know how much it will cost, and I need to know how long it will take me to finish... We need to develop a capability to provide this information to students before they apply.”

*Scott Booth
Executive Director of Marketing and Enrollment
Franklin University*

Without answers to these questions, prospective transfer students overlook four-year institutions that may provide a good academic fit or abandon their transfer aspirations altogether. Four-year institutions that communicate answers earlier in the admission process not only expedite students' decision-making process but also establish a competitive advantage as a “transfer-friendly” institution.

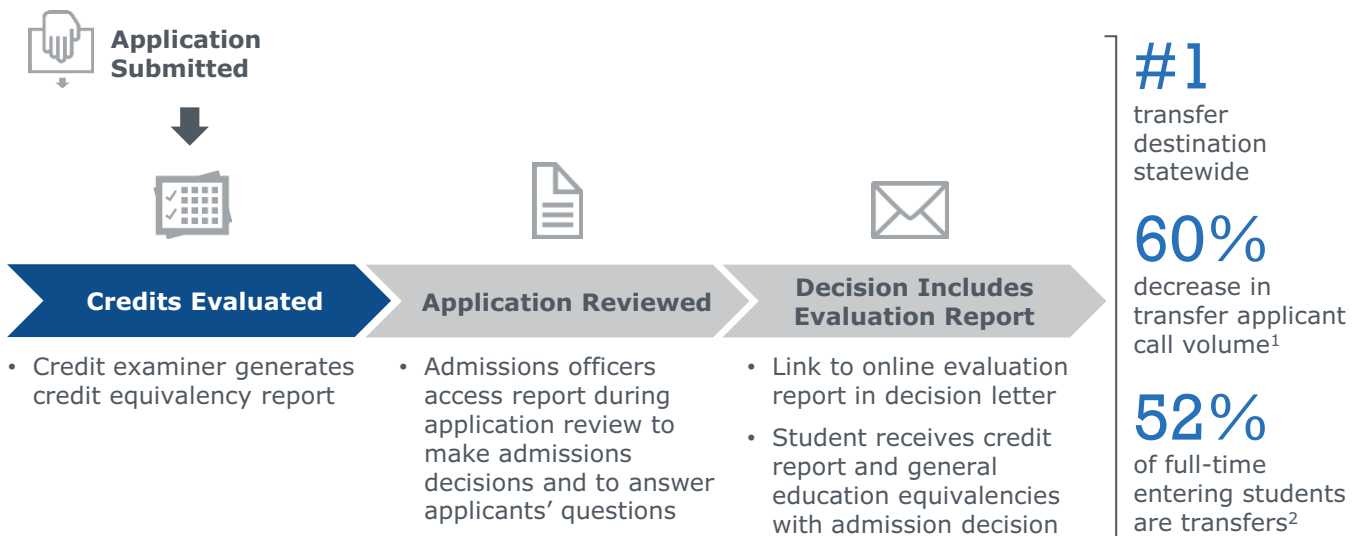
Practice 6: Pre-admission Credit Evaluation

Pairing Admissions Decisions with Immediate Credit Evaluation Reports

Traditional credit evaluation processes require time-consuming back-and-forth between admissions staff and faculty, leaving prospective transfers waiting for credit evaluation reports long after they've been admitted to the institution. To improve transparency on credit equivalencies and time-to-degree, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) inverted admission and credit evaluation processes for transfer students. Admissions staff assess every applicant's transfer credit and generate a credit evaluation report and a checklist indicating remaining general education credits. The credit evaluation reports are sent through a personalized link with each student's admission decision. Students can use these reports to infer their remaining time- and cost-to-degree.



Overview of UNC Charlotte's Pre-admission Credit Evaluation Process



Pre-admission Credit Evaluation Delivers Competitive Advantages

UNC Charlotte's admissions officers use credit evaluation reports to both counsel applicants and to make more informed admissions decisions. UNC Charlotte is the number one transfer destination statewide because it provides clear-cut information early on; this eases prospects' enrollment decisions and demonstrates transfer-friendliness. Additional benefits to UNC Charlotte include:

- Decreased Call Volume:** Calls from prospective transfer students have decreased approximately 60%, freeing staff to give special cases more time and attention.
- Converting Denied Applicants to Enrollments:** Because denied students receive information on remediation steps to enhance preparation for transfer the following year, they often successfully reapply for admission.

1) Data based on estimate from admissions officials responsible for managing transfer inquiries
 2) Includes both fall and spring enrollments

Sources: University of North Carolina Data Dashboard, <https://www.northcarolina.edu/?q=content/unc-data-dashboard>; EMF Interviews and Analysis.

Practice 7: Automated Credit Equivalency Estimator

Low-Cost Automated Tool Provides Quick Credit Evaluation

A major barrier to providing transfer applicants with timely credit evaluation decisions is the lack of admissions' involvement in the process. At many institutions, authority for credit evaluation resides with academic units. DePaul University increased coordination between academic units and admissions staff by developing a low-cost credit equivalency estimator. This tool enables admissions staff to generate pre-enrollment credit transfer estimates while maintaining academic oversight.



Overview of DePaul's Automated Credit Evaluation Process

Upload Articulation Database to Existing SIS

Incoming courses link to a database of previously articulated credits during the credit-posting process



Benefit to Institution



Saves staff time in evaluating and posting credit

Provide Credit Evaluation Pre-enrollment

Students submit credits with application and receive transfer credit report with admissions decisions



Benefit to Students



Enables admitted students to make decisions with clear concepts of time-to-degree

Win-Win: Zero Tech Start-Up Costs and Marginal Staffing Levels

Because DePaul used PeopleSoft to develop its automated credit evaluation database, the institution incurred no start-up tech costs. Although temporary staff first populated the database, more staff were necessary to update and maintain it. Since 2009, this team has increased the database from 10,000 to approximately 170,000 courses.

Benefits to the institution include increased accuracy, consistency, and speed when evaluating and posting transfer credit. And by delivering transfer credit reports to students upon admission, DePaul helps transfers make decisions with clear concepts of time- and cost-to-degree.

Practice 8: Self-Service Degree Forecast

Online Credit Evaluation Tool Addresses Transfers' Three Critical Questions

To further improve credit evaluation transparency, four-year institutions can provide prospective transfer students with estimated credit articulation information before they apply. Franklin University's enrollment management office developed the "My Transfer Credit" tool, a web-based self-service platform that permits prospective transfer students to generate personalized credit evaluation reports and time- and cost-to-degree estimates.



Overview of Franklin University's "My Transfer Credit" Tool

The screenshot shows the 'My Transfer Credit' tool interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons for 'User Login' and 'Help', and a progress indicator with steps '2 Add Courses' and '3 Save Information'. Below this, there are two promotional banners: 'GET MORE WITH THESE MAJORS' showing 'GET UP TO \$4,176 MORE TRANSFER VALUE' and 'FINISH FASTER WITH THESE MAJORS' showing 'FINISH UP TO 4 MONTHS FASTER'. A table lists major options, with 'Accounting Bachelor of Science' selected. A circular progress indicator shows '40 of 88' credits. Below the table, a summary section shows 'Estimated Transfer Credit Hours' with four metrics: 'Total credits transferred to Franklin University: 40', 'Transfer credits applied to this major: 40', 'Maximum transfer credits allowed for this major: 88', and 'Credits required to complete this major: 128'. Below this, there are three progress bars for 'Fundamental General Education Core (22 of 24 credits apply)', 'University Electives (7 of 14 credits apply)', and 'Major Area (3 of 32 credits apply)'. Each bar has a 'VIEW COURSES' button.

- Prospects enter current or previous institutions, courses taken, and major of interest
- Sum transferrable credits and report general education and major-specific progress
- Estimate time-to-degree to indicate required investment
- Estimate cost-to-degree to clarify anticipated costs
- Offer save profile functionality for students to track degree progress
- Recommend course-corrections to save students time and money

Image Credit: Franklin University.

Sources: "My Transfer Credit," Franklin University, <https://www.franklin.edu/transfer-credit-college-course-equivalency-tool/>; EMF Interviews.

Self-Service Degree Forecast

Investments in Easy-to-Use Self-Service Tool Yield Transfer Enrollments

Franklin University made few upfront investments to develop this tool because it used internal staff and an existing student information system: enrollment management staff uploaded historic credit equivalency tables and articulation agreements and a cross-campus committee built the tool in-house over five months. The tool positions Franklin University to stand out to prospective transfer students—its easy-to-use online interface attracted incremental applications and enrollments and boosted yield.



Credit Evaluation Self-Service Tool Development: Resources Required

Cross-Functional Team



- 15 representatives from the offices of the registrar, marketing, IT, and admissions
- IT staff member with expertise in user-experience interface design enhanced self-service functionality

Time



- Five months to complete
- Update, rather than rebuild, existing course-equivalency database

Integration



- Add-on to existing student information system

Self-Service Web Tool Generates Leads and Boosts Yield

5,000

unique visitors
each month

>700

leads generated



2x

increased yield
of tool users

13%

of spring 2015
transfer enrollments
generated by the tool



Navigating the Credit Evaluation Silos

Transfer Service Hamstrung by Siloed Credit Evaluation, Administrative Backlog

Enrollment managers at institutions for which academic colleges own credit evaluation face three additional transfer enrollment challenges, as illustrated below.

Barriers to Transfer Due to Siloed Credit Evaluation Processes



Problems

1 Delayed Credit Evaluation

- Faculty oversight of credit evaluation results in processing delays and duplication of effort, as some credits are evaluated by multiple departments
- Transfer students are unaware which credits will transfer until post-enrollment

2 Few Options for Students Between Course Levels

- Inflexible credit articulation standards fail to accommodate sometimes minor variations between two- and four-year curricula
- Transfers are often over-qualified for the introductory course or under-prepared for the next

3 No Opportunity for Student Feedback, Guidance

- Transfer students are unaware of appeal processes for credit articulation
- Students retake courses unnecessarily, delaying time-to-degree

Enrollment managers can reduce each of these barriers to transfer by nudging faculty adoption of centrally-managed, transfer-friendly admission processes that retain faculty oversight of the credit evaluation process.

Building Transfer-Friendly Credit Evaluation Policies

Nudging Units to Embrace a Transfer-Friendly Approach

EAB identified three approaches from enrollment managers who have collaborated with faculty to ease transfer credit evaluation, better serving prospective transfer students without infringing on the faculty's academic prerogative. These approaches advantage students as well as faculty, who benefit from reduced credit evaluation workloads and more successful students.

Three Approaches to Developing Transfer-Friendly Credit Evaluation Policies



Solutions

1 Send Time-Limited Credit Evaluation Estimates

- Admissions generates proposed credit articulation reports based on historic data and departmental policies, emails them to academic departments with a deadline for modifications
- Faculty that become comfortable with admissions' credit evaluation decisions often cede control



2 Develop Online Remedial Refresher Modules

- Transfer advisors consult with students or administer placement tests to identify knowledge gaps
- Faculty are paid to develop online, self-paced refresher modules for students to complete before enrollment
- Upon completion of refresher modules, students are able to request full credit



3 Promote Credit Articulation Appeal Disclosures

- Credit articulation appeal process is described on the admissions website
- Appeal instructions are included with credit articulation reports to build student awareness



Benefits

- Faculty use admissions' credit evaluation estimates to expedite their credit evaluation process
- Admissions gains timely access to credit transfer equivalencies, can provide transfer admits advance notice of time- and cost-to-degree

- Reduces faculty teaching load as refresher courses remain self-paced, do not require ongoing faculty oversight
- Transfers no longer need to re-take introductory courses, decreasing time- and cost-to-degree

- Transfer admissions staff are trained to handle appeals, reducing faculty appeal workload
- Transfers are empowered to question credit articulation, increasing student satisfaction and ensuring advising touch-points for concerned students

Key Takeaways from This Section

Our Insights on Reducing Barriers to Transfer Enrollment

1 Improve Clarity for Students and Promote Enrollment through Early Credit Evaluation

- Transfer students often lack answers to questions on credit transfer and time- or cost-to-degree not only before they apply but even after they enroll
- Delivering credit evaluation reports with admissions decisions answers students' key questions in time to inflect enrollment
- Evaluating transfer credit prior to making admission decisions benefits the institution by helping staff make more informed decisions on borderline applicants

2 Ease the Credit Review Process for Students and Staff with Automated Credit Evaluation

- Establishing templates for admissions staff to follow when evaluating new credits minimizes the number of credits that must be reviewed by faculty
- Developing automated evaluation tools empowers admissions staff to oversee transfer credit review and provides timely estimates for students
- Providing online self-service degree-tracking supports prospective transfer students' decision-making by answering key questions on time- and cost-to-degree

3 Improve Service to Transfer Admits with Small Modifications to Faculty Procedures

- Communicating deadlines to faculty for approving or amending credit evaluation decisions allows admissions to deliver timely reports to students while maintaining faculty control
- Offering self-paced refresher modules enables students to address minor curriculum variations and promotes timely degree completion
- Delivering information on credit articulation appeal procedures with articulation reports increases student satisfaction

Advisors to Our Work

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