

## Measuring Your College's Effectiveness Serving Transfer Students

### Part 3: Recommended Analyses using College's Student Unit Record and Transcript Data

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The following are further analyses your college should consider running to measure your effectiveness in serving transfer students. These analyses build on in companion transfer analyses using National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data.

**Transfer outcomes by broad program area, or “meta-major.”** For each broad program area or “meta-major,” calculate the following:

1. For an entering FTEIC student cohort, how many new students are enrolled in each meta-major area? We recommend looking at meta-major enrollment during students' second term (e.g., for an entering fall cohort, which meta-major are students enrolled in during their spring term)
2. For students in each meta-major area, list the top 10 courses attempted by entering students in their first two terms. Then, for students in each meta-major area, list the top 10 courses by DFW rate in students' first two terms.
  - a. If your state has a statewide transfer library or course equivalency system, we encourage you to examine the percentage of courses taken among students in the different meta-major areas that are “transferable” courses, in that they are a part the state transfer library or equivalency system.
3. For students in each meta-major area, replicate the *Tracking Transfer* measures using NSC data (Transfer-out Rates, Transfer-with-Award Rates, Transfer-out Bachelor's Completion Rates). Compare the performance of students in each meta-major to the college-wide average.
  - a. In addition to replicating the three *Tracking Transfer* measures, we recommend looking at the average number of credits students attempted and earned prior to transferring-out of your college, by meta-major area.
  - b. We also recommend replicating the transfer partnership analyses in Part 2 of this report (Table 5) for the top 3-5 meta-majors with the largest number of transfer students at the college.
  - c. To further understand inequitable outcomes surfaced through the transfer analyses in Part 2, disaggregate transfer outcomes by student race, income / Pell status, age, and gender for each meta-major area. A good way to get started on this is to begin with some of the largest enrollment meta-majors.

**Course-taking behavior of transfers who do and do not complete bachelor's degrees.** After matching your unit record transcript data with NSC data for all students who transferred to a four-year institution, derive the following outcomes separately for transfer students who did and did not complete a bachelor's degree within six years of starting at your college:

4. Top courses passed and failed (DFW) among transfer completers and non-completers (overall results for the college, and if feasible breakdown results by meta-major area and by student race, income / Pell status, age, and gender).
  - a. If your state has a statewide transfer library or course equivalency system, we encourage you to examine what percentage of courses taken by completers and non-completers were “transferrable” courses (or, courses in the transfer library).
5. Average number of credits earned and attempted prior to transfer among transfer students who did and did not complete a bachelor’s degree (disaggregate by student meta-major, race, income / Pell status, age, and gender).
6. The percent of completers vs. non-completers who earned a pre-transfer award from the college (disaggregate by student meta-major, race, income / Pell status, age, and gender).

**Transcript analysis requiring data sharing with four-year partners or state databases.** The following analyses can help frame conversations around credit transfer loss and efficiency, though we recognize that these data are difficult to access and it may not be immediately feasible to run the following analyses. An alternative to data sharing would be to convene a group of researchers across institutions to work toward a set of common transfer-related research questions. Like the previous analyses, disaggregation by student race, income / Pell status, age, and gender will help to better understand inequitable transfer outcomes.

7. Total number of credits attempted and earned among bachelor’s completers who started FTEIC at your community college. Disaggregated by broad bachelor’s degree field (e.g., Tables 9-11 in Part 2), and if possible, by meta-major area during the students’ community college enrollment.
8. Average number of credits not accepted by each of the college’s top transfer destinations (credit loss). This is likely something the four-year partner will have to identify for the community college’s students, and they may only share these data with the understanding of the results being reported internally for improvement purposes only.
9. For the college’s top 3-5 partners, list the top courses not accepted for transfer and top courses not applied to bachelor’s degree program. Further disaggregation by students’ community college meta-major area would be very informative. These types of studies, while very useful for increasing efficiency in credit transfer, are quite difficult and rare. One such study was commissioned by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in 2001<sup>1</sup> and involved six universities conducting transcript audits of transfer students. Running degree audits to surface the common courses being accepted for transfer but not applied toward students degree may be more feasible with contemporary degree audit report systems.

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<sup>1</sup> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2001). *Transfer issues advisory committee report: Identifying and closing the gaps*. Austin, TX: Author.