

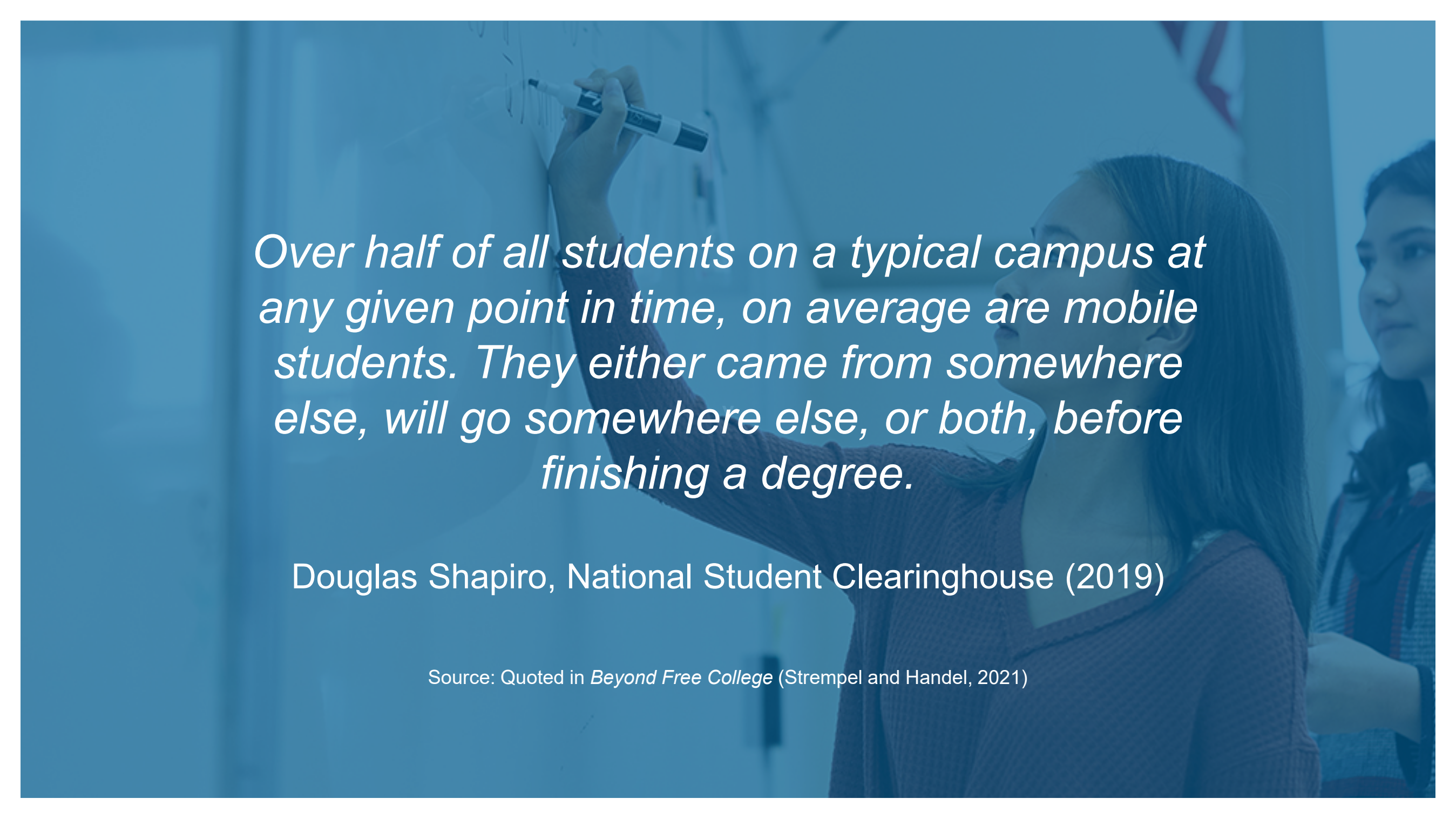
Guidelines for Assessment of Course Equivalency: A California Case Study

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Strategic Higher Education**

SYA Project: Credit Transfer Webinar Series

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A woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark sweater, is writing on a whiteboard with a white marker. She is looking towards the whiteboard. Another person is partially visible on the right side of the frame, looking towards the whiteboard. The background is a classroom setting with a whiteboard and some papers.

Over half of all students on a typical campus at any given point in time, on average are mobile students. They either came from somewhere else, will go somewhere else, or both, before finishing a degree.

Douglas Shapiro, National Student Clearinghouse (2019)

Source: Quoted in *Beyond Free College* (Strempel and Handel, 2021)

Agenda



Why Credit Transfer Policies Are More Important Than Ever



Institutional Advantages and Constraints

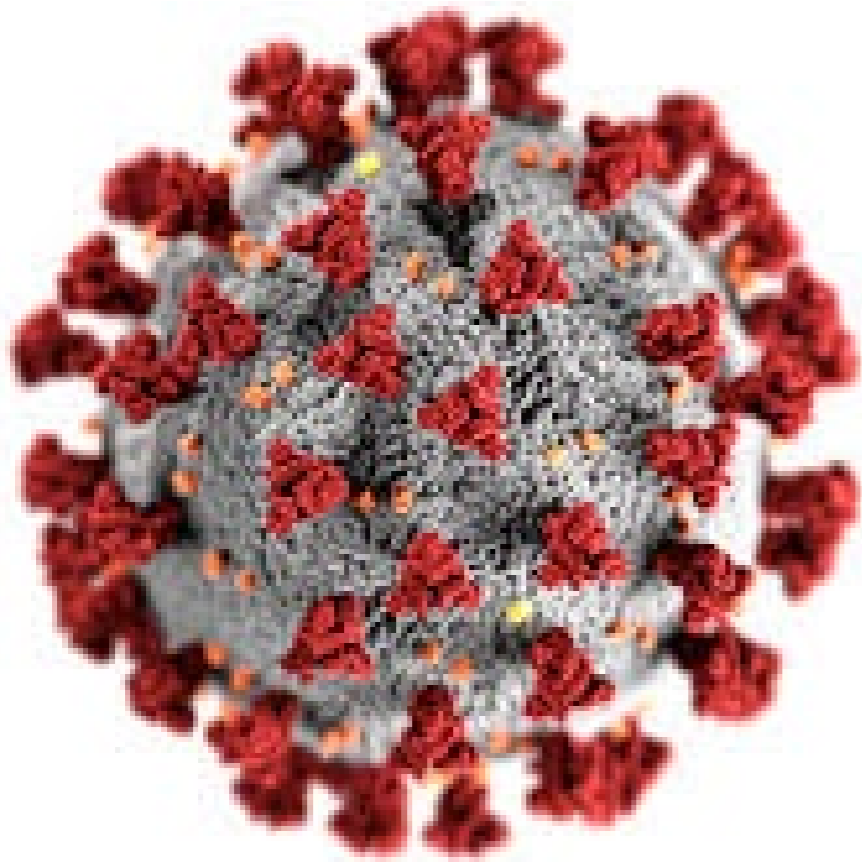


Case Study—A California Credit Transfer Model



Final Thoughts and Additional Resources

Our New Normal: Impact on Higher Education



- Expansion of the internet and on-line platforms like Zoom have allowed us to communicate virtually.
- On-line learning has expanded significantly, providing students with an opportunity to earn college credit without having to go to a classroom.
- New and growing sources of college credit, such as Advanced Placement (AP), IB, and PLA, will advance student progress around the world.

It is predicted that by 2025, 32% of students attending public four-year institutions will transfer with 30 or more credits from another institution.

% of Students Enrolling With >30 Credits From Another Institution				
	Public 4-Year		Private 4-Year	
	Current	2025	Current	2025
<10%	6%	2%	21%	12%
10%-19%	21%	9%	22%	15%
20%-29%	17%	21%	15%	22%
30%-39%	9%	21%	12%	15%
40%-49%	15%	6%	7%	10%
>50%	17%	32%	9%	16%
Unsure	13%	9%	15%	9%

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Final Thoughts and Additional Resources

Credit Transfer: Institutional Advantages

- Most new students want to earn a BA degree, regardless of the certificates and sub-baccalaureate degrees they might earn.
- Students will enroll at those colleges and universities that:
 - pose the fewest barriers for credit transfer; or
 - have the most *transparent* credit transfer policies.



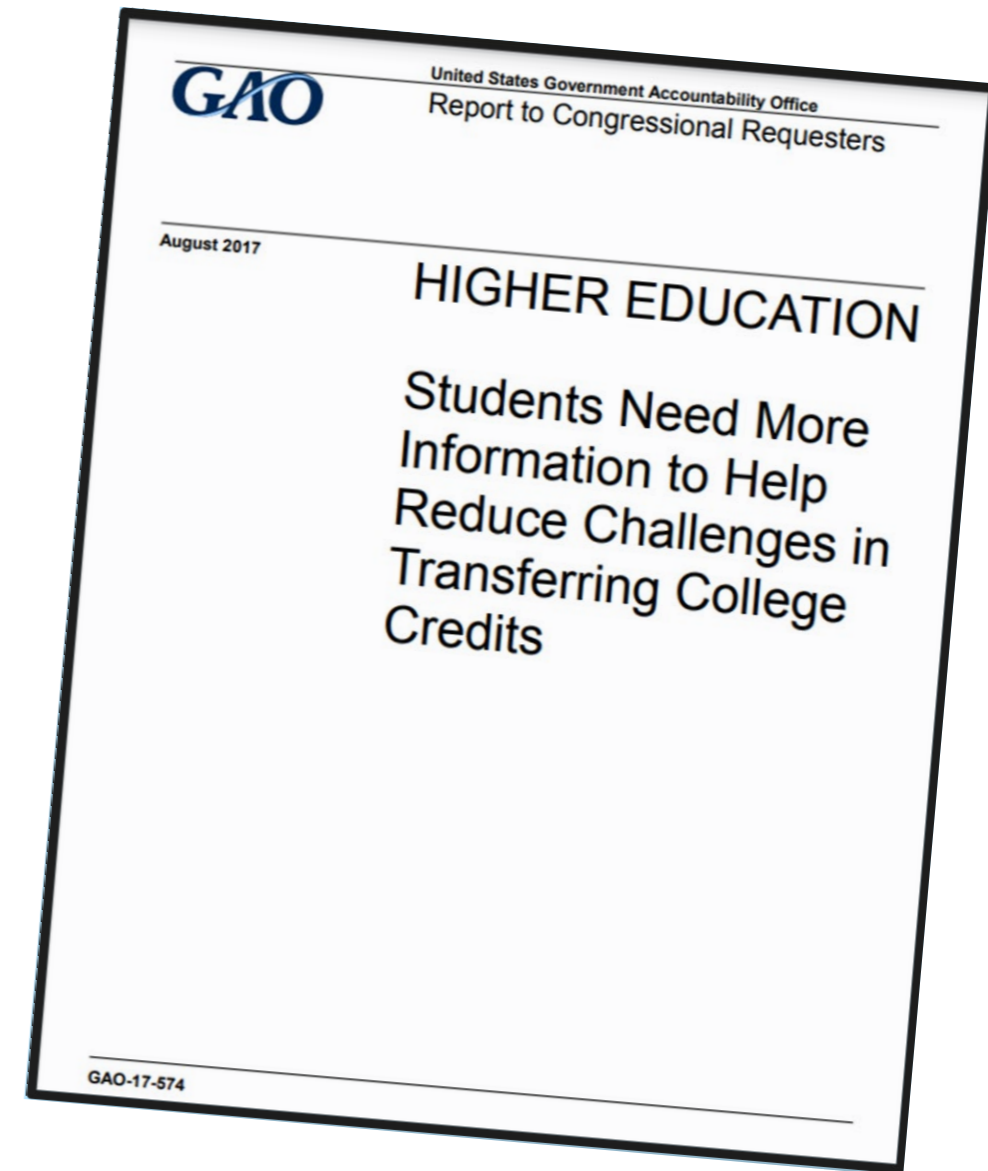
Credit Transfer: Institutional Parameters and Constraints

- Four-year colleges and universities must enroll *qualified* students. (We do not wish to accept courses that do not prepare students well for the programs they are entering.)
- Community colleges want to offer courses that are relevant and appropriate for students who wish to transfer, but often do not know the criteria by which other institutions will accept their courses.
- Evaluating individual courses is time-consuming, often tedious, and seemingly never ending.



The Cost: Credit Transfer Outcomes

- US General Service Administration (GAO) analysis of student course taking over six years.
- Findings:
 - “Students lost an estimated 43 percent of college credit when they transferred, or an estimated 13 credits, on average”
 - Credit Loss by Pathway: Vertical transfers lost about 26 percent of their credit.



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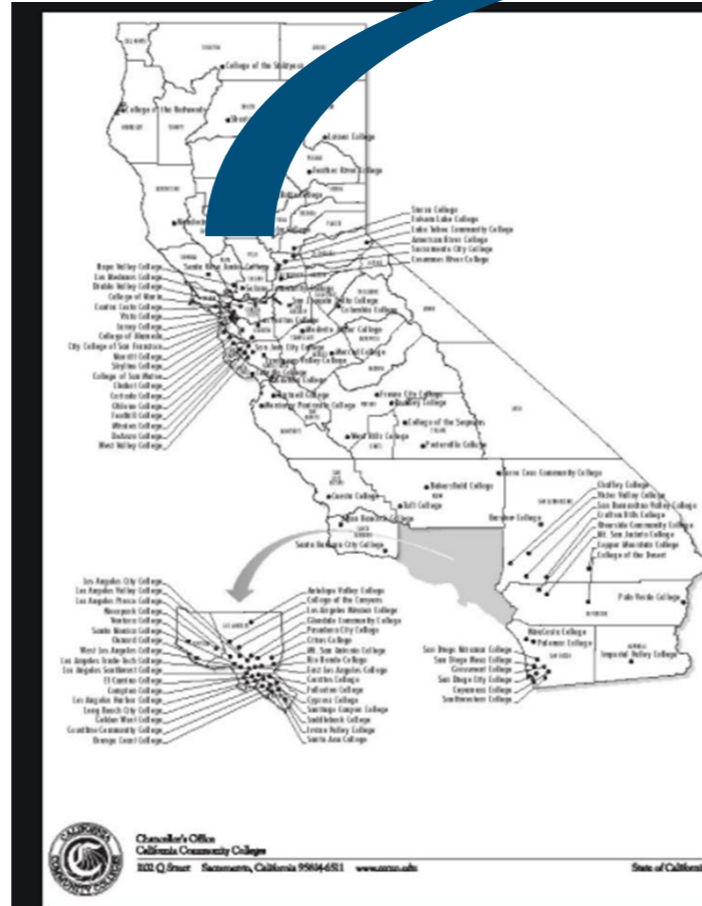
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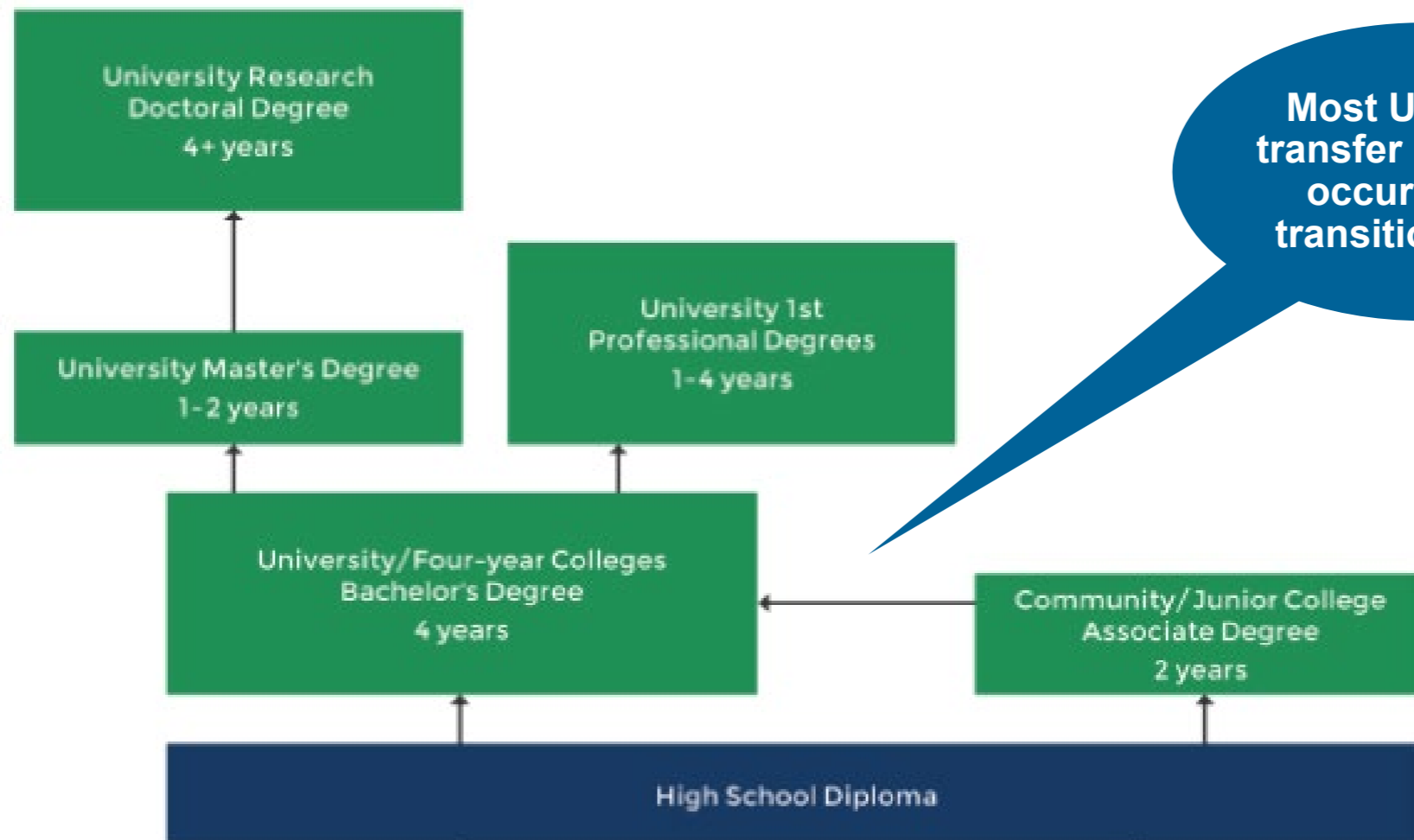
Case Study: Transfer from a California Community College to the University of California

- California Master Plan (1960)
- 110 community colleges (2 million students); 9 UC Campuses
- “2 to 1” Ratio Requirement means a lot of students are transferring every year
- Transfer Credit Policies are Key to Master Plan Success



California Transfer Process

Structure of U.S. Education System



Most US credit transfer problems occur at this transition point.

Model Components

1. *Philosophy/Principles*
2. *Practice and Policy*
3. *Disciplinary Details*
4. *Textbook/Resource Specifications*
5. *Out-of-Scope Requests: Some Ideas*



1. Philosophy/Principles

Two basic principles are involved in determining whether a community college course is transferable to the University of California:

- *The course should be comparable to one offered at the lower-division level at a UC campus.*
- *If the course is not equivalent to a particular UC course, it must be appropriate for a university degree in terms of purpose, scope and depth.*

2. Practice & Policy

University of California Statement of Credit Practices

- High-level guidance, but with important specifics.
- Indicates what credit the University will *not* accept.
- Available on-line:
https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/files/Transfer_Credit_Practice.pdf

Statement of Transfer Credit Practices

The University of California (UC) awards unit credit for college courses completed at [United States regionally accredited colleges and universities](#); or at a university recognized by the Ministry of Education (or higher-education authority/appropriate government agency) in another country that offers university-level academic degree program courses comparable to a U.S. associate's or bachelor's degree.

Courses determined to be essentially the same as courses offered for an undergraduate degree at any UC campus will be awarded credit, if the course:

- is listed in the original institution's catalog/website of official courses offered for the year in which the course was completed, and
- includes the same or similar content, and
- requires the same or similar prerequisite course work, and
- is offered at the same level of instruction

Courses that further the student's knowledge and understanding in fundamental liberal arts disciplines such as mathematics, natural science, literature, social sciences, fine arts and philosophy, are acceptable for transfer if comparable in scope and depth to those offered at UC.

Courses accepted for transfer must be reported on an official transcript (academic record) which must be provided to the UC campus in a sealed envelope (or electronically submitted from a UC campus-acceptable vendor) from the original college/university of enrollment, bearing the institution's official seal and registrar's signature.

Pass Along Credit

UC does not award credit posted to a third-party institution's transcript. Credit is only considered from the original institution's official academic record.

UC does not award credit for: work or volunteer experience, vocational or technical training, and personal enrichment courses; remedial academic or pre-baccalaureate courses, especially in English and mathematics; or College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) or DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST) exams.

Courses completed at unaccredited/non-regionally accredited institutions *may* be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

U.S. Military Service Courses

UC may award lower-division (freshman/sophomore level) units for military courses completed if the courses are consistent with University policy on awarding transfer credit when there is an equivalent course taught at a UC campus. UC will consult the ACE recommendations for information regarding course content and as a guide to the awarding of credit. Credit for military courses is determined *after* matriculation at UC.

2. Practice & Policy

University of California Statement of Credit Practices

- Additional Topics:

Limitations

Duplicative Credit

Examination Scores

UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA Undergraduate
Admissions

Limitations on Transfer Credits

Students will be awarded up to 70 semester/105 quarter units of credit for lower-division coursework completed at any institution or any combination of institutions. Subject credit only will be awarded for appropriate coursework taken in excess of this unit limitation and may be used to meet requirements.

- Units earned through: AP, IB, and/or A-Level examinations are not included in the limitation and do not put applicants at risk of being denied admission.
- Units earned at any UC campus (Extension, summer, cross/concurrent and regular academic year enrollment) are not included in the limitation but *are* added to the maximum transfer credit allowed and may put applicants at risk of being denied admission due to excessive units.
- Note: if all courses are completed at one or more 2-year (community) colleges, a student would never be in danger of having too many (excessive) units.

In addition, UC places limitations on the number of units or courses awarded in the following areas:

- English as a Second Language courses: a maximum of 8 semester (12 quarter) units
- Physical Education courses: a maximum of 4 semester (6 quarter) units of PE Activity; a maximum of 8 semester (12 quarter) units of PE Theory

Duplicative Credit Prohibited: UC will not award credit for college courses if the content duplicates material of previously completed courses or examinations for which credit has already been awarded, with the exception of the repeat of deficient (C-/D/F) course grades.

Examination Scores/Grades

The University of California awards credit for examinations as follows:

- College Board Advanced Placement (AP) – [more information](#)
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Higher Level – [more information](#)
- GCE, Singapore-Cambridge and Hong Kong Advanced Level (A-Levels) – [more information](#)

3. Disciplinary Details

Special regulations for courses in specific subject areas

- UC provides guidance for credit transfer in 36 disciplinary areas.
- From “Administration of Justice to Theatre Arts.”
- Let’s review two subject areas...Chemistry and Physical Education

Special regulations for courses in specific subject areas

The following guidelines pertain to lower-division courses being evaluated for transfer credit to the University of California. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the general criteria contained within UC’s *Statement of Transfer Credit Practices*:

http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/files/Transfer_Credit_Practice.pdf

A course that is comparable to a lower-division course offered at one or more UC campuses is transferable. Alternately, a course may be transferable if it is appropriate for a university degree in terms of depth, scope, and rigor.

See pages on field studies, independent studies/variable topics courses and online courses for regulations regarding these courses.

Subject areas (alphabetical)

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A

Administration of Criminal Justice/Criminology/Law and Society

3. Disciplinary Details

Special regulations for courses in specific subject areas

- Each disciplinary subject area is analyzed.
- Every Discipline Has “The Basics:”
 - What is an acceptable transferable course?
 - What kinds of prerequisite courses are required to create a transferable course?
 - What courses are *not* transferable?

Chemistry

Transferable courses:


- Cover basic principles of chemistry.
- One introductory or survey course prior to the general course series for the major or non- major is allowed.

Prerequisites:

- Lower-division preparation courses for chemistry majors require intermediate algebra or its equivalent (as defined under the Mathematics guidelines).
- Must include a lab manual. [Follow this link for additional textbook information.](#)

Not transferable:

- Courses primarily professional or technical in nature; courses for certification, such as Chemical Safety or Chemical Hygiene Officers.
- No credit for introductory courses taken after more advanced-level courses in this area.



3. Disciplinary Details

Special regulations for courses in specific subject areas

- The Concept of Limited Credit
- UC limits the amount of credit a student may transfer to its campuses, *regardless of the quality of that course or its applicability/usefulness to other programs or degrees.*

Physical Education

Transferable courses:

- May fall into two categories: 1) Activities; 2) Theory / Academic / Scholarly.
- Credit for PE activity courses is limited to 4 semesters/6 quarter units.
- Credit for Theory courses is limited to 8 semester units/12 quarter units.
- Textbooks are not required for PE courses.

Not transferable:

- Courses that are primarily vocational such as: Aerobic Instructor Training; Personal Trainer Certification; or Fire Academy Protection Preparation; etc.

4. Textbook/Resource Requirements

UC requires that supplementary resources (such as textbooks) to meet specific parameters.

- UC faculty are *not* interested in specifying specific textbooks.
- Depending on the discipline, however, the textbooks must meet some basic thresholds, such as:
 - Reading Level
 - Laboratory Course Materials
 - Reading Lists

Textbook requirements

Textbooks must be dated within seven years of the course submission date or clearly identified as a “Classic text” in the course outline of record (COR). Include the identifier “Classic text” adjacent to the textbook title, or in the field “Other Appropriate Texts”.

- More recent texts may be required in fast-changing disciplines, e.g., Computer Science, courses in any discipline with a contemporary focus, etc. The main textbook may be up to seven years old but more current reading materials should also be included.
- All textbooks should be beyond the 12th-grade reading level and at the appropriate college level.
- Textbooks and supplemental material/s should relate directly to course content.
- Open Educational Resources (OER), or online/digital texts, are acceptable if they are stable and publicly available as published textbooks, not a list of web links.
- Lab science courses must include a clearly identified lab manual in the COR. Lab manuals from either a publisher or compiled by CCC faculty (e.g., “CHEM 001 Lab Manual, CCC Chemistry department, 2019”) are acceptable.
- English Composition courses must include a writing handbook.
- Literature courses must include a representative reading list (i.e., a list of works that the students will be reading).
- History courses should include primary sources or alternative texts in addition to a textbook.
- College Success courses must include a community college catalog. A hyperlink to the online community college catalog is acceptable.
- See the guidelines for information and requirements for specific subject areas.

5. Out-of-Scope Requests & Special Topics

- Some courses do not fit into neat categories based on discipline, rigor, prerequisites, required textbooks, or the like.
- Yet students need some process by which they can provide additional information about the courses they have completed (e.g., such as a syllabus or a reading list).
- Curriculum developers at other colleges/universities also need additional information about the type of courses your institution will accept or the degree of rigor they must demonstrate.
- The University of California has an appeal process that allows students (or curriculum directors at other institutions) to obtain additional information.

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Final Thoughts: American Council on Education

- *Statement of Principles on Acceptance of Credit (April 2020)*
- *“**One size does not fit all**....We do not believe that there is one approach or one system that should apply to how institutions evaluate and accepts credits...”*
- *“Institutional policies should, aim for complete **transparency**. The circumstances under which credits and or grades are accepted and not accepted should be clear and publicly stated in accessible, specific, and easy-to-understand terms.”*
- *“Students and their families **need clear, timely information** on which to make decisions.”*



Additional Resources

The California Intersegmental Articulation Council (CIAC)

COVID-19 / Coronavirus Information

Stay Informed →

Resources for Virtual Learning, Teaching, and Working →

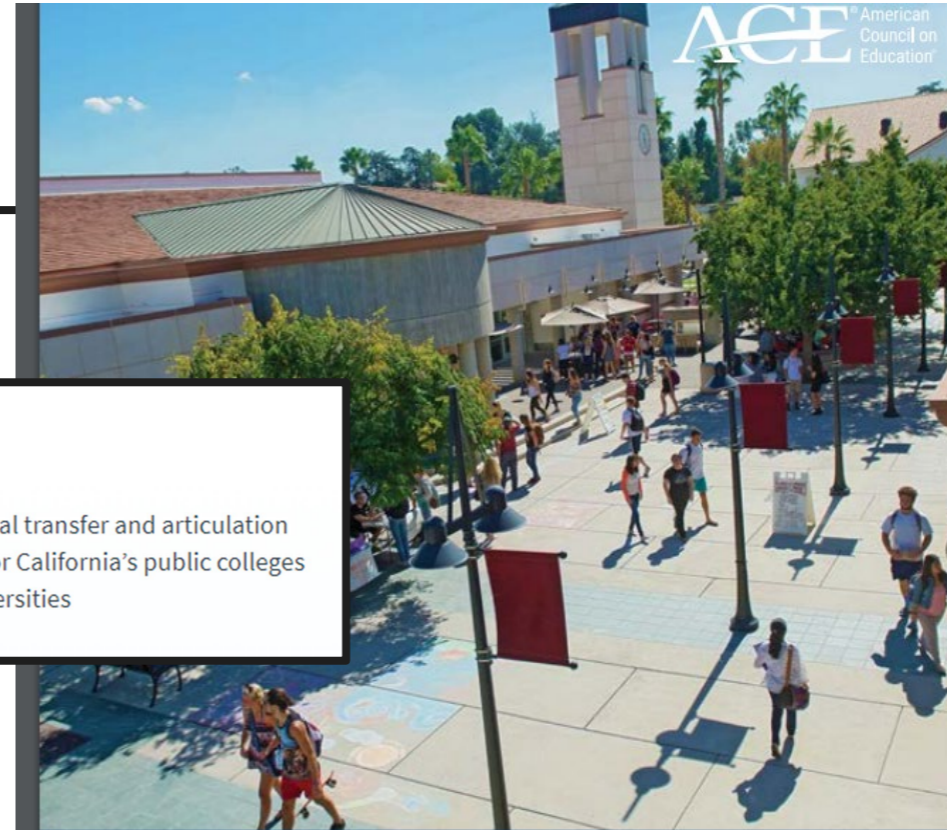
AY 20-21 Planning →

Home ▾

CIAC Resources ▾

Events ▾

External Resources ▾



The official transfer and articulation system for California's public colleges and universities

REIMAGINING TRANSFER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The National Task Force on the Transfer and Award of Credit

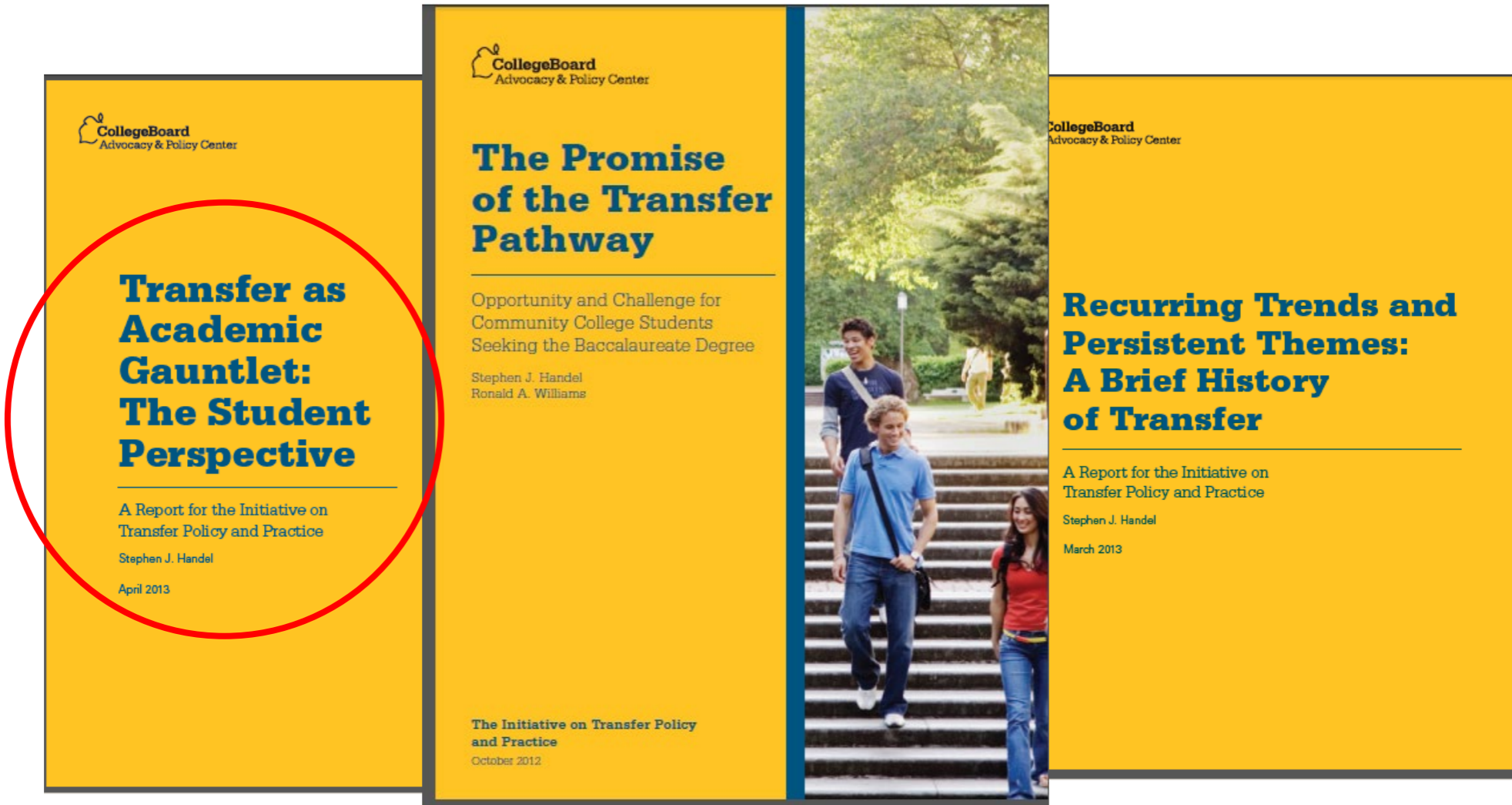
BEYOND FREE COLLEGE

MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION WORK FOR 21ST-CENTURY STUDENTS

EILEEN L. STREMPER AND STEPHEN J. HANDEL

Series Coeditors: Debbie L. Sydow and Kate Thiroff

The Initiative on Transfer Policy and Practice



Available from: <https://professionals.collegeboard.org/highered/community-colleges/initiative-transfer-policy-and-practice>

Thank You!

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Higher Education**

The College Board

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