



Reforming the State's Transfer Process:

# A Progress Report on Senate Bill 1440

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**California State University**



**California  
Community  
Colleges**

AN LAO REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

***Transfer Is a Core—Yet Historically Problematic—Feature of the State’s Higher Education System.*** The Legislature has long recognized the importance of facilitating the efficient transfer of students between the California Community Colleges (CCC) and four-year universities. According to the *Master Plan for Higher Education* (originally adopted by the Legislature in 1960 and periodically reviewed), “The transfer function shall be recognized by the Governor, Legislature, and the governing boards of each of California’s postsecondary education segments as a central institutional priority of all segments of higher education.” Despite this emphasis by the state, however, CCC students often must navigate a complex maze of transfer course requirements, which can make accessing and completing a baccalaureate program difficult.

***Recent Legislation Designed to Streamline Major Transfer Pathways.*** In an attempt to fundamentally reform the state’s primary transfer pipeline from CCC to the California State University (CSU) system, the Legislature and Governor enacted Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010 (SB 1440, Padilla). The legislation requires community colleges to create two-year (60 unit) degrees (known as “associate degrees for transfer”) that are fully transferable to CSU. These degrees require completion of (1) a minimum of 18 units in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by each community college, and (2) an approved set of general-education requirements. Students who earn such a degree are automatically eligible to transfer to the CSU system as an upper-division (junior) student in a bachelor’s degree program. Though these students are not guaranteed admission to a particular CSU campus or into a particular degree program, SB 1440 gives them priority admission to a CSU program that is “similar” to the student’s CCC major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Once admitted, SB 1440 students need only to complete two additional years (an additional 60 units) of coursework to earn a bachelor’s degree.

***Notable Progress Has Been Made . . .*** The legislation requires the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) to provide a status report to the Legislature by spring 2012 on the segments’ progress in implementing SB 1440. This report is in fulfillment of that reporting requirement. Our 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.”) To date, CCC and CSU faculty have approved TMC for 18 majors, with eight additional TMC currently under development.
- ***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. According to a recent survey of community colleges by the CCC Chancellor’s

Office, about 15 colleges have associate degrees for transfer either developed or in the process of being developed for each major they currently offer with an approved TMC.

- ***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). To date, six CSU campuses have achieved this goal, with CSU working to make available more degree options to SB 1440 transfer students.

... ***But Results Are Falling Short of Legislation's Intent.*** While some progress has been made to implement SB 1440, both segments have much room for improvement. For example, an average of just four associate degrees for transfer have been developed per community college. In addition, a number of community colleges have expressed reluctance to create more than a handful of such degrees despite the CCC Chancellor's Office goal that, by 2014, each community college have a TMC-aligned associate degree for transfer in every major it offers. For their part, CSU campuses and academic programs vary significantly in terms of accepting such CCC degrees for their bachelor's degree programs. We find that for the most part such variation and the resulting complexity could be reduced. Based on the progress to date in matching TMC to CSU majors, it appears that a significant number of CCC students with an associate degree for transfer could be denied many of the benefits of SB 1440.

***LAO Recommendations.*** Our review finds that additional work needs to be done by both segments to achieve the Legislature's intended goals. To this end, we recommend the Legislature provide additional guidance and clarification to CCC and CSU on their responsibilities, as well as continued oversight to track their progress. Specifically, we recommend 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 (such as that TMC disciplines cover at least 90 percent of CCC transfer enrollments at CSU).
- Clarify in statute that community colleges 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 its expectation that—with limited exceptions—CSU campuses accept TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer in *each* of the CSU degree options 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).

## INTRODUCTION

In the 1960 *Master Plan for Higher Education*, the Legislature adopted a number of policies for ensuring college access to the state’s public higher education segments. A key provision of the Master Plan is the transfer function, which gives state residents an opportunity to begin their postsecondary studies at CCC and eventually move to the University of California (UC) or CSU to earn a bachelor’s degree. Unfortunately, the transfer process from CCC to the public universities has never worked as well as intended. For years, the Legislature has sought to make improvements. Despite these efforts, transfer students still must often navigate a complex maze of requirements that vary across campuses. This can make it very difficult for students to transfer successfully.

In an attempt to fundamentally reform the state’s major transfer pathway—that from CCC to CSU—the Legislature and Governor enacted Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010 (SB 1440, Padilla). Senate Bill 1440, which passed both houses with unanimous support and included a total of 46 co-authors, requires community colleges to

develop two-year (60 unit) associate degrees that are completely transferrable to CSU. Students who earn such a degree are guaranteed admission in the CSU system, and would be required only to complete two additional years (an additional 60 units) of coursework to earn a bachelor’s degree. The legislation requires the LAO by spring 2012, to provide an update to the Legislature on CCC’s and CSU’s implementation of SB 1440. The legislation further requires a fuller assessment by 2015 of how the reforms actually improve the transfer pathway.

This report is in fulfillment of the first reporting requirement. Below, we explain the purpose and features of the new law, provide an assessment of the segments’ progress to date, and conclude with recommendations on how to ensure that the segments stay on track and achieve the legislation’s intended goals. We begin by including an overview of key issues and concepts pertaining to the state’s higher education system and transfer process, which provides the relevant background and context for our later analysis and recommendations.

## BACKGROUND

### Importance of the Transfer Process

*Three-Tiered System Depends on Transfer to Maintain Access.* The Master Plan calls for UC to draw its entering freshmen from the top one-eighth (12.5 percent) of public high school graduates, CSU to draw from the top one-third (33.3 percent), and the junior (community) colleges to admit all high school graduates and all persons over 18 years of age capable of benefiting from the instruction offered. When the Legislature established these targets in 1960, both UC and CSU were admitting

students from somewhat larger pools of high school graduates. In reducing the eligibility pools, the Legislature sought to protect educational standards at UC and CSU.

At the same time, the Legislature stressed the importance of the transfer process in maintaining access to higher education for all California residents. The Master Plan declares that “so long as any high school graduate can be admitted to a junior college, it [reducing the eligibility pools] will not reduce the opportunity for students able and willing to meet the requirements for transfer

to the upper division in the state colleges and the University of California.” Overall, the Legislature envisioned the transfer process as an important avenue for any student to earn a bachelor’s degree.

**Transfers Given Priority in Undergraduate Admissions.** In order to guide the universities in their enrollment planning and admission decisions, the Legislature has adopted statutory admissions priorities stating that, to the extent practicable, the two segments should admit and enroll California residents at the undergraduate student level in the following priority order.

1. Continuing undergraduate students in good standing.
2. Qualified community college transfer students who have successfully met all transfer requirements.
3. Other qualified transfer students.
4. New students entering as freshmen or sophomores.

Within each of these enrollment categories, statute directs that the universities give priority consideration to certain applicants (such as veterans) above other groups. In addition, current law requires that UC and CSU maintain

upper-division (junior and senior) enrollment of 60 percent of total undergraduate enrollment. The expressed intent is to preserve access for qualified upper-division transfer students from the community colleges.

**CSU Enrolls Majority of Transfer Students.** The majority of students transferring from CCC enroll at CSU, as shown in Figure 1. In addition, transfer students from CCC regularly comprise more than half of CSU’s bachelor’s degree recipients and more than one-quarter of those at UC. Because CSU enrolls the majority of community college transfer students, the state’s efforts to improve the transfer process (including SB 1440) have tended to focus on transfer pathways from CCC to CSU.

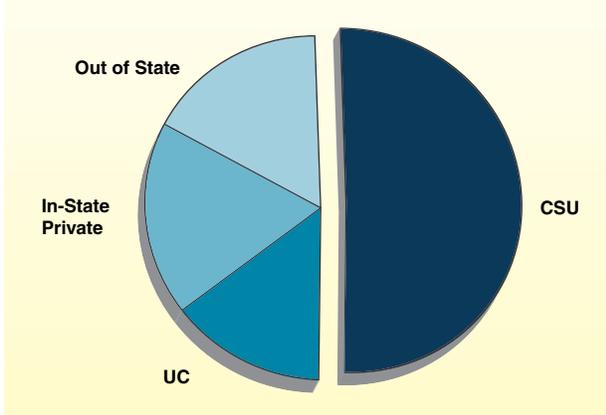
**Eligibility for Transfer Admission**

The admissions process for transfer students consists of two parts: (1) eligibility for admission to the segment and (2) selection to a particular campus or academic program. Eligibility applies to the segment as a whole and does not guarantee admission to any particular campus. Campuses and programs select students for admission from among eligible students.

With few exceptions, a student must complete 60 semester (90 quarter) units of transferable lower-division (freshman and sophomore) course requirements at a community college with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a four-point scale to be eligible for transfer admission to CSU. Within these units, a student must complete at least 30 semester (45 quarter) units of general education courses—including courses in written communications, oral communication, critical thinking, and mathematics/quantitative reasoning—with a “C” grade or better in each of these four courses. A student who completes these requirements may be considered for transfer admission at the junior level.

**Figure 1**  
**CSU Is Most Common Destination for CCC Transfers**

Total: 112,237 Transfer Students (2010-11)



## Selection for Transfer Admission

### *Not All Qualified Students Are Admitted.*

Although the Master Plan's eligibility policy promises access to CSU to every eligible applicant who applies, the university's budgetary resources in any given year are finite. State funding for CSU in the annual budget act typically is based on a target enrollment level that the university is expected to serve. The CSU Chancellor's office must work with campuses to manage enrollment to targeted levels while still ensuring that all eligible applicants are offered an enrollment slot. Achieving these twin goals sometimes has required making it harder for students to submit eligible applications—for example, by setting stricter application deadlines or modifying transfer requirements. Until recently, a qualified transfer applicant who was attentive to (and met) CSU's general eligibility requirements could count on admission to his or her local campus and most other campuses. In recent years, some CSU campuses have denied admission to some qualified transfer applicants.

***Campuses Use Impaction to Manage Enrollment.*** An especially powerful enrollment management tool is "impaction," whereby admissions criteria can be raised above the systemwide requirements for certain programs or groups of students. In contrast to most other enrollment management techniques (which still guarantee a spot for all eligible applicants to a campus), impaction allows campuses or programs to deny admission to applicants who do not meet enhanced requirements beyond statewide eligibility. There are two primary categories of impaction:

- ***Campus Impaction.*** A campus can declare campus impaction when the number of qualified applicants to a campus exceeds campus capacity. An impacted campus may establish admissions criteria for

all *nonlocal* applicants that are stricter than systemwide minimum eligibility. Campuses may declare impaction at the freshman or transfer level, or both. Seventeen campuses are impacted for 2012-13. Consistent with the Trustees' policy of protecting local access, impacted campuses guarantee admission to all *local* applicants who meet systemwide eligibility requirements.

- ***Program Impaction.*** A campus can declare program impaction when the number of qualified freshman or transfer applicants to a particular program—such as mechanical engineering or nursing—exceeds available space at the campus. Impacted programs may establish supplemental admission criteria for *all* applicants—local and nonlocal. For example, they can require completion of specified pre-major courses for transfer applicants, and set GPA thresholds above the systemwide requirement of 2.0. As a result, there is no local admission guarantee for impacted programs, although campuses may award local students extra points or other consideration to help make them more competitive. Historically, only a relatively small number of programs were impacted—primarily programs with unusually high demand or more costly programs with enrollment limited by resource constraints. While most CSU campuses have some impacted programs, 4 of the 23 campuses have now declared *all* of their majors impacted (Fullerton, San Diego, San Jose, and San Luis Obispo).

***Students May Enter Campus-to-Campus Transfer Agreements.*** Some CSU campuses provide the opportunity for all students that attend

certain community colleges to enter into a transfer admission agreement (sometimes called a transfer admission guarantee). A transfer agreement works as a contract between the student and the university campus he or she wishes to attend by granting priority or guaranteed admission if the student meets certain academic requirements, including completing specified courses and achieving a minimum GPA.

### **General Education Requirements**

In addition to basic eligibility requirements, CSU maintains general education and major preparation requirements for all students. While students who enroll as freshmen at CSU are able to satisfy these requirements during the course of their CSU enrollment, transfer students must fulfill some of the requirements in advance to qualify for transfer admission.

#### ***General Education Requirements***

**Standardized.** General education requirements are designed to expose students to a broad range of subjects and develop their critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, communication, and other competencies. The CSU has established systemwide general education requirements called the CSU General Education Breadth, or GE-Breadth, requirements. In addition, CSU has collaborated with UC to establish the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, or IGETC, with common general education requirements that CCC transfer students can use to fulfill lower-division general education requirements at a UC or CSU campus. (The GE-Breadth requirements are more commonly used by CCC students intending to transfer to CSU.) These requirements are summarized in the nearby box.

### **Major Preparation Requirements**

At many CSU campuses, entering transfer students are required to specify a major on their admissions application. (In other instances, students can apply with an “undeclared” major.) In order to ensure that students are prepared for advanced study in a particular major, some university departments advise or require students to complete major preparation (also known as pre-major) courses during their first two years in college. These courses may be prerequisites for other courses required as part of the major. For instance, an introductory course in statistics is often a prerequisite for certain upper-division courses required for a baccalaureate degree in psychology. Some majors, particularly in the sciences, require significant numbers of pre-major courses, while others require only a few.

***Courses May Fulfill Both General Education and Major Requirements.*** A campus may permit a single course to satisfy a general education and major requirement. For example, a writing course could meet (1) the written communication requirement for GE-Breadth or IGETC and (2) a lower-division requirement for the English major. By selecting courses that serve a dual purpose, a student can fulfill general education and major preparation requirements in fewer units than otherwise would be possible.

***Major Preparation Varies by CSU Campus.*** Preparatory courses for a particular major have historically varied across CSU campuses. For example, the pre-major course requirements for physics could differ from one CSU campus to another. This has meant that a student intending to transfer to a specific campus might complete courses that only meet the major requirements of that campus. If the student later decides to apply to a different university campus, the student might need to take more course units at the community college or university. This is one reason

### **California State University (CSU) General Education Requirements Are Standardized**

***CSU General Education Breadth (GE-Breadth) Pattern.*** The CSU GE-Breadth pattern consists of 48 semester (72 quarter) units. For transfer students, at least 30 and no more than 39 semester units may be transferred from a community college. Students must complete any remaining lower division units and nine upper division units after transfer. Each community college maintains a list of courses that have been approved to fulfill specific GE-Breadth requirements. (Units shown are minimum semester units; quarter unit requirements are higher.) Students must complete at least one course in each of the specified areas.

- Communication in the English Language and Critical Thinking (nine units)
  - Written communication
  - Oral communication
  - Critical thinking
- Physical Universe and Its Life Forms (six units) at least one course with a lab component
  - Physical science
  - Life science
- Math and quantitative reasoning (three units)
- Arts, Literature, Philosophy, and Languages Other Than English (nine units)
  - Arts (arts, cinema, dance, music, theater)
  - Humanities (literature, philosophy, languages other than English)
- Social, Political, and Economic Institutions (nine units)
  - Sociology, anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology, and others
- Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development (three units)
  - Courses with sociological, physiological, or psychological content, or physical activity

***Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).*** Similarly, the IGETC is a general education program that California Community College transfer students can use to fulfill lower-division general education requirements at a CSU or the University of California campus. The IGETC requires completion of a minimum of 37 semester (49 quarter) units of lower division work with a “C” grade or better in each course. The IGETC pattern requires one more science unit than GE-Breadth, and does not include a lifelong learning requirement. Student completing IGETC requirements at community college must also complete nine upper division semester units of general education (12 quarter units) after transfer.

many students accumulate excess units to earn a bachelor's degree.

**Course Articulation Also Varies.** Each CSU campus department determines which courses from each CCC campus it will accept as comparable to its required courses. The process of linking CCC courses to CSU campus course requirements is known as course articulation. While the business management department at one CSU campus may accept a particular community college's statistics course as satisfying its introductory statistics requirement, the business management department at another CSU campus may determine that the same community college course does not have the focus, content, and rigor necessary to satisfy its corresponding requirement.

### **Inconsistent Requirements a Longstanding Concern**

Variation in major preparation courses and course articulation across CSU campuses has been an ongoing concern for transfer students and policymakers. Despite previous efforts to streamline transfer—including legislation requiring CSU to develop systemwide lower-division transfer curricula (called Lower-Division Transfer Patterns)—differences persist across campuses. This variation complicates the transfer process by requiring multiple campus-to-campus articulation agreements, limiting students' campus options, and increasing students' difficulty in identifying comparable courses that will satisfy requirements at different campuses. As a result, the transfer process has not been as efficient or effective as envisioned in the Master Plan.

## **PROVISIONS AND PURPOSE OF SB 1440**

**New Law Designed to Create Clear Degree and Transfer Pathways.** In response to these concerns about the transfer process, the Legislature passed SB 1440. (The Appendix contains the full text of the legislation.) The legislation is designed to accomplish two main goals. First, SB 1440 seeks to create clearer pathways from CCC to CSU. In so doing, the intent is to reduce the number of excess units students take at CCC and CSU in fulfillment of CSU's transfer and graduation requirements (thereby increasing students' chances of achieving their educational goals, as well as freeing up course enrollment slots for other students). Second, by giving admission priority to transfer students with an associate degree for transfer, the legislation seeks to create a strong incentive for students to obtain an associate's degree while attending CCC, so that students who transfer to CSU but are unable to complete a baccalaureate program have at least an associate's degree when entering the job market.

**Regular Associate Degrees Are Not Necessarily Transferable.** Currently, community colleges offer associate of arts and associate of science degrees in a number of programs. Under CCC regulations, associate degrees must consist of a total of at least 60 credit units (typically about 20 courses). Of that amount, at least 18 units must be a particular major or area of emphasis, and a minimum of 18 units must be in general education. In addition, regulations permit community colleges to require students to fulfill local course requirements, such as coursework in ethnic studies or physical education. Degree units do not necessarily have to be transferable to a four-year institution. (In fact, CCC regulations allow colleges to apply certain courses toward an associate degree which are not even college-level, such as Elementary Algebra.) Students who seek these degrees typically have one of two educational goals: to enter the workforce

directly upon receiving a degree (such as a student in an Automotive Technology degree program), or to transfer to a four-year institution.

***Legislation Requires Community Colleges to Create Associate Degrees for Transfer.*** Senate Bill 1440 requires community colleges to create a new type of associate degree called associate degrees for transfer. These degrees consist of a total of 60 units of coursework, all of which must be transferable to CSU. To earn this degree, students must complete a minimum of 18 units in a major or area of emphasis “as determined by the community college district.” Students also must meet their general-education requirements by completing either the full IGETC or lower-division CSU GE-Breadth pattern. The legislation prohibits CCC from imposing additional local requirements.

***CSU Must Admit SB 1440 Transfer Students as Juniors Somewhere in the System.*** Beginning in fall 2011, students who earn an associate degree for transfer (which, like regular associate degrees, requires a minimum 2.0 GPA) are automatically eligible to transfer to the CSU system as an upper-division (junior) student in a bachelor’s degree program. Because of impaction (discussed in the previous section), students are not guaranteed admission to a particular CSU campus or into a particular program (major). However, CSU must grant SB 1440 students “priority admission” to (1) their local CSU campus and (2) a program or

major that is similar to what they majored in at the community college. Determination of which CSU and CCC degree programs are similar is left to the CSU campus to which the transfer student is admitted. Students with an associate degree for transfer who seek to transfer to CSU receive priority “over all other” transfer-seeking CCC students, with the exception of CCC students who entered into a transfer agreement with CSU prior to fall 2012.

***Limit on Number of Units Transfer Students Must Complete to Earn Bachelor’s Degree.*** Once admitted to a CSU campus and program, students with an associate degree for transfer need to complete 60 additional units to obtain a bachelor’s degree. (Students may need to complete more than 60 units at CSU if the bachelor’s degree requires more than the standard 120 units.) The statute also specifies that CSU cannot require students to repeat any courses that are similar to what they took as part of their coursework leading to an associate degree for transfer.

***Veterans’ Priority Maintained.*** The Legislature subsequently adopted Chapter 349, Statutes of 2011 (SB 940, Committee on Education), to clarify its intent that priority for SB 1440 students be granted consistent with existing admission priority for recently released veterans of the armed forces of the United States, and other established priorities. (The priority categories are listed in the “Background” section of this report.)

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SB 1440

### Formation of Implementation and Oversight Committee

Following enactment of SB 1440, CCC and CSU formed the SB 1440 Implementation and Oversight Committee (IOC). The IOC comprises 18 members drawn from the Chancellor’s

Offices of the respective segments and various other organizations (such as student groups and the Academic Senates of CCC and CSU). The IOC is designed to work through details on the implementation of SB 1440 and ensure coordination between the two segments. For example, as

discussed later, members of the committee discussed and agreed on how to give priority admission to SB 1440 transfer students. They also agreed on a marketing and communications plan to make students, counselors, campus admissions directors, and others aware of the new degree and transfer pathway. The IOC had its first meeting in November 2010, and has generally met monthly since that time.

### **Role of CCC and CSU Faculty**

*Development of Transfer Model Curricula as Basis of New CCC Degrees.* The legislation provides individual CCC districts with the authority to choose the courses that are included in the 18-unit requirement for a major/area of emphasis. In theory, therefore, there could be considerable variation across the CCC system with regard to the courses that students pursuing the same

### **Building Statewide Pathways: The Role of the Course Identification Number System (C-ID)**

In response to Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010 (SB 1440, Padilla), the California Community College (CCC) and the California State University (CSU) Academic Senates decided to create statewide Transfer Model Curricula (TMC) for a number of the most commonly transferred majors. Each TMC includes lower-division courses that intersegmental faculty have determined would provide transfer students with the necessary content to be ready for coursework in their major at the upper-division level. To develop TMC, faculty have relied on infrastructure that was already in place to support the C-ID. The C-ID, which was created in 2007, is a system that simplifies the identification of comparable courses at different college and universities. Through C-ID, faculty representing their respective disciplines identify the courses that should be included in each TMC. Faculty groups then develop and review “C-ID descriptors” for each course in the TMC. (Often, faculty work off of course descriptors that were developed as part of the earlier cross-segmental articulation efforts, such as Lower Division Transfer Pattern.) Both the draft course descriptors and the draft TMC are vetted statewide for CCC and CSU faculty input before they are finalized. These descriptors include basic information about the course, such as the topics that are covered, the knowledge and skills that students should be able to demonstrate as a result of taking it (course objectives), how students are evaluated (such as through essay exams and research papers), and sample textbooks or other instructional materials that are commonly used.

Once a descriptor is fully vetted by faculty, it is given a unique course identifier. (“College Algebra,” for example, is designated C-ID MATH 150.) At that point, community colleges are able to submit their course outlines of record to a team of CCC and CSU faculty, who review the submissions. Courses that match a particular descriptor are assigned that same C-ID course identifier. (So regardless of a local college’s course number, a math course at a community college that matches the College Algebra descriptor would also carry the additional designation of C-ID MATH 150.) The C-ID process facilitates the ability of faculty to build their own associate degrees for transfer that align with the approved TMC in that discipline. The C-ID also makes it easy for students, counselors, and others to identify courses that are comparable across campuses and segments (thus reducing uncertainty around whether transfer students at CSU are being required to repeat coursework they already took at CCC, which is prohibited by SB 1440).

associate degree for transfer are required to take. To ensure that all students who complete their lower-division major coursework at CCC have the proper foundation to succeed in upper-division major coursework at CSU, the Academic Senates of CCC and CSU opted to promote a *statewide*, rather than a local approach, to implementing SB 1440. Toward that end, intersegmental groups of faculty have developed TMC for the most commonly transferred majors. The TMC identify a set of courses that will prepare CCC students for the more-advanced courses they take as juniors and seniors at CSU. The TMC typically include at least six units of “core” coursework that are required of all students seeking an associate degree for transfer in their major. In addition, TMC include a list of other courses (in that major or a related discipline) that community colleges can select to design their local associate degrees for transfer. (Faculty use a common course numbering system to help them develop these TMC, as discussed in the nearby box.)

***Eighteen TMC Have Been Developed, With Some More in the Pipeline.*** As Figure 2 shows, the first four TMC—in communication studies, mathematics, psychology, and sociology—were approved by faculty in early 2011. Faculty finalized 12 other TMC in 2011, and recently approved 2 additional TMC (in elementary education and music). According to the CCC and CSU Academic Senates, faculty expect to finalize at least eight more TMC in 2012. (As explained in the box on page 14, intersegmental faculty and IOC members are also discussing ways of streamlining transfer pathways for the nursing major, which has unique curricular requirements.)

**Rolling Out Associate Degrees for Transfer**

***Multistep Review and Approval Process for Associate Degrees.*** Once a TMC is approved, community colleges may use it to design an associate degree for transfer in that program. The

process of creating these degrees is very similar to that of regular associate degrees. First, CCC department faculty must decide on the courses that will make up the 18 units required for the major or area of emphasis. The proposed degrees are then vetted by the college’s interdisciplinary curriculum committee. After that, the district’s governing board must approve the degree during a public hearing. Finally, the district submits the proposed degree to the systemwide Chancellor’s Office for review. Once approved, the degree program is added to the college catalog.

***CCC Chancellor’s Office Has Set Expectations for Local Compliance With Law.*** Though SB 1440 requires community colleges to develop associate degrees for transfer, the legislation does not specify the *number* of degrees that a college must create. Absent an explicit statutory goal, the CCC Chancellor’s Office determined that, by the end of 2011, a college must develop at least two associate degrees for transfer in order to be in compliance.

**Figure 2**  
**Approved Transfer Model Curricula**

*As of March 30, 2012*

Discipline	Date Approved
Communication Studies	January 2011
Psychology	January 2011
Sociology	January 2011
Mathematics	March 2011
Administration of Justice	May 2011
Early Childhood Education	May 2011
Geology	May 2011
History	May 2011
Physics	May 2011
Theatre	May 2011
Art History	June 2011
Business Administration	June 2011
English	June 2011
Kinesiology	June 2011
Political Science	June 2011
Studio Arts	June 2011
Music	February 2012
Elementary Education	March 2012

### Segments Considering Different Approach for Nursing

The requirements for a nursing license in California, largely prescribed by the Board of Registered Nursing, include 36 units of nursing content—far exceeding the 18-unit major requirement in Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010 (SB 1440, Padilla). When combined with general-education requirements, associate degrees in nursing typically total more than 60 units, and thus fall outside of SB 1440. To facilitate transfer to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs, faculty in both systems are discussing the possibility of a 70-unit core associate degree curriculum that would transfer to the California State University (CSU) for full credit. The CSU nursing programs, in turn, would develop a 50-unit model curriculum or other mechanisms to permit associate degree for transfer students to complete a BSN degree within a total of 50 units after transfer.

Going forward, the Chancellor's Office has set the goal that, by the end of 2014, community colleges will have an associate degree for transfer in all programs in which (1) they currently offer a regular associate degree and (2) where a TMC exists. As an interim goal, the Chancellor's Office expects that each college offer an associate degree for transfer in at least 80 percent of such programs by the end of 2013.

### Designating Similar Programs

*Each CSU Campus Determines Which CCC Majors Are Similar to Its Own Majors.* As described above, SB 1440 gives a student with an associate degree for transfer priority admission to a CSU program that is similar to the student's community college major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. To implement this provision, CSU developed the following definition:

An associate degree for transfer is similar to a CSU baccalaureate degree "when a specific CSU campus by its processes determines that a student so prepared can successfully complete the bachelor's degree within 60 additional units."

The CSU Chancellor's Office asked each campus to identify its similar degrees for each of the first 16 approved TMC by September 15, 2011.

Initially, several CSU campuses determined that in some majors, none of their degree programs were similar to the approved TMC. In other words, they could not ensure baccalaureate completion within 60 additional units to students transferring with TMC-aligned associate degrees in those majors given the CSU program's existing course requirements.

While CSU campuses based their initial reviews on their existing degree programs, the CSU Chancellor's Office directed them to consider changes to their degree programs with the goal of turning "not similar" determinations to "similar." To that end, the Chancellor's Office suggested a number of strategies for campuses to consider, including:

- Reducing the number of elective units.
- Reducing the number of units required in the major.
- Moving required major courses from upper to lower division.
- Requiring double-counting of American Institutions with major course requirements, upper-division general education requirements, or campus-specific requirements. (See nearby box for an explanation of CSU American Institutions requirements.)
- Reducing the number of units required in American Institutions.

- Reducing the number of units required in general education (for campuses that require more than the systemwide minimum).
- Reducing the number of units required in campus-specific graduation requirements (for example, technological proficiency, cross-cultural competence, or language other than English).
- Requesting a waiver of the American Institutions requirements.

The CSU Chancellor’s Office has set a goal of offering at least one similar degree option in each TMC discipline in which a campus offers a bachelor’s degree. A degree option can be a concentration, emphasis, or particular track within a major (such as a teacher education focus within the history major) leading to a bachelor’s degree.

### **Defining Priority Admission**

***System Awards Modest GPA Bonus for SB 1440 Applicants.*** As described earlier, CSU may impose supplemental criteria for admission to impacted programs and campuses, including additional required courses and GPAs above the systemwide eligibility requirement of 2.0. For

students who complete an associate degree for transfer, however, the IOC agreed that the only permissible supplemental criteria will be GPA.

As shown in Figure 3 (next page), students from outside a campus’ local admission area applying to an impacted campus (for programs that are not impacted) are awarded an additional two-tenths (0.2) of a GPA point on a four-point scale to make them more competitive for admission to the campus. (Local students are guaranteed admission to these programs.) Local and nonlocal students applying to impacted programs (at any campus) are awarded an additional 0.1 GPA point in programs admitting 20 or more students. No priority is awarded in impacted programs with fewer than 20 slots.

***Highest Priority Granted for Spring 2013 Admission.*** In response to budget concerns, CSU will not accept applications for admission in the spring 2013 term, with very limited exceptions. The primary exception is for CCC graduates with associate degrees for transfer applying to similar CSU programs. This CSU policy decision highlights the extent to which the university system is prioritizing SB 1440 implementation. The policy provides a strong incentive for CCC

### **California State University (CSU) American Institutions Requirements**

The CSU’s regulations require campuses to provide instruction in United States history (including California history and local government), the Constitution, and American ideals; and require students to demonstrate competence in these areas. This requirement is sometimes referred to as the “American Institutions” or “AI” requirement. While some campuses allow students to demonstrate their knowledge through comprehensive examinations, other campuses require students to successfully complete up to two courses to meet this requirement. These additional courses could result in degree requirements exceeding 60 additional units, rendering the degree “not similar” to a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC). On July 12, 2011, the CSU Board of Trustees amended its regulations to include a provision for granting—under specified conditions—exceptions to this requirement. This change allows more flexibility as campuses develop their TMC. To date, however, no campus has requested a waiver of American Institutions requirements.

**Figure 3**  
**Summary of CSU Admission Priority Policy**

Program	Campus	
	Not Impacted	Impacted
Not impacted	All eligible students guaranteed admission.	Eligible local students guaranteed admission. Eligible <i>nonlocal</i> students must compete for limited slots. SB 1440 Bonus = 0.2 GPA points
Impacted	All eligible students (local and nonlocal) must compete for limited slots. Campus may award bonus points to local students. SB 1440 bonus = 0.1 GPA points	

GPA = grade point average.

***Segments Agree on Student Identification and Verification Plan.***

For the short-term, IOC members have agreed on a plan for CCC transfer applicants to complete an “intent to earn an associate degree for transfer” form within a certain timeframe (by February 15, 2012 for fall 2012 applicants to

campuses to offer associate degrees for transfer, for students to complete them, and for CSU campuses to identify similar majors to which these students can transfer.

**Identifying SB 1440 Applicants**

***CSU Needs Student Information for Planning and Admissions Purposes.*** Given that CSU must reserve an enrollment slot and provide priority admission for SB 1440 transfer students, IOC has considered ways for the segments to identify these students and their major—preferably as early as possible. By accurately identifying which students are on a SB 1440 pathway, CSU can plan accordingly and make informed admissions decisions.

CSU) and to submit it to both their community college and the CSU to which they applied. The community college is responsible for reviewing students’ academic records and informing them whether they are, in fact, on track to receive an associate degree for transfer. Students then forward this notification to CSU. After admission but before enrolling at CSU, students will request that their community college send a final transcript (typically by mailing a paper copy) to CSU. In the longer term, both segments acknowledge the need for obtaining earlier identification of SB 1440 students, as well as replacing CCC’s largely paper-based degree verification methods with electronic solutions (such as e-transcripts).

**LAO ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE**

**SEGMENTS HAVE MADE SOME NOTABLE PROGRESS . . .**

**The TMC Approach Has Been a Key—and Highly Collaborative—Innovation**

As noted above, SB 1440 gives each community college wide discretion with regard to the courses students must take in their major or area of

emphasis to earn an associate degree for transfer. Immediately after the bill was passed, though, CCC and CSU agreed that it was in students’ best interest if department faculty from both segments could agree on the general composition of requirements for the major. Doing so would provide greater assurance that students with an associate degree for transfer are adequately prepared for upper-division coursework in that major—regardless of

which CSU campus they end up attending. At the same time, there was a desire to provide a certain level of flexibility so that CCC faculty could design a degree that took into account factors such as local curricular preferences and existing course offerings.

We find that over the past 18 months CCC and CSU faculty have created a productive and strong working relationship. Under the leadership of the Academic Senates of CCC and CSU, between October 2010 and March 2012, over 1,000 CCC and CSU faculty have participated in meetings across the state as part of the effort to develop TMC. Thousands of additional faculty have provided their input (online or through another medium) on the content and courses that should be included in the TMC. The 18 TMC that have been approved thus far are the product of tens of thousands of hours of faculty time.

**Many CCC and CSU Campuses Are on Right Track**

*A Number of Community Colleges Are Off to a Fast Start in Developing New Degrees.* The first associate degree for transfer (created by College of the Desert) was approved by the CCC Chancellor’s Office in March 2011. Since that time, community colleges have received approval for a total of more than 300 associate degrees for transfer in 16 different disciplines. (Because two TMC, in music and elementary teacher education, were just recently approved, no community college currently has an associate degree for transfer in those programs.) As of March 30, 2012, Pasadena City College (Los Angeles County) had 13 associate degrees for transfer developed and either approved or under review by the CCC Chancellor’s Office—the most in the CCC system. (Moorpark College [Ventura County] is second among community colleges with 11 such degrees though March 20, 2012.) According to a recent survey of community

colleges by the CCC Chancellor’s Office, about 15 community colleges have associate degrees for transfer either developed or in the process of being developed for each academic program they currently offer that has an approved TMC.

*Most CSU Campuses Accepting Most TMC as Similar.* Six CSU campuses have identified at least one—and often several—similar degree option(s) in every TMC in which they offer a bachelor’s degree. In some cases, this has required that the campus adjust its degree requirements to accommodate the TMC. Another nine campuses have identified at least one similar degree option in all but one or two TMC, and are working to resolve issues in the remaining disciplines. By deeming their majors similar to TMC, these campuses are opening the door to priority admission and a 60-unit guarantee for any community college graduate statewide with a corresponding associate degree for transfer, as envisioned in SB 1440.

**... BUT IMPLEMENTATION FALLING SHORT OF SB 1440’S INTENT**

**Roll-Out Process for New Associate Degrees Has a Ways to Go**

*Most Community Colleges Have Developed Four or Fewer Degrees.* While some community colleges are rapidly developing new degrees (as discussed above), overall progress systemwide is mixed. As of March 30, 2012, three community colleges still offered fewer than two associate degrees for transfer, which falls short of the CCC Chancellor’s Office’s expectations for 2011. (Two of these colleges, however, had at least one degree at the Chancellor’s Office for review—the final step in the approval process.) Figure 4 details the distribution of degrees by college. As the figure shows, 37 of the system’s 112 colleges have two associate degrees for transfer that are either approved or under review at the Chancellor’s

Office. Another 30 colleges have three degrees either approved or nearly approved. This means that 60 percent of community colleges have four or fewer associate degrees for transfer thus far. And while collectively the system has over 400 associate degrees for transfer either approved or under review at the Chancellor’s Office, this represents less than four degrees per college.

***Some Community Colleges Reluctant to Embrace New Degrees.*** Despite the CCC Chancellor’s Office goal of 100 percent participation by fall 2014, about a dozen community colleges have indicated they are planning to develop only a handful of associate degrees for transfer at this time. Colleges have provided several reasons for their reluctance to create additional associate degree for transfer, including:

- Lack of sufficient faculty and staff to support the development of the new degree.
- Lack of funding to offer courses in a new degree.
- Not enough students in the discipline to justify offering the degree.

- Faculty preference for the college’s current associate degree over a TMC-aligned degree.

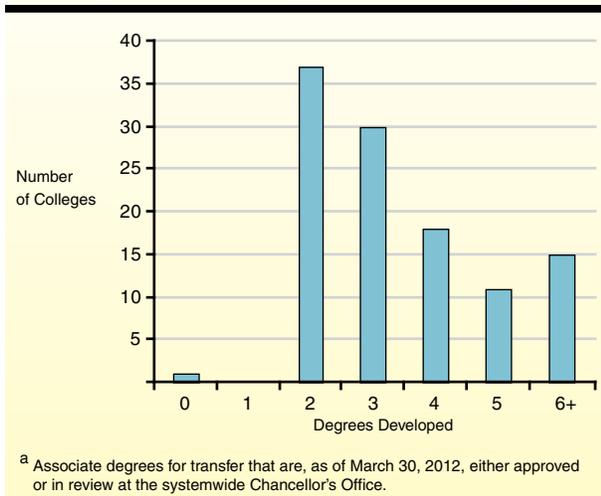
Some community colleges also have indicated that they do not intend to develop any additional TMC-aligned associate degrees until they can be assured that their local CSU campus will deem them similar. The issue of similarity is discussed in more detail below.

**Associate Degrees for Transfer Not Universally Accepted at CSU Campuses**

While all CSU campuses have deemed at least some of their degree options similar to certain TMC-aligned associate degrees, acceptance is far from universal. Responses have varied across campuses and majors, as illustrated in Figure 5 (see page 20).

- ***Variation Across Campuses.*** As of April 2012, five campuses have identified no similar degree options in five or more TMC disciplines in which they offer bachelor’s degrees. Together, these campuses offer more than 100 degree options in these disciplines, all of which they have deemed “not similar” to the corresponding TMC.
- ***Variation Across Disciplines.*** In sociology, art history, and political science, every CSU campus offering bachelor’s degrees in the discipline deemed at least one of its degree options similar to the TMC. In contrast, about one-third of campuses offering geology and kinesiology degrees, and about one-fourth offering early childhood education, business administration, and math degrees deemed all of their degree options in these disciplines not similar to the corresponding TMC.

**Figure 4**  
**Mixed Progress Among Community Colleges in Rolling Out New Degrees<sup>a</sup>**



- ***Variation Within Major at a Campus.***

Many campuses have deemed one or more degree options similar to a TMC while deeming other options within the same major not similar. This may not be problematic if the similar option(s) includes common concentrations or the general concentration. In these cases, a student could earn a general degree within 60 CSU units or take a few more units for a more specialized degree. In some cases, however, it appears the similar option in a major is a less common, specialized one. For example, one campus with 12 business degree options has deemed only a corporate management option similar to the TMC, limiting SB 1440 benefits (priority admission to the major and the 60-unit guarantee) to students who apply for that specific business concentration. Another campus has deemed two art-degree options (in design and history) as similar to the studio-arts TMC, but *not* its degree option in studio arts.

In all of these cases, this variation means that students with associate degrees for transfer may not be granted priority admission or a 60-unit cap on additional required courses.

Campuses continue to work toward turning not similar designations to similar. Several campuses have already identified solutions that will require time to implement, such as developing a new degree option in a major that aligns with a TMC. Sixteen campuses, however, have reported that they cannot yet honor the TMC in one or more majors in which they offer bachelor's degrees, as shown in Figure 5 (see page 20).

***Reasons for Misalignment.*** There are several legitimate reasons some potentially similar degrees could be deemed not similar by CSU campuses.

Some degree options are very specialized and can reasonably require more than the standard 60 units to complete. For example, some campuses offer a bachelor's degree in mathematics with a computer science option, which requires students to complete major coursework in mathematics as well as physics and computing. In addition, some majors have two or more major strands leading to different careers. Degrees in kinesiology, for example, can lead to careers in sports and fitness or physical therapy, among others. Kinesiology students planning to attend graduate school for physical therapy may require a different curriculum (even at the lower-division level) that those entering various fitness fields, and it is unlikely a single TMC could accommodate the requirements of all strands.

Other reasons some campuses have deemed degrees not similar have more to do with internal campus or departmental policies. Both departments and campuses have specific lower-division and upper-division course requirements students must satisfy to earn a bachelor's degree. If these requirements are not well-aligned with the TMC, a transfer student could be required to complete more than 60 units at CSU to earn a degree in the major. By definition, therefore, the degree would be deemed not similar to the TMC.

Other reasons campuses have given for not accepting TMC-aligned degrees include systemwide and campus graduation requirements that take up course units, and potential accreditation issues for professional programs. For example, accreditors may require that certain courses currently included in the TMC be taught at the upper-division level. (Not all programs in a given discipline have the same professional accreditation. As a result, a TMC may be acceptable for some programs and not for others.)

Figure 5

Acceptance of TMC Varies by CSU Campus and Major

✓	Indicates campus has deemed at least one degree option within the major similar to the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC).
-	Indicates the campus does not offer the major, as determined by the CSU Chancellor's Office.
x	Indicates campus has deemed all degree options within the major not similar to the TMC.

CSU Campus <sup>a</sup>	Sociology	Art History	Political Science	Physics	History	Communic. Studies	Theater Arts	Admin. of Justice	English	Psychology	Studio Art	Bus. Admin.	Music <sup>b</sup>	Elementary Ed. <sup>b</sup>	Math	Early Childhood Ed.	Geology	Kinesiology
East Bay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fullerton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Humboldt	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Francisco	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Jose	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sonoma	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-
Bakersfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Chico	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Long Beach	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
Sacramento	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Channel Islands	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	x	x	-	-	-
Fresno	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
Monterey Bay	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	x	x	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
Northridge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
San Luis Obispo	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	x	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	x	x
Pomona	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	-	x	-	-
Stanislaus	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
San Marcos	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	-	✓	x	✓	-	✓	x	-	-	-	x
Dominguez Hills	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	x
Los Angeles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓
San Bernardino	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	✓	✓	-	-	✓	x	x	x	x
San Diego	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x

<sup>a</sup> Data as of April 2012. Excludes Maritime Academy, which generally does not offer bachelor's degrees in majors with a TMC.  
<sup>b</sup> Responses for recently developed elementary education and music TMC are still in process.

**Adopted Definition of Similar Programs Fails to Protect SB 1440 Guarantees.** In our view, CSU's definition of similar programs falls short of the intent behind SB 1440. As envisioned by the bill's authors, campuses would (1) identify similar programs for purposes of granting priority admission, and (2) provide a pathway in those programs for SB 1440 students to earn bachelor's degrees within 60 additional semester units.

Campus faculty would need to work within the 60-unit limit, even if they preferred to maintain requirements that could cause students to exceed the unit cap. However, CSU has reversed the sequence: campuses are (1) determining which TMC they can accommodate given the faculty's curricular choices, and (2) calling programs similar or not similar based on this determination. This logic runs counter to the intent of the legislation.

While many academic departments have made adjustments to their degree programs to meet the intent of SB 1440, others are choosing to maintain most of their existing programs intact. As a result, many degrees students would reasonably perceive as similar are deemed not similar.

We have several concerns about this approach. It further complicates, rather than simplifies, the transfer process for some community college students. It permits CSU campuses to maintain campus-specific requirements for graduation of transfer students. More fundamentally, it raises questions about the meaning of majors when campuses are unable to agree on their content or necessary preparation.

***Variation Could Be Reduced.*** Representatives from CSU contend that the richness and complexity of academic disciplines requires a more nuanced definition of similar programs than the Legislature may have anticipated. While we agree there may be some valid reasons for distinctions within majors, for the most part we find this variation and the resulting complexity could be reduced, especially in the first two years of instruction, without sacrificing academic breadth.

***Impedes Efforts to Develop Common Understanding.*** Numerous international organizations and states are engaged in efforts to define what a degree in a given field means, on the principle that degrees have more value when they reflect a common understanding about graduates' knowledge and skills. They reason that this better serves students, colleges, graduate schools, and employers. Senate Bill 1440 could move California toward greater consensus on the meaning of degrees by creating common expectations about

students' lower-division preparation for a given major. This would still allow individual campuses to distinguish and specialize their programs in the junior and senior years. The development of TMC is a commendable step toward common understanding. The current process for determining similar CSU programs, however, could frustrate efforts to achieve a broader consensus.

***Students Could Be Denied Benefits.*** Based on the progress to date in matching TMC developed last year to CSU majors, it appears that a significant number of community college graduates with associate degrees for transfer could be denied many of the benefits of SB 1440 at some CSU campuses. These students could find that SB 1440's guarantee of priority admission and a 60-unit cap at CSU comes with a long line of asterisks and a short list of degree options within their major to which it applies. Students will have to weigh the conditional guarantees of SB 1440 (as implemented at some CSU campuses) against existing articulation and transfer agreements and other transfer pathways.

### **Unclear Whether CSU's Admission Policy Sufficiently Prioritizes SB 1440 Students**

Although the GPA bonuses of 0.1 and 0.2 provide some advantage to SB 1440 students, it is unclear to what extent they meet the requirement of SB 1440 to grant students with associate degrees for transfer "priority over all other community college transfer students." Following three or four admission cycles, we will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in ensuring these students access to the CSU system and to their preferred campuses and majors.

## **LAO RECOMMENDATIONS**

In 1960, California adopted a unique framework that sought to forge the state's higher education segments into a coordinated system

and promised universal access to a baccalaureate education. In adopting the Master Plan, the Legislature envisioned an efficient process

for students to transfer from the community colleges to the state’s four-year institutions. Notwithstanding this core principle, however, transfer course requirements for years have created significant obstacles for students.

Since enactment of SB 1440 in 2010, both CCC and CSU have taken a number of positive steps toward creating streamlined transfer pathways between the segments. Looking forward, our review finds that additional work needs to be done—by both segments—to achieve the Legislature’s intended goals. To help ensure that happens, we recommend the Legislature provide additional guidance and clarification to CCC and CSU on what is expected of them, as well as continued oversight to track their progress. Figure 6 summarizes our recommendations.

**Clarify Segmental Responsibilities Under SB 1440**

*Students Would Benefit From Development of Additional TMC.* In less than two years,

intersegmental faculty have made considerable progress in developing TMC. As a result of these collaborations, CCC students who successfully complete their lower-division major requirements as part of an associate degree for transfer should have confidence that they will be prepared for more-advanced major coursework at CSU. Yet, while the approximately 25 TMC that are either finalized or planned would cover a large share of students, that does not help thousands of other CCC-to-CSU transfer students. We recognize that it may be neither feasible nor necessary to develop a TMC in every discipline. (In 2010-11, about 70 CSU majors had ten or fewer CCC students transfer into them—8 majors had just one CCC transfer student.) Nevertheless, our review finds that there are still disciplines with fairly large enrollments without an existing or planned TMC. For example, majors such as graphic design and public administration each had more than 200 students transfer into them from CCC in 2010-11 (a larger number than geology, physics, and art history, each of which has

**Figure 6  
Summary of LAO Recommendations**

- ✓ **Goal 1: Expand the Number of Majors Covered by Transfer Model Curricula (TMC)**
  - Recommend the Legislature statutorily endorse the TMC approach as the preferred basis for associate degrees for transfer. Consider setting an expectation for the development of additional TMC (such as that TMC disciplines cover at least 90 percent of CCC transfer enrollments at CSU).
- ✓ **Goal 2: Increase the Number of TMC-Aligned Associate Degrees for Transfer**
  - Recommend the Legislature clarify in statute that community colleges create an associate degree for transfer in every major they offer that has an approved TMC. Consider establishing a timeline for achievement of full compliance.
- ✓ **Goal 3: Maximize the Number of Degree Opportunities at CSU for Students With a TMC-Aligned Associate Degree for Transfer**
  - Recommend the Legislature clarify in statute its expectation that—with limited exceptions—CSU campuses accept TMC-aligned associate degrees for transfer in each of the CSU degree options within a given major.
- ✓ **Begin Exploring Potential Next Steps if Legislature’s Goals Are Not Met**
  - Recommend the Legislature begin identifying next steps if the segments fall short of meeting the above goals. Potential actions could include involving external entities to address areas of poor compliance and the loss of some state funding (or increases if goals are exceeded).

a TMC). We recommend the Legislature statutorily endorse the TMC approach as the preferred basis for associate degrees for transfer, and perhaps even set an expectation for future TMC development—such as that TMC cover at least 90 percent of CCC-to-CSU transfer students.

In cases where there are justified differences within a major based on distinct strands within a discipline, we believe that developing separate TMC would be reasonable. These should be very limited in number, however, to avoid unnecessarily complicating transfer pathways for students, and CCC campuses should clearly identify the strand in the resulting TMC.

***Define Legislature’s Expectations of Community Colleges for Degree Creation.*** While some community colleges are rapidly developing associate degrees for transfer, the CCC system still has a considerable amount of work to do before the degrees become a widely available option for students. Earlier this year, the CCC Chancellor’s Office expressed its goal that, by the end of 2014, every community college have an associate degree for transfer in each major it offers where a TMC exists. We believe that this is consistent with legislative expectations for SB 1440 and recommend the Legislature clarify in statute its intent that community colleges achieve this goal. The Legislature also might consider expressing additional interim goals (such as 90 percent of majors having an associate degree for transfer by mid-2014), so that colleges’ progress can be tracked more closely along the way.

***Establish Expectations for Determination of Similar CSU Degrees.*** As discussed earlier, the CSU Chancellor’s Office has set a goal to have at least one similar degree option in each TMC in

which a campus offers a bachelor’s degree. As our analysis has shown, thus far the CSU system is falling short of realizing that goal. Even if CSU campuses were to achieve one degree option for every TMC, however, this still could be problematic for students. This is because the degree option might not be one a student is interested in (such as corporate management in a business major). In addition, a degree option that is honored at one campus might not be honored at another campus with the same concentration—resulting in confusion and limiting flexibility for students. We recommend the Legislature clarify its own expectation that not just one but—except in limited instances—*every* degree option within a major should fit to a TMC. Under this approach, CSU campuses still would have two full academic years of coursework at the upper-division level to provide students with more-specialized instruction in a given discipline.

***Begin Exploring Potential Next Steps if Legislature’s Goals Not Met.*** We believe that by clarifying its intent and establishing goals, the Legislature could help the segments fully realize what SB 1440 sought to accomplish. In the event that either or both segments fail to stay on track, however, we recommend the Legislature consider potential next steps or consequences. This might include commissioning an external academic review of program requirements in areas with poor compliance and/or limiting state funding for campuses or departments that fall short of expectations. In addition, the Legislature could identify potential ways of rewarding colleges for *exceeding* goals, such as providing additional program funding.

AN LAO REPORT

# APPENDIX

## Senate Bill No. 1440

### CHAPTER 428

An act to add Article 3 (commencing with Section 66745) to Chapter 9.2 of Part 40 of Division 5 of Title 3 of the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2010. Filed with Secretary of State September 29, 2010.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1440, Padilla. California Community Colleges: student transfer. Existing law establishes the 3 segments of public postsecondary education in this state. These segments include the California State University, the campuses of which are administered by the Trustees of the California State University, the University of California, which is administered by the Regents of the University of California, and the California Community Colleges, which are administered by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

Existing law establishes community college districts throughout the state, and authorizes them to provide instruction to students at community college campuses.

Existing law, known as the Donahoe Higher Education Act, authorizes the community colleges to grant associate in arts and associate in science degrees. The act also requires the regents, the trustees, and the board of governors to have as a fundamental policy the maintenance of a healthy and expanded program to increase the number of transfer students from community colleges.

This bill would enact the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act, which, commencing with the 2011–12 academic year, would require a student that receives an associate degree for transfer to be deemed eligible for transfer into a California State University baccalaureate program when the student meets prescribed requirements.

The bill would condition a community college district's receipt of state apportionment funds on its development and granting of associate degrees for transfer, unless each of the state's community college districts waives reimbursement for specified state-mandated costs of implementing the bill in accordance with a prescribed procedure.

This bill would prohibit a community college district from imposing any requirements, in addition to these requirements, for a student to be eligible for the associate degree for transfer, and would prohibit remedial noncollegiate level coursework from being counted towards the units required for the associate degree for transfer.

This bill would require the California State University to guarantee admission with junior status to any community college student who meets the requirements for the associate degree for transfer. This bill would not guarantee a student admission for specified majors or campuses, but would require the California State University to grant a student priority admission to his or her local California State University 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 California State University campus to which the student is admitted. This bill would authorize the California State University to require a transferring student to take additional coursework at the California State University in specified circumstances, and would prohibit the California State University from requiring a transferring student to repeat courses that are similar to those taken at the community college that counted towards the units required for the associate degree for transfer.

This bill would also require the Legislative Analyst’s Office to review and report to specified legislative committees and subcommittees, within a prescribed time period, on specified outcomes and recommendations related to this act.

By requiring a community college district to grant the associate degree for transfer in exchange for receipt of state apportionment funds, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) Since the enactment of the Master Plan for Higher Education in 1960, preparing students to transfer to a four-year university has been a core function of the California Community Colleges.
- (b) Successful progression from lower division coursework to degree completion is a basic principle of California higher education and is critical to the future of the state’s economy.
- (c) Currently, the coursework necessary to transfer to a campus of the California State University or the University of California differs from the coursework needed to earn an associate degree. As a result, many transfer students leave the community

college system having completed transfer requirements, but are unable to participate in community college graduation ceremonies, do not have a degree to show for their work, and are ineligible for some awards and scholarships because they did not fulfill current requirements for an associate degree.

(d) Today, one in every four jobs requires an associate degree or higher. In the near future, one in every three jobs will require an associate degree or higher.

(e) The Public Policy Institute of California projects that California will have one million fewer graduates than it needs in 2025, and that increasing transfer rates from community colleges to four-year postsecondary educational institutions would dramatically reduce the education skills gap.

(f) The community college system allows the state to address the serious projected shortage of educated workers.

(g) To meet workforce demands in a cost-effective way, incentivizing students to earn an associate degree while preparing for transfer to a four-year college or university, and recognizing that they have completed a transfer preparation course pattern, provides students encouragement and support to complete their overall educational pursuits.

SEC. 2. Article 3 (commencing with Section 66745) is added to Chapter 9.2 of Part 40 of Division 5 of Title 3 of the Education Code, to read:

Article 3. Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act

66745. This article shall be known, and may be cited as the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act.

66746. (a) Commencing with the fall term of the 2011–12 academic year, a student who earns an associate degree for transfer granted pursuant to subdivision (b) shall be deemed eligible for transfer into a California State University baccalaureate program when the student meets both of the following requirements:

(1) Completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units that are eligible for transfer to the California State University, including both of the following:

(A) The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements.

(B) A minimum of 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by the community college district.

(2) Obtainment of a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

(b) (1) As a condition of receipt of state apportionment funds, a community college district shall develop and grant associate degrees for transfer that meet the requirements of subdivision (a). A community college district shall not impose any requirements in addition to the requirements of this section, including any local college or district requirements, for a student to be eligible for the associate degree for transfer

and subsequent admission to the California State University pursuant to Section 66747.

(2) The condition of receipt of state apportionment funding contained in paragraph (1) shall become inoperative if, by December 31, 2010, each of the state's 72 community college districts has submitted to the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, for transmission to the Director of Finance, signed certification waiving, as a local agency request within the meaning of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution, any claim of reimbursement related to the implementation of this article.

(c) A community college district is encouraged to consider the local articulation agreements and other work between the respective faculties from the affected community college and California State University campuses in implementing the requirements of this section.

(d) Community colleges are encouraged to facilitate the acceptance of credits earned at other community colleges toward the associate degree for transfer pursuant to this section.

(e) This section shall not preclude students who are assessed below collegiate level from acquiring remedial noncollegiate level coursework in preparation for obtaining the associate degree. Remedial noncollegiate level coursework shall not be counted as part of the transferable units required pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a).

66747. Notwithstanding Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 66201), the California State University shall guarantee admission with junior status to any community college student who meets all of the requirements of

Section 66746. Admission to the California State University, as provided under this article, does not guarantee admission for specific majors or campuses.

Notwithstanding Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 66201), the California State University shall grant a student priority admission to his or her local California State University 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 California State University campus to which the student is admitted. A student admitted under this article shall receive priority over all other community college transfer students, excluding 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.

66748. (a) The California State University may require a student transferring pursuant to this article to take additional courses at the California State University so long as the student is not required to take any more than 60 additional semester units or 90 quarter units at the California State University for majors requiring 120

semester units or 180 quarter units. Specified high unit majors shall be exempt from this subdivision upon agreement by the Chancellors of the California State University and the California Community Colleges and their respective academic senates. (b) Community college transfer units shall not be applicable to upper division requirements at the California State University, unless agreed upon by the local Academic Senates of the California State University and the California Community Colleges and the transferred units do not exceed the required 60 semester units or 90 quarter units required pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 66746.

(c) The California State University shall not require students transferring pursuant to this article to repeat courses that are similar to those taken at the community college that counted toward the associate degree for transfer granted pursuant to Section 66746.

66749. (a) The Legislative Analyst's Office shall review and report to the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, the Senate Committee on Education, and the respective education finance budget subcommittees of the Assembly and the Senate in the spring of 2012, an update on the implementation of this article.

(b) The Legislative Analyst's Office shall also review and report to the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, the Senate Committee on Education, and the respective education finance budget subcommittees of the Assembly and the Senate, within four years of implementation of this article, on both of the following:

(1) The outcomes of implementation of this article, including, but not limited to, all of the following:

(A) The number and percentage of community college students who transferred to the California State University and earned an associate degree for transfer pursuant to this article.

(B) The average amount of time and units it takes a community college student earning an associate degree for transfer pursuant to this article to transfer to and graduate from the California State University, as compared to the average amount of time and units it took community college transfer students prior to enactment of this article, and compared to students using other transfer processes available.

(C) Student progression and completion rates.

(D) Other relevant indicators of student success.

(E) The degree to which the requirements for an associate degree for transfer take into account existing articulation agreements and the degree to which community colleges facilitate the acceptance of credits between community college districts, as outlined in subdivisions (c) and (d) of Section 66746.

(F) It is the intent of the Legislature that student outcome data provided under this subdivision include the degree to which the California State University was able to

accommodate students admitted under this article to a campus of their choice and a major that is similar to their community college major.

(2) Recommendations for statutory changes necessary to facilitate the goal of a clear and transparent transfer process, including whether this article should be made applicable to students transferring from community colleges to the University of California.

SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that the requirements placed on community college districts pursuant to this act shall be carried out in the normal course of program development and approval, course scheduling, and degree issuance and shall not represent any new activities or a higher level of service on the part of community college districts.

SEC. 4. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

AN LAO REPORT

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This report was prepared by Judy Heiman and Paul Steenhausen, and reviewed by Steve Boilard. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) is a nonpartisan office that provides fiscal and policy information and advice to the Legislature. To request publications call (916) 445-4656. This report and others, as well as an e-mail subscription service, are available on the LAO's website at [www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov). The LAO is located at 925 L Street, Suite 1000, Sacramento, CA 95814.