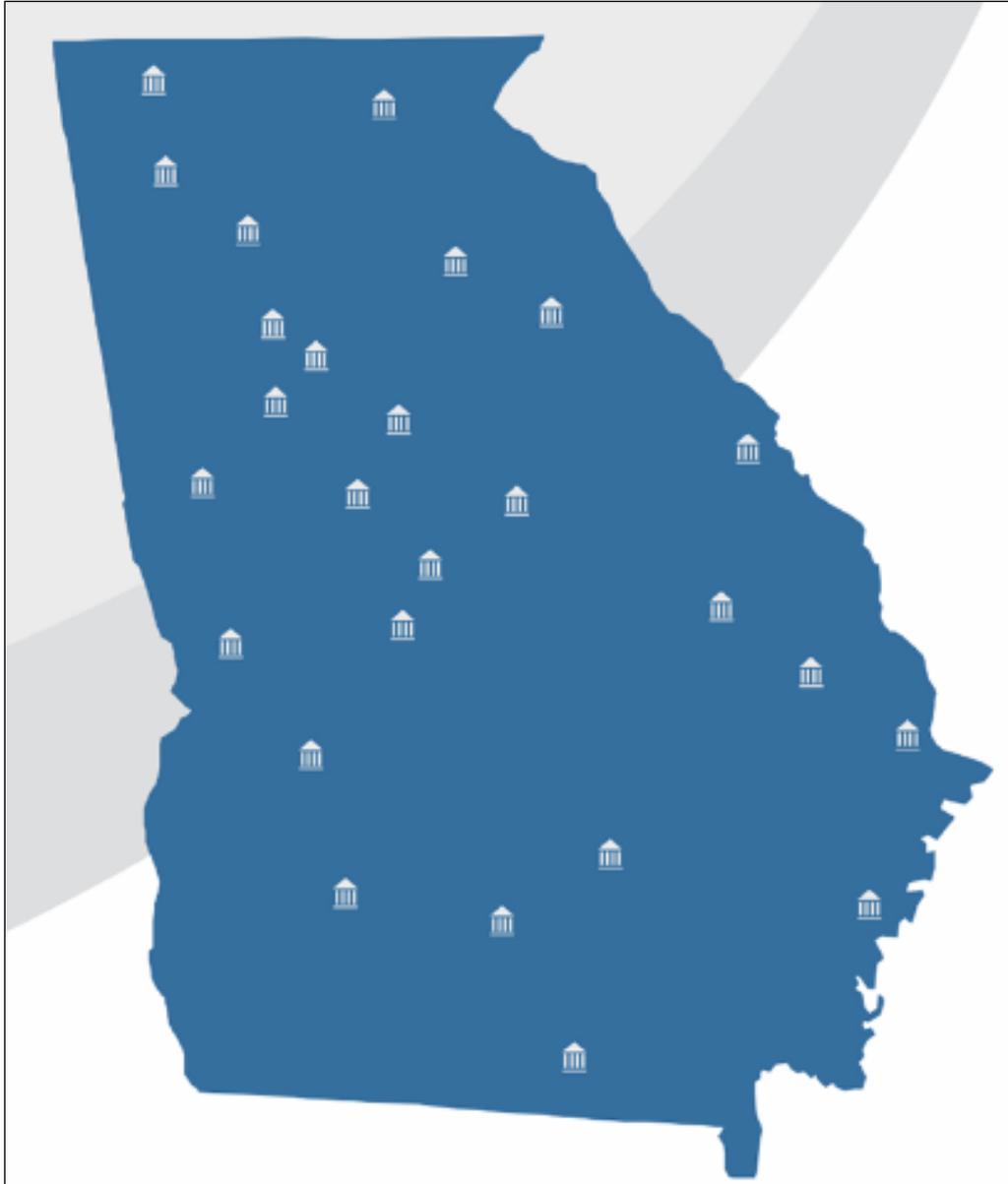**University System of Georgia**

# Transfer Improvement Initiative



## Presidents' Work Group on Transfer and Dual Enrollment

## August 19, 2024

# USG Transfer Improvement Initiative

In October 2022, Chancellor Perdue created the President's Workgroup on Transfer and Dual Enrollment because of concerns coming directly from USG presidents regarding improvements needed in transfer in the USG. The workgroup was convened, and in a series of meetings over several months the workgroup discussed specific concerns and identified barriers to effective transfer and developed specific action items to accomplish. It was clear that identification and implementation of actions would require convening a broad representation of system personnel related to transfer and require a significant effort over a period of time.

In the ensuing year a robust team of more than 100 USG staff and faculty came together to create the USG Transfer Improvement Initiative. Organized into four main workgroups, these individuals were charged to assess current transfer practices, identify barriers to effective transfer, and consider best practices in transfer student success. Workgroups were expected to develop recommendations that, when implemented, would lead to improvement in transfer across and into the University System and to enhance student success, academic progression, and graduation.

The four workgroups and actions identified by the President's Workgroup on Transfer and Dual Enrollment are:

## Assessment and Effectiveness Workgroup

The intended outcomes of this workgroup are to develop a methodology to assess the effectiveness of the USG Transfer "system," identify the appropriate key performance indicators to measure, and to suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

> Action 1: Develop key performance indicators and dashboards to monitor and track data related to transfer.

> Action 2: Complete a review of system transfer effectiveness using the Aspen Institute Playbook or Gardner Institute Transfer Foundations of Excellence framework (or other external method).

## Transfer Services & Technology Work Group

The purpose of this workgroup is to identify current and potential technology solutions to improve transfer student services, to determine the best processes and services to support student transfer, and to suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

> Action 1: Evaluate current campus business processes related to transfer articulation and related student services. Identify exemplar campus best practices and develop USG system-wide guidance/best practices to remove barriers that impact transfer students, including alignment to the Core IMPACTS.

Action 2: Evaluate technology *currently in use* related to transcript receipt, transcript review, transcript processing, etc., and make recommendations (where applicable) for system-enabled contracts and pricing.

Action 3: Identify and research *emerging technology* solutions that utilize Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to process transfer student transcripts to improve resource utilization across the USG, enhance the transfer student experience, and reduce errors and time to deliver of transfer articulation results. After review, recommend a potential system-wide solution in alignment with the Unified ERP project currently underway.


**Organization, Structure, Policy, and Procedures Workgroup**

The intended purpose of this workgroup is to assess system and institutional practices relating to transfer, review processes and policies impacting transfer, and to suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

Action 1:  Complete a USG Business Process Manual and Academic Affairs Handbook review to catalog relevant transfer policies, processes, and procedures.  Use such catalog to contribute to the system transfer effectiveness review.

Action 2:  Create strong system messaging around transfer--both internal and external.  This should include clear messages to institutions about the direction to make transfer easy and seamless, as well as marketing across the state for external constituents.

Action 3:  Assure that institutions and the system are current with course transfer tables and all associated web sites.

**Student Transition and Student Success (Strategy) Workgroup**

The purpose of this workgroup is to review and assess student-facing practices to improve the student transition and student success, to determine the proper personnel to assist and support transfer students, and to suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

Action 1:  Develop a method of sharing student data system-wide to ease transfer.  Implement transfer of data in the admission process including prior institution transcripts, immunizations, residency decisions, etc. so that students don't have to "reapply" with these documents.

Action 2: Develop a strong reverse degree conferral program so students who transfer get the degree which they have earned.

Action 3:  Confirm that each institution has a Transfer Coordinator that focuses on transfer student success by reducing barriers and enhancing programs and services.

Action 4:  Assure that each institution provides adequate transition support services including an orientation and timely transcript evaluation.

Action 5: Encourage institutions to assign specific personnel to transfer student success (RAs, Student Ambassadors, Academic Advisors, Faculty Mentors, Orientation Leaders, etc.

A comprehensive transfer system considers statewide and institutional policies, practice, and cultures across both sending and receiving institutions. Such a system is grounded in the partnership configurations between the student, the sending institution, and the receiving institution. Measuring the effectiveness of this complex system requires a host of key performance indicators that are intertwined with all aspects of the institution and transfer student life cycle, and at the state level. In addition to recommendations involving policy, procedures, and practice, specific key performance indicators are recommended to assist with analysis and assessment.

**Overarching Recommendations**

In their several meetings, the President's workgroup discussed not only the specific barriers and issues that institutions and students face regarding transfer, but they also discussed the broader context and culture surrounding transfer and the changes needed to improve transfer as a system. Three overarching recommendations emerged that will help us set that broader context and vision for the future.

First, over many years the USG has talked about unifying data for many purposes, but for this workgroup the discussion was around sharing data between institutions to ease transfer. Several of the recommendations, if enacted, will enhance the ability of the student to transfer, but the concept goes beyond the individual students. The overarching recommendation from the President's Workgroup is to employ current technology so that institutions can partner with each other to facilitate seamless student transfer. Why does a student that intends to transfer have to do all of the steps of the admission process when they have already done so at a previous USG institution? Shouldn't institutions share information (with proper updates) so that the student doesn't have to start at step one when they are considering another USG institution for transfer? We currently have the technology to facilitate such a transfer of data such that the process can be streamlined and more efficient. But this recommendation goes beyond just the sharing of data. It also requires institutions to actively assist students to transfer out— even though it impacts enrollment. Helping students enter sister institutions is also a worthy outcome, and necessary to maintain overall USG enrollment. It is noted that the future student system of the unified ERP will go even further in enhancing transfer by aggregating all data in a unified system, but even current technology allows us to move further down this path even without the implementation of a unified ERP.

Second, it was noted by the President's Workgroup that the information about transfer is lacking and that students and parents do not understand the process and have difficulties advocating for themselves because of that. Even basic terminology is misunderstood, and this lack of knowledge limits students and their supporters from taking the necessary steps to transfer. Additionally, institutional representatives may not fully understand all that is necessary and may not actively advocate for the student because of that—leaving the student to fend for themselves. The President's Workgroup recommends that the USG and member institutions embark on a major communication and marketing campaign to simplify the information around transfer and make and active effort to push that communication far and wide so that the knowledge of transfer and the transfer process is easily attainable and understandable. The campaign would be both internal and external, and permeate all constituent markets. It needs to be made clear that transfer is supported and encouraged for those

needing that option.  Interestingly, this aligns with the overarching recommendation from the USG Strategic Enrollment Plan regarding a broad marketing effort for the USG.

Finally, recognizing that any student transferring out of an institution instantly reduces that institution's enrollment and may impact retention and graduation rates (if the student entered as a first-time, full-time, degree seeking student).  Inasmuch as that impacts institutional budget allocations, the President's Workgroup supports consideration of a modification of the USG budget allocation process to reflect positive transfer outcomes.  Institutions should not be penalized for providing full participation and support for students transferring out and succeeding at their USG transfer institution.  Such adjustment would go a long way to galvanize internal support for a broader acceptance of transfer culture and active support for student transfer.

## Conclusion

The remainder of this document reflects the work and recommendations of each workgroup. Recommendations are not listed in priority order, but such prioritization should be the first step in the strategic implementation process and considerate of available resources.  Additionally, such recommendations should align with both the USG Strategic Plan 2029 and the USG Strategic Enrollment Plan (currently in draft form).

# Assessment and Effectiveness Workgroup

## Charge
Develop a methodology to assess the effectiveness of the USG Transfer "system," identify the appropriate key performance indicators to measure, and suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation #1: Build upon the efforts of individual workgroups and engage in comprehensive audit to explore USG and institutional transfer pathways and partnerships.**

The A&E workgroup reviewed [BOOSTing Transfer Partnerships to Promote Equitable and Affordable Transfer Pathways](#) (IHEP, April 2023) and the [Transfer Policy and Practice Audit Tool](#) (NISTS, September 2022), which could be used in combination to complete the audit. Each tool contains a blueprint for execution that can be tailored to the needs of the project. Findings from the other workgroups can be used to kickstart the information collection process. Once completed, the audit feedback can be used to create a road map that includes measurable goals for transfer system improvement over time.

**Recommendation #2: Evaluate existing and future systemwide transfer-related platforms to determine opportunities for synergy and/or reinvention.**

The USG System has, and will be, investing a great deal of resources in several transfer-focused and adjacent platforms that are ripe to be leveraged en route to smoothing transfer pathways. Specifically, [GA Transfer](#) portal is undergoing a transformation, and as the primary source for system-level transfer information is a critical player in the Transfer Improvement Initiative. Similarly, the USG's [Unified ERP](#) is

likely to present opportunities to streamline transfer-related services and practices. Finally, initiatives in the USG's Research and Policy Analysis Division strive to better capture, report, and utilize transfer student data and will provide a critical foundation to understanding transfer student migration and enrollment patterns, as well as completion data.

**Recommendation #3: Before determining the path forward post-audit, assess the readiness for states/systems to engage in building successful transfer pathways and initiatives.**

*State-level readiness* includes an exploration of policy infrastructure, statewide data dashboards, and statewide communication capacity to be leveraged to build public support for transfer efforts. *Regional or local readiness* includes the identification of one or more regions where addressing transfer equity gaps would make a statewide impact, and the existing collaboration between institutional leaders, community-based organizations, and workforce development to engage students and deliver on transfer commitments. *Institutional readiness* requires leaders demonstrate a commitment to revisiting their business models to better serve adults from low-income backgrounds and students of color in a post-COVID context. (TransferBOOST, 2023)

# Transfer Services & Technology Workgroup

## Charge
Identify current and potential technology solutions to improve transfer student services, determine the best processes and services to support student transfer, and suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

## Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Develop consistent standards to ensure that all USG institutions allow common Core IMPACTS courses to be used as transfer credit without requiring departmental level approval, overrides, and/or interventions.

USG institutions use varied methodologies for entering transfer credit. Further, many institutions require department level approval, override, and/or intervention to allow common Core IMPACTS courses to be used as transfer credit. As the USG implements the new Core IMPACTS curriculum, it is imperative that we ensure students can utilize coursework taken previously without undue burden. This practice benefits the student on their path towards graduation. Development of standards surrounding the acceptance of common Core IMPACTS courses will impact student success, retention, and ultimately graduation. This recommendation aligns with the implementation of the new Core IMPACTS demonstrating increased collaboration with academic affairs, enrollment management, and Registrars. The system will benefit in the areas of student success, retention, and will help students graduate on time.

Recommendation #2: Identify Core IMPACTS courses on USG transcripts to assist with transfer articulation.

Explore additional modifications to the current USG transcript (a GeorgiaBEST Enhancement to Baseline Banner) that would allow institutions to print some indicator or symbol to clearly identify Core IMPACTS courses as articulated at other USG institutions. This recommendation will allow USG institutions to better identify and utilize courses during transfer articulation as they were articulated at another USG institution. This course of action would increase productivity during transfer articulation and would ensure students transferring within the USG receive credit towards the Core IMPACTS.  Students transferring within the USG would have assurance that courses that met Core IMPACTS at one institution would also meet that same area at another USG institution. From a technology perspective, having an indicator on the current USG transcript would ease the burden of articulation review and subsequent credit assignment. This recommendation aligns succinctly with the Core IMPACTS, which will benefit students as they pursue their degree and ultimately graduate.

**Recommendation #3:** Develop USG-specific course attributes for Core IMPACTS courses to assist with intersystem transfer and with scribing in Degree Works.

Survey results from USG transfer articulation practitioners demonstrated that one pain point in the process will be the identification of the Core IMPACTS courses. Coupled with inclusion on the USG transcript (see previous recommendation), utilization of specific attributes for each Core IMPACTS section would provide the best method for scribing in Degree Works. This method would ensure student course works meets Core IMPACTS when transferring within the USG. This recommendation would require a significant effort across multiple stakeholder groups to determine the best methodology to assign course attributes for Core IMPACTS courses, develop potential crosswalks if institutions are already utilizing course attributes for core courses, and develop consistent sharable best practices in Degree Works for scribing using course attributes. This effort will enhance student success on the path to graduation and will ensure that students courses are used consistently when transferring within the USG. Further, this recommendation will provide a better student experience across the USG with respect to utilization of Degree Works.

**Recommendation #4**: Pursue system enabled pricing for Premium Licensing with a best-in-class transcript vendor to create consistency across the USG. This would allow all USG institutions to access and benefit from premium licensing, and potentially provide cost savings across all institutions.

Survey results from all USG transfer articulation practitioners revealed that there is variation in transcript technology and levels of service from vendors. Best practice systems allow transcripts to be automatically loaded into a student account and removes the need to download and manually move the transcript to the student record (in the campus imaging system, i.e., BDM). Of note, 24 out of 26 USG institutions use currently use Parchment as their transcript service provider, but not all have the Premium license. Expanding institutions' capabilities would improve transfer articulation processing in a significant way. Practitioners would no longer need to manually move transcripts to the student record in Banner. This recommendation would bring cost-savings to all USG institutions, allowing the smaller institutions to capitalize on system enabled pricing. Further, process improvements would be significant for transfer articulation practitioners.

**Recommendation #5:** Conduct a comprehensive system-wide review of existing internal practices and create USG system-wide best practices in relation to process maps and training for all aspects of the transfer articulation process (i.e., transfer course catalog, use of transfer course attributes, using Banner baseline pages effectively, etc.).

Survey results from USG transfer articulation practitioners clearly demonstrated that there are no standards, per se, in how courses are reviewed and articulated. Further, there are multiple Georgia Enhancements to Baseline Banner that system practitioners must use. Currently, review and data entry is manual which can lead to errors during the evaluation process. Errors and inconsistencies in transcript evaluation led to delayed delivery of results related to admissions and ultimately, to students. This recommendation is the best course of action in that it will standardize business processes thereby ensuring students have the same experience related to transfer articulation across the USG. Further, resource utilization would be improved by providing clear, concise methodologies and training for all aspects of the transfer articulation process. Potential outcomes, both short and long term, include reduction of errors during the transfer evaluation process, enhanced student experience across the USG, and resources for USG practitioners to lean into that are accurate and informative. This recommendation will be important to the USG as we approach the potential migration to a Unified ERP for student modules. The system will benefit in this preparatory work, as will USG institutions. Further, pursuit and completion of this recommendation will enhance the student experience related to transfer articulation.

**Recommendation #6**: Establish a cross-sector, cross functional area working group to conduct thorough research of potential transfer articulation processing solutions, potentially recommending a single USG solution.

Currently, nearly all transfer articulation related processing is manual. Only one USG institution is utilizing technology today (KSU). One USG institution is in the implementation stage for a newer technology that utilizes OCR and AI to perform transfer articulation processes (Georgia State University). Across the USG, practitioners indicated that technology to assist with the transfer evaluation process and subsequent articulation would be the best solution to alleviate all pain points. The identification and implementation of a transfer articulation processing solution is imperative in order to improve resource utilization across the USG, enhance the transfer articulation experience for students and reduce errors and time to delivery of transfer articulation results. This recommendation will mitigate a host of issues related to current USG transfer articulation processes. The short and long-term effects will include a better student experience, a decrease in time to delivery of transfer articulation results, and a reduction in errors. This recommendation aligns with the Unified ERP project for student modules and will benefit the USG in that it will align all institutions related to business processes provided by the solution selected.

**Recommendation #7**: Develop a centralized Transfer Gateway (portal) to facilitate the transfer admission process and ease administrative burden on students as they consider transfer.

The USG does not yet have a unified enterprise resource system and there are multiple different customer relationship management (CRM) systems in use across USG institutions.  Currently, a USG student who is interested in multiple institutions must interact with and apply to each of those institutions even to get basic information about transfer credit evaluation and academic program admission.  Additionally, actions that are required by board policy (i.e., submission of immunizations), although consistent in policy for all institutions, are very onerous and increase the amount of time for the student. With a more unified approach the admission process can be streamlined such that students would only have to submit documents once to be considered for admission at multiple institutions. This innovation would allow more centralized services and

communication, but also allow potential transfer institutions to engage with potential students—acting as a matching program and increasing student engagement and understanding. This recommendation aligns with the Unified ERP project and will align institutions and transfer practices.

# Student Success Workgroup

## Charge
Review and assess student-facing practices to improve the student transition and student success, determine the proper personnel to assist and support transfer students, and suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

## Recommendations
Based on the experience of the Student Success Workgroup members and feedback from campuses, it is clear the transfer process is complex and is compounded by how "invisible" transfer students may feel. Many students conduct much of the "exploration and discovery" phase of their transfer process independently, using web resources and peers first before turning to advisors and campus staff.

It is also known from institutional feedback that the procedures and process through which students transfer is disjointed and complicated at both the home and transfer institution—with numerous points where a student might need help navigating or understanding the process. To greater or lesser degrees institutional supports are in place, including dedicated advisors and admissions personnel, online resources, and checklists. Two key elements emerged in the personnel discussions – the need for a single, relatively senior person on campus to coordinate transfer and serve as the resource on policy and practice, and a sufficiently broad network of personnel across campus who have responsibility for transfer functions in their area.

**Recommendation #1:** Encourage all USG institutions to designate an Institutional Transfer Coordinator or Chief Transfer Officer (CTO) who is the institution's official point of contact on matters relating to transfer and is a resource for the System Office.

> Each institution currently has an individual who generally serves as the institutional transfer coordinator (ITC), but has other duties on campus unrelated to transfer. The roles and responsibilities of these positions vary widely across institutions. Increasing the consistency between institutions could support a stronger transfer network. The CTO should be viewed as a central point of contact for questions and issues related to transfer on their campus with the responsibility to elevate these thoughts to both institutional and System leadership. The CTO should also be the authority at the institution charged with coordinating and collaborating with other institutions on questions related to transfer. The CTO is responsible for the coordination of transfer activities and resources on campus and to help connect, organize, and engage the various personnel who have a role in supporting students in the transfer process. The CTO should maintain and publish a list of contacts for students (both current and potential) and the campus community (faculty and staff).  To be effective, this group of contacts should have an opportunity to meet and share their practices and procedures and be specifically trained in transfer-specific issues. Because the needs of students in the transfer process can often be highly complex, there should be personnel in key functional areas

who are designated as points of contact (PoC) and resources in support of Transfer Student Success. While the list of units may vary from institution to institution, among the departments in which a transfer PoC should be established include:

- Admissions
- Registrar's Office
- Financial Aid
- Advisors

- Student Life
- Housing
- Orientation
- FYE/SYE

**Recommendation #2**: Each institution should establish a comprehensive transition plan especially for Transfer Students that addresses common barriers of transfer enrollment and supports transfer students in their transition to the new campus.

Although orientation programs for direct-from-high school students are generally well-developed and comprehensive, the orientation and transition process for students who transfer are less developed and involve many "moving parts," not all of which are clearly articulated. This is compounded by the transfer student likely having some familiarity (and expectations) around processes at one institution that may not be the same at their next school. The complexity and uncertainty around the processes is compounded by uneven processes for connecting transfer students to their new institutional community.  Providing clarity and predictability in the transition and orientation process should reduce "transfer shock" and help to improve coordination across the institution. The development of checklists and clear transfer protocols will support a better understanding of process expectations for both the institution and students and may serve to identify efficiencies and opportunities for streamlining and simplification. Robust transfer student orientation programs will also eliminate the potential for students to "fall through the cracks" as they navigate their new institution. Such programs should greatly reduce student error, improve process compliance, and ease the overall obstacles to transfer. Additionally, for both students and institutions, these steps should make the processes more intentional and deliberate. There are opportunities for budgetary savings in error reduction and improvements in processes, as well as increased opportunity for retained student revenues if transfer students "stick." This recommendation has significant dependence on IT systems to allow for transfer students "cases" to be managed by multiple offices efficiently and effectively. The previously recommended technology enhancements will give institutions and students the ability to more clearly track processes and will provide critical supports to effectively communicate with transfer students.

**Recommendation #3**: Address technical and procedural barriers to fully implement the policies impacting the conferral of associate degrees through reverse transfer credit (Associate Degree You Deserve).

The University System has established a policy around conferring associate degrees through reverse transfer of credit. A key roadblock to broader utilization has been the technical and procedural barriers of sending transcripts back to the associate degree granting institution for review. In many instances, the conferral of degrees by reverse transfer requires substantial review by registrar personnel, and often yields very few degrees. The other barrier to broader utilization is awareness among both transfer students and advisors at the new institution. The technology recommendations in the earlier section should enhance our ability to administer such a program.  In addition, two

enhancements need to be implemented.  First, institutions should develop an opt-out option to be included on transfer applications or other technology associated with transfer.  Normalizing the awarding of the associate degree upon students meeting the requirements will increase the number of Georgians with a credential and enhance the outcomes of higher education in Georgia.  Second, following earlier recommendations regarding clarifying pathways will clarify when the transfer student has met the requirements for the associate degree. Finally, by promoting the practice through advising and course registration at a student's subsequent institution, more degrees would likely be conferred in this manner. Regular reviews of student records, combined with guaranteed transfer pathways (see below) would facilitate substantially more conferrals.

**Recommendation** #4:  Create an extensive catalog of Transfer Pathways that give confidence to potential transfer students when they follow an established, guaranteed transfer program of study so they do not lose credits by unnecessarily retaking courses or increase time to degree.

When transferring, students often face challenges getting credit for courses taken previously. While Georgia Transfer/GA Tracks provides visibility about which courses have historically been honored at receiving institutions, specific program requirements may mean courses are not applied. While courses in General Education are fully articulated across the System, specific course requirements and expectations may vary between institutions. Transfer Pathways outline the shared lower division course requirements for each program as well as indicating the courses required for the major.  By following a specific pathway at one USG institution, students can advance further into the curriculum, possibly earning an associate degree before transferring to complete a bachelor's degree. In most instances, courses included in the pathway are universally applied across all other institutions, with specific exceptions being clearly indicated. Transfer pathways would be crafted by disciplinary representatives from across the System and approved through a centralized review process to guarantee transfer of the first 60 credits of any program.  Models for development are relatively well-established, and Georgia's experience with an already robust articulation process means that much of the curriculum is currently aligned. A broader transfer pathway initiative would further support student mobility and success, by allowing students to truly "start where they are and finish where they want" in whatever field or discipline suits their skills and interests. A structured and system wide approach is far more navigable for students than alternative bilateral articulation agreements, which require students to know where they intend to complete their degree at the very beginning. Transfer pathways should decrease credit loss at transfer and could potentially increase the credit hours earned at the first institution. Current transfer rules advantage students who transfer earlier to minimize lost credits, which can have financial and progression implications. Incentivizing completion of more credits at a first institution could decrease student costs and time to degree by allowing students to start their academic careers at lower-cost institutions before transferring and finishing their degrees without less uncertainty.

# Organization, Structure, Policy & Procedures Workgroup

## Charge

Assess system and institutional practices relating to transfer, review processes and policies impacting transfer, and suggest potential actions and interventions to affect improvement leading to easier and more seamless transfer between USG institutions and from outside the system.

## Recommendations

This section includes a chart of all policies and guidance that is related to transfer students and below are specific recommendations about the revision of these policies and guidance that will positively impact the transfer student experience, decrease barriers, and lead to increased enrollment.

**Action 1—Transfer Student Policies and Academic and Student Affairs Handbook Guidance**

| Board of Regents (BoR) Policies Impacting Transfer & Transient Students |
| --- |
| Policy 3.3.1, Core Curriculum: Core IMPACTS |
| Policy 3.3.4, United States and Georgia History and Constitutions |
| Policy 3.3.5, University System and Technical College System of Georgia Articulation Agreement<br><br>Policy 3.3.5.1, Associate Degrees<br><br>Policy 3.3.5.2, General Education Course Transfer |
| Policy 3.3.6, Academic Credit Earned Through Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning<br><br>Policy 3.3.6.1, Course Credit Earned from Military Experience<br><br>Policy 3.3.6.2, Course Credits for Standardized Examinations |
| Policy 3.5, Grading System<br><br>Policy 3.5.1.1, Grades Approved in Determining Grade Point Average<br><br>Policy 3.5.3, Grade Point Average Upon Academic Renewal |
| Policy 3.8, Degrees |
| Policy 4.1.6, Admission of Persons Not Lawfully Present in the United States |

Policy 4.2.1, Admission Requirements for Programs Leading to an Associate or Baccalaureate Degree

    Policy 4.2.1.5, Transfer Admission Requirements

    Policy 4.2.1.6, International Transfer Admission Requirements

    Policy 4.2.1.7, Exceptions to Transfer Requirements

    Policy 4.2.1.8, Non-Traditional Requirements

Policy 4.2.2, Admission Requirements for Programs Not Leading to the Baccalaureate Degree

    Policy 4.2.2.4, Admission of Transient Students

    Policy 4.2.3.2, Referral of Students to Other Institutions

    Policy 4.2.3.3, Right to Refuse Admission

Policy 4.3.2, Classification of Students for Tuition Purposes

Policy 4.8.2, Immunization Requirements for Students

Policy 7.3.4, Out-of-State Tuition Waivers and Waiver of Mandatory Fees

| Academic & Student Affairs Handbook (ASAH) Sections Impacting Transfer & Transient Students |
| --- |
| ASAH Section 2.3.5, Degree Requirements |
| ASAH Section 2.4.4, Details Regarding Areas A-F |
| ASAH Section 2.4.9, Transfer Rules |
| ASAH Section 2.4.10, Common Course Prefixes, Numbers, and Descriptions |
| ASAH Section 2.17, Acceptance of Core Coursework and Placement Test Scores from TCSG Colleges |
| ASAH Section 2.16, Academic Credit for Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning |

| |
|---|
| ASAH Section 2.5.1, Academic Renewal |
| ASAH Section 3.1.1.5, Transfer Requirements |
| ASAH Section 3.1.1.6, International Transfer Requirements |
| ASAH Section 3.1.1.7, Exceptions to Transfer Requirements |
| ASAH Section 3.1.1.8, Non-Traditional Requirements |
| ASAH Section 3.1.2.4, Admission of Transient Students |

**Recommendation #1:**  The workgroup recommends exploring options for assessing the core requirements for students with an associate or bachelor's degree earned outside the USG.

BoR Policy 3.3.1 states that "students at all institutions must meet the Core IMPACTS requirements in all specified areas." The workgroup noted that requiring the completion of Core IMPACTS can present a barrier to transfer students who have already earned an associate or bachelor's degree outside the USG.

Relevant Policy/Guidance:  BoR Policy 3.3.1 – Core Curriculum: Core IMPACTS

**Recommendation #2--**Explore options to provide incoming transfer students additional time to make progress towards completing their Area A1 and A2 requirements.

Per Section 2.4.4 of the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook, students who have earned 30 semester hours but have not completed:

Area A1 - must enroll in the next course necessary to make progress toward completing Area A1 in every semester in which they take classes.

Area A2 - must enroll in the next course necessary to make progress toward completing Area A2 in every semester in which they take classes.

The workgroup noted that it can be problematic for entering transfer students, especially those approaching, meeting, or exceeding 30 transfer hours with outstanding Area A1 and/or Area A2 requirements, to immediately enroll in the required coursework in their first term(s).

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  ASAH Section 2.4.4 – Details Regarding Areas A-F

**Recommendation #3:** Explore options to better allow receiving institutions to identify courses used in the core at a student's previous USG institution and the autonomy to permit courses that counted in the core at a previous institution to also count in the student's core upon transfer.

The workgroup noted that it can be challenging for a receiving institution to identify the courses a previous USG institution used in a student's core. The workgroup reported that this is the result of institutions having different courses approved to count in the core and lack of an efficient way for a receiving institution to identify the courses used to satisfy a student's core at a previous institution, especially when substitutions have been made.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** ASAH Section 2.4.9 – Transfer Rules

**Recommendation #4:** Develop opportunities to allow students to retain their credit upon transfer if their grade met the minimum at the institution where that credit was initially earned.

Section 2.4.9 of the ASAH states that "provided that native and transfer students are treated equally, institutions may impose additional reasonable expectations, such as grade of "C" in Area A-F courses." The workgroup noted that students can lose credit when transferring from one USG institution to another USG institution due to meeting the minimum grade requirement at their prior institution but not at the receiving institution.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** ASAH Section 2.4.9 – Transfer Rules

**Recommendation #5:** Guidance should be added to the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook to clarify how institutions should consider an institution's accreditation in the transfer credit evaluation process to ensure consistency across the USG.

Neither Board Policy nor the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook specify how regional accreditation, or lack of regional accreditation, should be considered when reviewing credit for transfer. The workgroup noted that institutions may need additional guidance on how to interpret and potentially implement guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, SACSCOC, and AACRAO, CHEA, & ACE on the matter to ensure consistence across the USG.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** ASAH Section 2.4.9 – Transfer Rules

**Recommendation #6:** The workgroup recommends that steps be taken to increase awareness of the existing transfer policies and guidance that are already in place to minimize students losing transfer credit awarded by one USG institution when transferring to another USG institution. This could include additional training opportunities as well as a mechanism for institutions to more easily locate existing transfer-related policies and guidance. The workgroup also recommends developing additional general guidelines around transfer (for example, guidelines for the consideration of institution accreditation in transfer credit review) to help ensure more consistency across the system and to make those easily accessible in from one place.

The workgroup noted that students can lose transfer credit granted in the core by one USG institution when transferring to another USG institution.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**     [ASAH Section 2.4.9 – Transfer Rules](#)

**Recommendation #7:**   The workgroup recommends taking steps to ensure all institutions grant transfer credit without consideration of course modality.

The workgroup noted that some institutions do not grant transfer credit for coursework based on modality even though the same course may be offered on their campus.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**     [ASAH Section 2.4.9 – Transfer Rules](#)


**Recommendation #8:**   The workgroup noted that consistency in the use of the common course titles, prefixes, numbers, and descriptions across the system can bring transparency and predictability to transfer. To achieve more consistency, the workgroup recommends:

- Updating Section 2.4.10 to reflect that common course titles must be used.
- Exploring ways to increase the use of the common course details across the USG.
- Establishing clear and consistent communication channels for announcing changes to Section 2.4.10.

The workgroup noted that Section 2.4.10 doesn't indicate that institutions must use the common course titles. In addition, the common course prefixes, numbers, and descriptions are not consistently utilized across the USG. Further, the workgroup noted that all impacted institution faculty & staff may not receive notification when a change is made to the common course details listed in the Handbook and, as a result, some institutions may not realize they are not using the most current common course details.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** [ASAH Section 2.4.10 – Common Course Prefixes, Numbers, and Descriptions](#)


**Recommendation #9:**   Increase opportunities for institutions to grant academic renewal as part of the admission process. The workgroup also recommends exploring options for increasing student awareness when this is an option at their institution and the impact on transfer. Lastly, the workgroup recommends taking steps to increase consistency in how renewed coursework is interpreted by a receiving institution.

The workgroup observed that the guidance provided in Section 2.5.1 gives institutions the discretion to determine how certain aspects of Academic Renewal are implemented. One aspect set by institutions is whether applicants can apply for Academic Renewal during the admission process so that renewed coursework can be omitted when determining admission eligibility for admission. The workgroup noted that some institutions may not be aware that academic renewal may be granted as part of the admission process. Also, some applicants may not understand that academic renewal may be an option at their institution or the implications. Lastly, the workgroup noted that there may be inconsistency in how coursework renewed at a previous institution is keyed into Banner by a receiving institution.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**     [ASAH Section 2.5.1 – Academic Renewal](#)

**Recommendation #10:**  Recognizing that the legislative requirements are mandated by state statute and must be satisfied through coursework or exam, the workgroup recommends the adoption of a free online Georgia history and constitution course and exam that all USG institutions could make available to

O.C.G.A. § 20-3-68 and BoR Policy 3.3.4 state that "No undergraduate student shall receive a certificate of graduation or a degree without successfully completing coursework or passing a satisfactory examination on the history of the United States, the history of Georgia, and the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and the Constitution of Georgia."

When completed at USG, TCSG or select private institutions in Georgia, students typically satisfy the requirements with POLS 1101 and HIST 2110, 2111 or 2112 credit. When credit for these courses is earned out-of-state or through AP/IB/CLEP/DSST credit, students do not receive the Georgia-specific instruction so the Georgia requirements must be completed through examination. Currently, the exams are developed by each institution, typically do not include instruction to help students prepare, and may require an examination fee.

The workgroup noted that Albany State University currently offers a tutorial and exemption test, available through POLS 0100 (a no-cost course), for their students lacking the Georgia requirements. The work group recommends making a virtual course similar to the ASU POLS 0100 available systemwide.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**        BoR Policy 3.3.4 - United States and Georgia History and Constitutions


**Recommendation #11:** The workgroup recommends evaluating the policy that requires an institution to recognize credit awarded for extra-institutional or prior learning at a previous USG institution only if the student successfully completed a higher-level course in the course sequence at the sending institution.

BoR Policy 3.3.6 states that "credits awarded for extra-institutional and prior learning by one USG institution shall transfer as the designated course to another USG institution if a student has passed a higher-level course in the course sequence offered at the previously attended USG institution."

Under the above policy, a USG institution may opt not to grant credit already awarded by another USG institution for a student's extra-institutional or prior learning if the student did not subsequently pass a higher-level course in the course sequence at the sending institution. As a result, a student may lose credit when transferring from one USG institution to another and additional coursework may be required to meet degree requirements.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  BoR Policy 3.3.6 – Academic Credit Earned Through Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning


**Recommendation #12:**  To minimize the duplication of work and inconsistency in results across the system, the workgroup recommends that the USO facilitate institutions sharing their evaluations and resulting credit awards for specific extra-institutional and prior learning. Furthermore, the workgroup recommends that the USO facilitate the sharing of best practices related to extra-institutional and prior

learning assessment to help institutions ensure they are meeting or exceeding industry best practices in this area.

BoR Policy 3.3.6 and ASAH Section 2.16 state that "institutions shall maintain a review process for extra-institutional and prior learning that adheres to SACSCOC policies and guidelines, minimizes the number of credits that do not contribute to progress toward a degree program, and does not improperly affect student eligibility for financial aid."

Currently, each institution independently reviews extra-institutional and prior learning to determine the appropriate credit to award. This leads to inefficiencies as similar reviews are duplicated across the system. This also leads to inconsistencies as institutions independently reach different conclusions about the credit to be awarded for comparable learning.

The workgroup noted that once there is more clarity and consistency across the system in how credit is awarded for extra-institutional and prior learning, the USO and USG institutions will be better positioned to then promote credit opportunities for extra-institutional and prior learning to prospective and current students.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** [BoR Policy 3.3.6 – Academic Credit Earned Through Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning](#)


**Recommendation #13:**  The workgroup recommends exploring the possibility of allowing institutions to grant credit for minimum SAT and ACT scores and/or to satisfy or waive A1 and/or A2 requirements for students demonstrating subject matter proficiency through the submission of outstanding SAT or ACT scores.

The workgroup noted that, in addition to AP, IB, CLEP, DANTES, and approved departmental exams, certain SAT and ACT scores may demonstrate prior learning in English and mathematics.

The following institutions may serve as examples:

[Angelo State University](#)

[Sam Houston State University](#)

[Utah State University](#)

[Western Kentucky University](#)


**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  [ASAH Section 2.16 – Academic Credit for Extra-Institutional & Prior Learning](#)


**Recommendation #14:**  The workgroup recommends that steps be taken to establish more consistency in the credits awarded for exam scores across the system.

While ASAH Section 2.16 states that "the particular courses for which students receive college credit may vary from institution to institution, dependent on what courses the institution offers", it

also notes that institutions shall "attempt to have consistency in terms of minimum scores for awarding credit and the course(s) for which credit is awarded across the USG for common-numbered core courses based on recommendations made by System-wide Regents' Advisory Committees (RACs) for the discipline (where available)."

The workgroup noted that despite the required consideration of the ACE and RAC credit recommendations, there is considerable variation in the credit USG institutions award for exam scores.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  ASAH Section 2.16 – Academic Credit for Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning

**Recommendation #15:**  The workgroup recommends evaluating the requirement that an institution recognize credit awarded for an exam score at a previous institution only if the student successfully completed a higher-level course in the course sequence at the previous institution.

ASAH Section 2.16 includes the following:

*For students transferring in with credit awarded at another institution for core courses based on standardized test scores, if the student has passed a higher level course in the course sequence offered at the sending institution, the core credit must be awarded as core transfer credit even if the receiving institution does not offer comparable course(s).*

*For students transferring in with credit based on standardized test scores awarded for courses outside the core, credit must be awarded if the student has passed another course in the sequence and the course(s) for which credit(s) has (have) been awarded is (are) part of the requirements for the degree the student is seeking.*

Based on the above, a student granted credit based on standardized exam scores at one institution may lose that credit when transferring if a higher-level course in the course sequence was not passed at the sending institution.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  ASAH Section 2.16 – Academic Credit for Extra-Institutional and Prior Learning

**Recommendation #16:**  The workgroup recommends establishing a clear process for additional courses to be considered for inclusion on the TCSG-USG Course Transfer Chart. Furthermore, the workgroup recommends that the USO regularly collect and  review the institution-level articulation agreements to identify the TCSG-USG courses that have reached a pre-determined threshold for consideration for inclusion on the TCSG-USG Course Transfer Chart.

Section 2.17 provides a link to the TCSG-USG Course Transfer Chart which lists the 28 courses currently approved at the system level for transfer between the TCSG & USG institutions. The

ASAH also states that "USG institutions may create more expansive agreements with a local TCSG institution."

The workgroup recognized that substantial course articulation agreements exist beyond those listed in the TCSG-USG Course Transfer Chart and noted that localized articulations, while necessary and beneficial to students, can present a barrier to transfer, especially for those students who do not remain in their local area for transfer.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** ASAH Section 2.17 – Acceptance of Core Coursework and Placement Test Scores from TCSG Colleges

**Recommendation #17:** The workgroup recommends exploring options to establish increased consistency in GPA calculations across the USG.

The workgroup observed that the USG institutions do not use the same grading scale. Specifically, the University of Georgia and Georgia State University are approved to use +/-. Neither BoR Policy not the ASAH guidance specify how +/- grades should be calculated into a student's GPA in transfer. Further, the workgroup noted that there is inconsistency in how repeat courses are calculated in a student's GPA. The workgroup noted that inconsistency in how GPAs are calculated across the USG leads to confusion when students transfer.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 3.5.1.1 – Grades Approved in Determining Grade Point Average

**Recommendation #18:** The workgroup recommends that additional information about the degree requirements for students seeking a second degree be added to the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook.

The workgroup observed there is inconsistency in the degree requirements for degree-seeking postbaccalaureate students seeking a second bachelor's degree. It was also observed that the inconsistencies across the system may be the result of lack of clear guidance on the requirements for students seeking a second degree. The workgroup noted this can result in students potentially taking more credits than is required for their second degree.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 3.8 - Degrees and ASAH Section 2.3.5 – Degree Requirements

**Recommendation #19:** The workgroup recommends exploring opportunities to increase consistency in how admission transfer GPAs are calculated across the USG.

Neither Board Policy nor the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook specify how a transfer GPA should be calculated. For example, the following   are not addressed:

- How +/- grades are included in the transfer GPA calculation for admissions
- How repeated courses are included in the transfer GPA calculation for admissions

- How grade forgiveness from a previous institution impacts a student's GPA calculation for admissions.

As a result, there is inconsistency in how transfer GPAs are calculated across the USG which can create confusion for students considering, or in the process of, transferring. It also makes it difficult for institutions to refer students not meeting their GPA requirement to another institution for consideration.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 4.2.1.5 – Transfer Admission Requirements and ASAH Section 3.1.1.5 – Transfer Requirements

**Recommendation #20:** The workgroup recommends that the "eligible to continue or return to sending institution" transfer admission requirement for the state college sector be reviewed.

The workgroup noted that Board Policy only specifies that being "eligible to continue or return to sending institution" is a transfer admission requirement  for the state college sector. For the other sectors, a minimum transfer GPA is specified. It was further noted that a student could meet the minimum transfer GPA but be ineligible to continue or return to their sending institution.

The following questions should be considered:

- As the sector with an access mission, should the state colleges be required to consider a student's eligibility to continue or return to their sending institution?
- Should the "eligible to continue or return to sending institution" requirement be added to the minimum criteria listed for the other sectors?

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 4.2.1.5 – Transfer Admission Requirements

**Recommendation #21:** The workgroup recommends reviewing the policy that only allows students who have been out of high school at least five years <u>and</u> whose high school class graduated high school at least five years ago to be considered non-traditional freshmen.

The workgroup noted there is inconsistency in the Non-Traditional Freshmen and Non-Traditional Transfer admission policy:

- To be a non-traditional freshman, policy specifies that a student must have been out of high school at least five years <u>and</u> their high school class must have graduated at least five years ago.
- To be a non-traditional transfer, policy specifies that a student must have been out of high school at least five years <u>or</u> their high school class must have graduated at least five years ago.

The workgroup noted that the above inconsistency leads to confusion. Further, the "and" in the non-traditional freshmen requirements results in some students not qualifying despite their class

having graduated five or more years ago. An example would be an adult student who decided to return to a non-traditional high school to earn their high school diploma in the last 5 years. Also, it is not clear how the policy applies to students participating in TCSG's Career Plus program.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  BoR Policy 4.2.1.8 – Non-Traditional Requirements

**Recommendation #22:**  The workgroup recommends exploring the development of policy/guidance related to minimum HSE scores for admission and/or for exempting LS placement. The workgroup also recommends exploring the possibility of granting credit based on HSE scores.

BoR Policy indicates a high school diploma or equivalency (HSE) is required for admission as a non-traditional freshman or non-traditional transfer. The ASAH specifies that the USG recognizes the GED, HiSET, and TASC HSE tests but scores are not addressed. However, the GED website, for example, shows a score of 145 is required for a student to earn their GED, 165-174 to be considered college-ready (potential for college-level placement without placement testing), and 175-200 to potentially earn college credit.

The workgroup noted that some institutions have implemented minimum HSE test scores which results in inconsistency in the non-traditional admission requirements across the USG. Further, the ASAH does not address the use of  HSE scores to exempt LS placement or for college credit to be granted.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  BoR Policy 4.2.1.8 – Non-Traditional Requirements and ASAH Section 3.1.1.8 – Non-Traditional Requirements

**Recommendation #23:**  The workgroup recommends clarifying in either BoR Policy or the Academic & Student Affairs Handbook that non-traditional exceptions can be made. The workgroup further recommends defining parameters and limitations for non-traditional exceptions.

The workgroup noted that neither BoR Policy 4.2.1.8 nor ASAH Section 3.1.1.8 indicate that non-traditional freshman and non-traditional transfer admission exceptions can be made despite this having been established as an allowable practice. As a result of not having non-traditional exceptions defined in the BoR Policy or the USG guidance, there is inconsistency in the consideration and granting of non-traditional exceptions across the USG.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:**  BoR Policy 4.2.1.8 – Non-Traditional Requirements and ASAH Section 3.1.1.8 – Non-Traditional Requirements

**Recommendation #24:**  The workgroup recommends reviewing the requirement that transients submit a new application for each term of enrollment.

The workgroup observed that Section 3.1.2.4 of the ASAH permits transient students to attend consecutive terms but are required to submit a new admission application for each term of transient attendance. The workgroup noted that requiring a new application for each consecutive

term of transient attendance presents an unnecessary barrier for students needing to enroll more than one term to complete coursework required for degree completion at their home institution.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** ASAH Section 3.1.2.4 – Admission of Transient Students


**Recommendation #25:** The workgroup recommends exploring options to allow students granted an out-of-state tuition waiver by one USG institution to maintain that waiver when transferring to another USG institution or temporarily attending another USG institution as a transient student in certain situations.

> BoR Policy 7.3.4.1 provides eight categories of out-of-state tuition waivers that allow USG institutions to waive the out-of-state tuition differential for students classified as out-of-state but meeting specific waiver eligibility criteria. Several of the USG out-of-state tuition waivers are limited to specific institutions, have institution-specific requirements, and/or have limits on the number of waivers that can be awarded. As a result, a student granted an out-of-state tuition waiver by one USG institution isn't guaranteed receipt of that waiver at when attending another USG institution as a transfer or transient student. The workgroup noted that this presents a barrier to degree completion which is especially likely to negatively impact Presidential and Border State Residents waiver recipients transferring from a state college to an institution in another sector.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 7.3.4.1 – Out-of-State Tuition Waivers


**Recommendation #26: Recommendation(s):** The workgroup recommends exploring opportunities to add more transparency and/or predictability to the mandatory fee waivers so students can better anticipate the additional education expenses they are likely to incur when transferring.

> Policy 7.3.4.1 indicates that institutions may waive or reduce mandatory fees in eight specified situations. The workgroup noted that the lack of consistency in the mandatory fee waiver from institution to institution can result in a student losing their mandatory fee waiver when transferring from one USG institution to another USG institution. It also makes it difficult for a student to anticipate potential increases in cost of attendance when transferring.

**Relevant Policy/Guidance:** BoR Policy 7.3.4.2 – Waiver of Mandatory Fees

**Action 2--Create strong system messaging around transfer - both internal and external. This should include clear messages to institutions about the direction to make transfer easy and seamless, as well as marketing across the state for external constituents.**

One theme that carried across the OSP[2] workgroup's discussions is that the USG institutions currently do not have a structured way to collaborate on issues specifically related to transfer. The conversations suggested that the USG system and institutions could see tremendous increases in consistency and efficiency if there were a mechanism for information, best practices, and other resources related to transfer to more easily be shared. With a better framework for collaborating on key transfer issues, instead of tackling challenges individually, institutions could efficiently build upon the great work of each other.

From that perspective, the workgroup considered the following:

- What are the key elements an internal resource should include?

- What key topics should the internal resource cover?

**Recommendation #27:** The workgroup recommends the creation of a password-protected USG resource to facilitate USG faculty and staff collaboration & sharing on issues related to transfer. The workgroup recommends the following for that resource:

**Key Elements:** Recognizing that the organization and features of the resource may evolve over time, the following are recommended for inclusion in the initial development:

- USG institution best practices focused on the key transfer topics

- Library of USG institution articulation agreements with TCSG and GA private institutions

- Links to each institution's transfer equivalency look-up

- Searchable FAQs organized by the key transfer topics

- USO announcements related to transfer

- Quick links to BoR policies and guidance related to transfer

- Discussion board for USG faculty and staff to discuss topics related to transfer

**Key Topics:** Recognizing that topics will evolve over time, the following are initially recommended:

- Transfer admission

- Core IMPACTS

- Prior learning assessment

- Review of military credit

The workgroup observed there is very limited public-facing information for the transfer audience on the USG website and much of that information is provided in the form of formal policy and guidance rather than in a student-friendly way. The workgroup noted that one impactful way the USG can provide clear external messaging around transfer would be to create a comprehensive USG transfer landing page designed with students interested in transferring within or to the USG in mind.

The workgroup noted that the existing GATransfer site may serve this purpose well with additional USG content.

The workgroup recommends the following in the development of an external transfer resource:

- Include messaging and information for both internal USG transfers and external transfers.

- Ensure the website is usable and well-organized - it must be easy for students to quickly find the information they need when they need it.

- Utilize a student focus group to ensure the right resources and information are provided.

- Include an option for students to indicate interest so leads can be generated.

- Consult the NISTS resources to ensure adherence to best practices in the messaging & design.

**Action 3--Assure that institutions and the system are current with course transfer tables and all associated websites**

The workgroup noted that prospective transfer students can be savvy shoppers and often want to know how their credits will transfer before they even make the decision to apply to an institution. Sometimes students compare institutions to determine their quickest path to graduation. And some students, such as dual enrollment students, want to proactively research transferability before registering for the courses they will eventually seek to transfer.

The workgroup recognized it is critical that students have easy access to current and accurate course transfer information. The workgroup also recognized that GATransfer (formerly GATRACS) is an existing resource designed to help students research how their courses may transfer and quickly compare Georgia institutions by the transfer credit they are likely to receive, saving students from having to visit individual institution websites.

The workgroup identified the following barriers to students taking full advantage of GATransfer:

- Students don't have awareness of GATransfer.

- GATransfer isn't always the best source for the most current course transfer information.

- The GATransfer interface isn't the most appealing/student-friendly and the required account creation can discourage usage.

- The process for the institutions to submit their data and for the GATransfer staff to process the data is time-consuming.

**Recommendation #28:** The workgroup recommends the following to increase the value and usage of GATransfer:

- Increase promotion of the GATransfer resources.  Consider more prominently displaying the GATransfer information and link on the USG and institution websites.

- Consider redesigning the tool to make it more visually appealing to the transfer student audience and easier to use.

- Explore ways to reduce the time and effort for institution and GATransfer staff to process the course data to make it easier to keep the tool current.

- Consider making a version of the course transfer look up available to students without requiring account creation. Explore making an account required only for those who want to save their research for future reference.

**Action 4--Document any additional barriers not included in Actions 1-3 and provide recommendations.**

The workgroup identified several barriers and issues not originally included in the Actions, but that need further exploration and recommendations:

1. Establish a process for the regular review of the transfer and transient-related policies, procedures, and guidance that includes opportunities for institution input.

2. Develop a mechanism for institutions to share and discuss available technologies that could increase institution efficiencies in transfer admission, credit evaluation, etc. and therefore improve the transfer student experience. Initiate opportunities for system-level pricing when it is determined a solution could benefit multiple USG institutions. This could include immunizations, lawful presence, tuition classification, transcript evaluation, etc.

3. Explore opportunities to move some processes to a shared or collaborative model so students transferring or attending transient within the USG don't have to submit the same documents more than once.

4. Consider options to make it easier for students to explore potential PLA opportunities.

5. Institute an annual or biannual USG transfer fair for students within and outside the USG to learn more about the USG institutions.

6. Establish more transcript uniformity within USG.

7. Explore creating a GEORGIA MATCH-type program for transfers.

8. Develop a mechanism for institution to refer their graduates to other institutions when they don't offer a subsequent program in the student's area of study (associate degree to bachelor's degree referrals and bachelor's degree to graduate degree referrals).

9. Develop mechanism for USG institutions to notify the other USG institutions when a new course is created so transferability can be proactively established.

10. Change culture so that institutions are encouraged to build helping students transfer into their student success programs. It should be recognized that sometimes students end up at an institution that isn't a good fit and the focus should be on helping them find a better fit within the USG.

11. Consider developing a transfer guide for the USG so students don't have to figure out transfer on their own.

12. Explore options for reducing transcript costs for students, including establishing a centralized state system where students could submit their transcripts to a single place and then order from that single place.

13. Consider how we can simplify or clarify the steps needed for financial aid when students transfer or attend another institution as a transient.

14. Offer system-wide training on the different aspects of transfer, such as how to evaluate transcripts, so there is consistent use of best practices across the system

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