

Assembly Committee on Higher Education

Assembly Member Das Williams, Chair

**An Oversight Hearing on
Streamlining Transfer in Public Higher Education:
A Progress Report on the Implementation of SB 1440 and AB 2302**

Tuesday, November 12, 2013
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

College Center, Room 224
Fullerton Community College
321 E Chapman Ave, Fullerton, CA 92832

In 2010, two major pieces of legislation were enacted into law, SB 1440 (Padilla - Chapter 428) and AB 2302 (Fong – Chapter 427), that sought to streamline the transfer process between California's three public segments of higher education. SB 1440 called for the creation of associate degrees for transfer that would guarantee community college students the ability to transfer with upper-division status to the California State University (CSU) system. AB 2302 requested that the University of California (UC) evaluate participation in this transfer pathway. In 2012, two statutorily mandated reports were released, discussing the status of implementation of SB 1440 and AB 2302. While the progress report on SB 1440 implementation recognized notable progress on multiple fronts, a number of needed improvements were highlighted. Earlier this year, SB 440 (Padilla – Chapter 720, Statutes of 2013) was signed into law to further clarify and expand upon the goals of SB 1440.

Legislative Summaries

- **SB 1440** established the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act (STAR Act) to require a California Community College (CCC) district to develop and grant two-year (60 semester unit) associate degrees for transfer that deems students eligible for transfer into a CSU baccalaureate program. The associate degrees for transfer are required to include 18 units in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by CCC, and an approved set of general education requirements.

CSU is required to guarantee admission with junior status to CCC students who have obtained an associate degree for transfer. Students are not guaranteed admission for specific majors or campuses, but CSU is required to provide priority admission to a student's local CSU campus and to a program or major that is similar to his or her associate degree for transfer major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Unless enrolled in a high unit major, students are required to complete only two additional years (60 semester units) of coursework at the CSU campus to earn a bachelor's degree.

Students that utilize the associate degree for transfer process receive priority over all other CCC transfer students, except for CCC students who have entered into a transfer agreement between a CCC and the CSU prior to the fall term of the 2012-13 academic year.

- **AB 2302** requested UC to continue its examination into the articulation of lower division major prerequisites in high-demand transfer majors with a goal of working in collaboration with CCC to design transfer degrees that provide students adequate preparation for entry into a major. UC was requested to consider offering guaranteed eligibility for admission into a UC campus,

similar to the CSU transfer guarantee provided under SB 1440. UC was also requested to designate a series of CCC courses that provide sufficient lower division preparation for a designated UC major. UC was requested to report to the Legislature by December 31, 2011.

Under the provisions of AB 2302, CCC and CSU were required to work together to establish effective methods to inform students, college advisers, and the general public about the associate degree for transfer. AB 2302 also required the Office of the Chancellor of the CCC to establish a process to facilitate the identification of courses that satisfy lower division preparation requirements throughout the CCC system.

Development of Transfer Model Curricula

While the STAR Act required individual CCC to develop degrees for transfer, CCC and CSU academic senates opted instead for a statewide approach to degree development in order to prevent significant variation in student lower-division coursework.

Under this statewide development structure, faculty work together to develop statewide Transfer Model Curricula (TMC). The TMC identify a pattern of lower-division courses in a major or area of emphasis that are deemed to adequately prepare CCC transfer students for the upper-division coursework within that major or area of emphasis. As of October 2013, TMC for 25 majors have been developed; there are currently no TMC in an "area of emphasis".

- **SB 440** amended the STAR Act to require that associate degrees for transfer meet the requirements of an approved transfer model curricula (TMC). CCC are required to create TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer in every major and area of emphasis offered by the college, for which an approved TMC has been finalized, within 18 months of the approval of the TMC. The bill established a requirement for development of at least four TMC in "areas of emphasis".

CSU is required, in guaranteeing admission with junior status to any CCC student who meets the associate degree for transfer requirements, to provide admission to a program or major concentration that is, either:

- 1) Deemed similar to his/her CCC TMC-aligned associate degree for transfer, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted; or
- 2) That can be completed within 60 semester units of study beyond the CCC TMC-aligned associate degree for transfer, with completion ability determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted.

CSU is further required to *make every effort* to accept TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer in each of the CSU concentrations. A "concentration" is defined as an area of specialization within a major degree program.

SB 440 requires CCC and CSU to work with stakeholders to develop a communication and marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the associate degree for transfer pathway.

Report Summaries

- On January 24, 2012, the UC Office of the President (UCOP) reported to the Legislature on "Implementing AB 2302 (Fong): Associate Degree Pathway to the University of California".

The report can be found at:

http://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/legreports/1112/implementing-ab2302.pdf

The report notes that "given the specialized nature of UC's degrees, the rigor of the upper-division coursework, and the way in which degree requirements are tied closely to individual campus research priorities, the University's participation in the associate degree pathway will differ in some significant ways from the way in which the California State University will participate." Where AB 2302 requests UC guarantee eligibility for admission to students with approved associate degrees, UC instead indicates it will guarantee a *comprehensive review* for admission to transfer students who have completed associate degrees for transfer in similar majors; UC will not guarantee selection for admission. Furthermore, UC will not be able to guarantee that students will graduate within 60 units after transfer in all majors on all campuses.

The report highlights progress on additional UC efforts to improve transfer:

UC Transfer Curricula: At the time of reporting, UC had identified a common core of major preparation that students should complete in eight disciplines in order to be both well-positioned to gain admission and well-prepared to complete a degree in a timely fashion. In general, completion of the UC Transfer Curriculum in a particular major covers 80% of what a student would need to complete at any given UC campus.

Improved Online Transfer Student Counseling Tools: UC developed a set of new websites that provides students with an early roadmap to prepare for admission and timely degree completion at all campuses within the top twenty transfer majors. Detailed advice is tailored to students who have identified a particular UC campus.

Continued Improvement of Existing Transfer Efforts: UC indicated it has strengthened its Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) Program, statewide articulation, and support for ASSIST. According to UC, the TAG application was moved online to provide instant feedback on basic eligibility; UC indicates it has the strong potential for an online counseling tool. All three segments of public higher education have completed a Request for Proposal and contracted with the winning vendor to develop and house an improved and expanded ASSIST database (www.assist.org). UC achieved articulation agreements between all nine campuses and all 112 California community colleges, maintenance of which is a top priority for UC.

- The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) released a report to the Legislature in May of 2012, entitled, "Reforming the State's Transfer Process: A Progress Report on Senate Bill SB 1440."

The report can be found at:

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2012/edu/progress-sb-1440/progress-sb-1440-051112.aspx>

The LAO highlighted the following:

Notable Progress Has Been Made - LAO review finds that CCC and CSU have made some notable progress on multiple fronts:

- Creation of Transfer Model Curricula (TMC). Though the legislation does not require it, intersegmental faculty have developed TMC for a number of the most commonly transferred majors. The TMC identify a set of lower-division courses in a major that will prepare CCC transfer students for the more-advanced coursework they take as juniors and seniors at CSU. Once a TMC is approved by faculty, community colleges use it to design an associate degree for transfer in that particular major. (These degrees are often referred to as "TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer.")
- Development of Associate Degrees for Transfer. A number of community colleges are rapidly rolling out TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer and making them available to students.
- Acceptance of TMC as Similar to Degrees at CSU. The CSU Chancellor's Office has set a goal for each CSU campus to offer at least one similar degree for each TMC-aligned associate degree for transfer (where the CSU campuses offer such programs).

Results are Falling Short of Legislature's Intent - The LAO found that while some progress has been made to implement SB 1440, both segments have much room for improvement. Specifically, the LAO recommended the Legislature:

- Statutorily endorse the TMC approach as the preferred basis for associate degrees for transfer, and consider setting an expectation for the development of additional TMC.
- Statutorily clarify that CCC are expected to create an associate degree for transfer in every major they offer that has an approved TMC, and consider establishing a timeline for achievement of full compliance.
- Clarify in statute the expectation that, with limited exceptions, CSU campuses must accept TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer in *each* of the CSU degree options (concentrations) within a given major.
- Begin to identify next steps if the segments fall short of meeting the above goals. These steps could include involving external entities to address areas of poor compliance and the loss of some state funding (or *increases* if goals are exceeded).

SB 440 (Padilla – Chapter 720, Statutes of 2013) addressed many of the recommendations outlined in the LAO report.

