



# 2015 Transfer and Articulation Audit Report

For Presentation to the  
Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee

June 9, 2016

# Transfer and Articulation

**Transfer** – credits taken at one institution will be considered by another institution for meeting degree requirements. Unless a course is designated as non-transferable, e.g., vocational or community service courses, all courses are transferable.

**Articulation** – indicates acceptance of a course for the purpose of meeting specific requirements of a student's chosen program of study.

# The Transfer Audit Process

This audit included the following:

- ✓ Review of lower division enrollment and the status of a Fall 2013 transfer student cohort;
- ✓ Review of random sampling of transfer agreements;
- ✓ Institution-level self-review of policy compliance;
- ✓ In-person meeting at each institution;
- ✓ Transfer student experience e-mail survey with follow-up phone calls; and
- ✓ Research on current national trends regarding transfer.

**Are the current policies and protocols for transfer and articulation working to support student success?**

# Student Transfer Snapshot

## Spring 2015 Current/Graduation Status for Fall 2013 Transfer Cohort

Bachelor's Program Institution	# of Students in Fall 2013 Transfer Cohort	Status After Spring 2015			
		Graduated	Senior	Junior	No Enrollment
UNLV	247	24.3%	53.0%	9.7%	13.0%
UNR	189	25.9%	51.3%	8.5%	14.3%
NSC	28	25.0%	57.1%	3.6%	14.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>25.0%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>

**Of the 464 students that graduated in Spring 2013 with a transferrable associate's degree, two years later 77.6% graduated with a bachelor's degree or were well on their way to a bachelor's degree and in their senior year.**

# Graduation Rates

## Bachelor's Degrees Earned at Four-Year Institutions by Number of Credits Earned at Community College (CC)

CC Credits Previously Earned** NSHE Totals	Number of Students*	Number of Students with Bachelor's Degree as of 6/2014	Percent Earned Bachelor's Degree
< 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%

\* Fall 2008 cohort of degree-seeking students – all undergraduate levels. 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.

**The data does not support limiting transfer from NSHE two-year institutions to the four-year institutions only to those students who complete an associate's degree.**

# Student Survey Results

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

- **78.3%** of the respondents indicated that they found the transfer process to be easy.
- **73.9%** of the students acknowledged having junior status upon transfer, while another 15.2% were not sure.
- **83.3%** said they did not have to retake courses.
- **77.2%** received academic advising related to their transfer from either the community college, the four-year institution, or both.
- **53.3%** were not aware of the transfer agreements, or if they were aware of them, did not use the agreements in the transfer process.

# Audit Findings

## **Timing and Communication of Curricular Changes –**

System-wide, there is not a consistent and concerted effort to communicate and collaborate regarding academic program changes. There are times these changes are approved late in the spring term for fall implementation.

**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.

# Audit Findings

**Year-by-Year Outlines** – Since 2010, Board of Regents policy\* required transfer agreements to include a year-by-year outline of required coursework.

- ❖ The intent is to provide for transfer of associate's degree intact, without loss of credits
- ❖ The outlines were not consistently part of transfer agreements reviewed in the audit
- ❖ **Conflicting 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.**

\*Handbook, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15, Subsection 1g

\*\*Handbook, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15, Subsection 1e



# Audit Findings

**Transfer Agreement Reviews** – The purpose of the review was to determine if a student could, considering the requirements for both the associate's and bachelor's programs, earn a bachelor's degree after earning an associate's degree without being required to take extra credits.

**276 transfer agreements or 15% of major programs reviewed**

- **46.4%** achieved an associate's degree
- **37.7%** did not achieve an associate's degree
- **15.9%** were undetermined because the agreement was not accessible at the time of review.

# Recommendation No. 1

## **Revise Board policy to correct the conflict between Subsections 1g and 1e.**

This would clarify that the year-by-year course outlines are intended to preserve the transferable associate's degree upon transfer to a four-year institution. At least 18 months should be allotted for the institutions to develop the required outlines. After that time, 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.**

This student success focused revision will give all transfer students the option to graduate under the catalog year they began at the two-year institution within the 10 year catalog limitation for the universities and state college (Title 4, Chapter 14, Sections 17 and 37).

# Recommendation No. 3

**Address the timing and communication of curricular changes to include the possibility of a standard curricular timeline and create a standard template for transfer agreements.**

This recommendation will be addressed through the NSHE Articulation Board, which is made up of institutional representatives with expertise in transfer and articulation.



# Questions?

