

# Improving Transfer in Texas Workgroup

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Texas Higher Education  
Coordinating Board

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## What is the potential with vertical transfer?

- Community colleges, which serve **70% of first- and second-year students** in the state of Texas, provide a vital path for students to earn a bachelor's degree. Ensuring that students who start their postsecondary education at a community college can easily navigate the vertical transfer process and seamlessly proceed to earn a four-year degree is key to increasing opportunities for social and economic mobility.
- Approximately **34% of bachelor's graduates** have completed 30 semester credit hours or more at a community college prior to graduation from a university.

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## What are the challenges with vertical transfer?

- Less than **35%** of students who start at a Texas community college transfer to a university within six years, despite the fact most community college students aspire to earn a baccalaureate degree.
- An analysis of the last ten years of data shows that 83% of native junior-year students complete a degree within four years, while only 66% of transfer juniors complete within four years. In other words, transfer students complete their degrees at a rate that is **17 percentage points lower** than the students who started at the same institution in their cohort.

## Improving Transfer in Texas Workgroup

- Unclear transfer pathways, misalignment between community colleges and universities, and insufficient and confusing information about transfer are some barriers that make transfer difficult.
- The Improving Transfer in Texas Workgroup has been meeting to collaboratively develop and make recommendations to substantially improve vertical transfer in Texas public higher education institutions.

## Composition of the Improving Transfer in Texas Workgroup

The transfer workgroup is composed of an equal number of representatives from public community colleges and universities and is supported by agency staff.



## Texas Transfer Landscape

- Senate Bill 25
- Texas Student Success Council (Educate Texas)
- Texas Transfer Alliance
- Texas Success Center (TACC)
- Postsecondary Innovation Network
- Region/System Initiatives
  - Houston GPS
  - North Texas Community College Consortium
  - UT System Transfer Advisory Group/Transfer Study
  - Texas Regional Alignment Network

## Purpose of the Improving Transfer in Texas Workgroup

The workgroup has been meeting on a weekly basis to collaboratively develop and make recommendations to:

- substantially improve vertical transfer,
- substantially improve the applicability of credit to a major, and
- reduce the number of excess semester credit hours.

## Process

### Workgroup Meetings

### Learning Sessions

- California
- Tennessee
- New York (SUNY)
- Georgia
- Washington State

## Existing Transfer Policies

### Transfer Policies

- Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS)
- Texas Core Curriculum
- Field of Study Curriculum
- Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)
- Senate Bill 25

The workgroup is reviewing data related to these existing policies.

# Design Principles for Developing Transfer Policy

## Design Principles of Framework

These principles provide a framework for adjusting existing policies and/or developing new policies and mechanisms.

## Design Principles

- Shared Responsibility
- Transparency/Student-Centric Academic Pathways
- Optimizing courses applying to major upon transfer
- Process
- Full-Scale Implementation

## Design Principles

**Principle 1 (Shared Responsibility):** Both community colleges and universities share equal responsibility for an efficient transfer framework.

**Principle 2 (Transparency/Student-Centric Academic Pathways):** The transfer framework must be seamless and transparent for students.

**Principle 3 (Optimizing Courses Applying Upon Transfer):** The transfer framework must optimize the number of courses/credits applicable to the major upon transfer to a university.

## Design Principles

**Principle 4 (Process):** The transfer framework shall be developed through a transparent process that involves all institutions participating in a formal venue to identify and to endorse mechanisms for efficient transfer.

**Principle 5 (Full-Scale Implementation):** The mechanisms of the transfer framework must be adhered to by all institutions. A formal venue will be sustained for post-implementation oversight.

## Recommendations

When the recommendations have been completed, the workgroup will present them to the Commissioner and the Coordinating Board. These forthcoming recommendations may alter institutional policy and practice or state policy.