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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair  
2015 - 2016 Regular

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**Bill No:** ACR 158  
**Author:** Holden  
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**Urgency:**  
**Consultant:** Olgalilia Ramirez  
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**Fiscal:** Yes

**Subject:** Postsecondary education: transfers

## SUMMARY

This measure encourages the Academic Senates of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC) to expedite their current efforts to streamline the transfer process and ensure that all general education credits can transfer between the UC, CSU, and the CCC systems.

## BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the governing bodies of the three public postsecondary segments, with appropriate consultation with the academic senates of the respective segments, to develop, maintain, and disseminate a common core curriculum in general education courses for the purposes of transfer. This provision requires that a person who has successfully completed the transfer core curriculum is to be deemed to have completed all lower division general education requirements for the University of California and the California State University. (Education Code § 66720)
- 2) Requires each department, school and major of the UC and CSU to establish discipline-specific articulation and transfer program agreements for majors with lower division prerequisites and establishes a number of related reporting and other requirements. (EC § 66740, § 66741, § 66742)
- 3) Requires a CCC district to develop and grant a transfer associate degree that deems the student eligible for transfer into the CSU, when the student meets specified course requirements. (EC § 66746)
- 4) Requires the CSU to guarantee admission with junior status to any CCC student who meets specified requirements, but provides that the student is not guaranteed admission for specific majors or campuses. However, the CSU is required to grant a student priority admission to his or her local CSU campus and to a program or major that is similar to his or her community college major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Students that utilize the associate transfer degree process are required to receive priority over all other community college transfer students, except for community college students who have entered into a transfer

agreement between a community college and the California State University prior to the fall term of the 2012-13 academic year. (EC § 66747)

## ANALYSIS

This measure encourages the Academic Senates of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC) to expedite their current efforts to streamline the transfer process and ensure that all general education credits can transfer between the UC, CSU, and the CCC systems. Specifically this measure:

- 1) States that:
  - a) All students deserve the right to choose an educational institution that best fits their needs;
  - b) Students should be able to transfer as their circumstances change throughout their educational experience;
  - c) Students of low-income and minority backgrounds are the most adversely affected by the lack of articulation agreements across California public postsecondary educational institutions;
  - d) Students should be given clear and concise information on how to transfer and how their credits will transfer;
  - e) Students should not have to retake classes as a result of transferring;
  - f) The UC and CSU should have articulation agreements with each other so students transferring from campus to campus or across the systems should not incur additional expenses or time to retake classes previously taken at another UC or CSU;
  - g) Special attention should be given to ensure Science, Technology, Engineering, and mathematics (STEM) classes transfer across California's public postsecondary education institutions;
  - h) The UC and CSU should have common course numbering in order to improve articulation across campuses;
  - i) All general education credits should transfer between UC, CSU, and the CCC systems;
  - j) Transferring within the UC and CSU educational systems should be seamless for students and not require students to retake courses; and,
  - k) The Legislature recognizes the necessity for a more cohesive, robust, and fair articulation process across the UC, CSU, and the CCC educational systems so students are not unduly burdened while trying to transfer and are able to graduate in a timely manner.

- 2) Resolves that the Legislature encourages the Academic Senates of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community College (CCC) to expedite their current efforts to streamline the transfer process and ensure that all general education credits can transfer between the UC, CSU, and the CCC systems.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Rationale for the bill.*** This bill stems from a constituent concern regarding transferability of credits from one CSU campus to another CSU campus. According to the author, "This resolution is seeking to streamline the student credit transfer processes from across University of California campuses and California State Universities." The author asserts that although improvements have been made with regard to transferring from CCC to UC and from CCC to CSU, the same level of effort has not been applied to transferring from one UC campus to another UC campus, from one CSU campus to another CSU campus, or from a CSU campus to a UC campus.
- 2) ***CSU and UC sister campus transfer process.*** CSU and UC have policies that facilitate the transfer of students from one campus to another within their respective segments. According to CSU, due to budget restrictions, campuses are only enrolling first time freshman and upper division transfers. CSU policy requires a student to transfer as an upper division student and to have completed basic skill requirements known as the "Golden Four" which include Oral Communication, Written Communication, Critical Thinking and Mathematics/Quantitative Reasoning. A student completing the "Golden Four," requirement is considered to have met that requirement at the campus to which they transfer. It appears that a student who has not completed the "Golden Four," requirement and transfers to another CSU is subject to the regulations of the receiving campus. As such course credit may not automatically transfer in the same manner as if they had completed the "Golden Four."

Under the current UC policy, any student may be transferred from one college or school of the UC to another upon approval of the dean or other responsible entity of the college or school to which admission is sought. According to UC, transferring from one UC to another is rare but should it occur at all, UC course credit on a main campus is transferable to a sister campus.

- 3) ***CCC transfer pathways.*** For the past several years, transfer reform efforts have focused on establishing a clear, transparent and more navigable transfer process for students transferring from a CCC. Most notably, SB 1440 (Padilla, Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010) established the Student Transfer Achievement Act, which took effect January 1, 2011. The Act required community colleges to create two-year 60 unit associate degrees for transfer (AA-T or AS-T) that are fully transferable to CSU. Students who earn such a degree are automatically eligible to transfer to the CSU system as an upper-division student in a bachelor's degree program. The Academic Senates of the Community Colleges and CSU continue to work collaboratively to create and approve new transfer degrees.

According to the Community College Chancellor's Office Web site 1,000, associate degrees for transfer are being offered system wide.

In addition, UC's transfer pathways plan for the California Community College (CCC) students streamlines the admissions process and help students better prepare for transfer to the University of California (UC) system. The pathways outline a single set of courses that will prepare transfer students for a particular major at any of the university's undergraduate campuses. This commitment to ease transfer from CCC was included in the 2015 budget framework agreed upon by the Governor and the President of the University in an effort to create capacity and serve more resident students.

- 4) ***Common course numbering across segments.*** This measure seeks to encourage Academic Senates to adopt common course numbering in order to improve articulation across campuses. The project that is currently underway, the Course Identification Numbering System, is administered by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges as a faculty-driven numbering system for colleges and universities to facilitate the identification of comparable courses and increase articulation across all segments of higher education in the state. The system is a collaborative effort of the Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges, the Academic Senate of the California State University, the Academic Senate of the University of California, and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.
- 5) ***Is this measure necessary?*** It appears that there are a number of standardize policies already in place to facilitate transfer including to a sister campus within a segment. As such, the Committee may want to consider whether legislation is necessary to request the Academic Senates to expedite current efforts. According to the author's office, although policies are currently in place, students still face hurdles particularly when transferring from on CSU campus to another CSU without completing certain general education requirements. If the intent of the measure is to streamline the process for CSU students that have not completed general education requirements, should the Academic Senates be encouraged to expedite this process when the legislative priority has been focused on improving and creating transfer pathways for CCC students?

## **SUPPORT**

Association of California School Administrators

## **OPPOSITION**

None received.

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