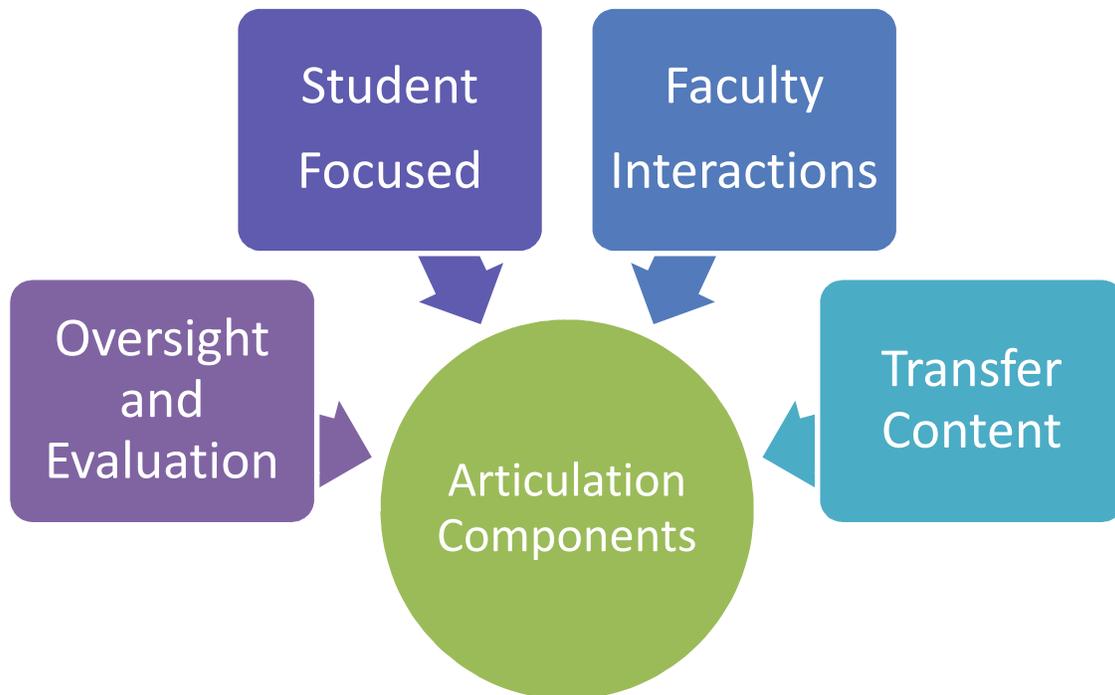


Transfer Guides for Student Focused Articulation



The Articulation Project has placed related articulation ideas into “components” as shown above. This paper discusses issues related to the **Student Focused** component, specifically **Transfer Guides**. Some ideas that relate to Student Focused Articulation include:

- A receptive culture for transfer students equivalent to “native” students
- Advising and counseling service centers
- Transfer guides that support transparency
- Guarantees for agreed upon transfers
- Common student records
- Online information systems for students and families
- Transparent appeals process

Today’s adult students expect that they should be able to make some choices about their education. They are looking for a quality education, but have limited time and resources and need to use both wisely. They want to be good consumers, but to be good consumers, these students need good information.

A curriculum outline with all required courses listed is the most common tool for providing that information. The curriculum outline is used for advising, but can be deceiving in its simplicity. While the outline lists all courses, it may not speak to issues of prerequisites, course sequencing, part-time student needs, or consider the student who will be transferring to further their education.

What is a Transfer Guide?

Students, who think they may want to enter or complete a degree program at a community college and advance to another credential or degree, need to consider the course outline not only at their entry program but also at the next program in their career pathway. A transfer guide agreed upon by both institutions is a tool that will enhance the student's ability to make good choices. In general a transfer guide upholds all applicable institutional and program standards and policies. While a few transfer guides offer transfer guarantees, generally guides cannot offer an assurance of transfer of credit. Students should review carefully the elements, limitations, and assurances.

Some Elements of a Transfer Guide

What a guide demonstrates for students is that a process has been discussed and accepted by both institutions. Students who follow the processes identified are both more knowledgeable about transfer issues and more likely to have credits transfer between the two institutions.

Students should look carefully at the following elements that may be in a transfer guide:

- Participating institutions are identified.
- Implementation and projected dates for review of document are defined.
- Specific degree programs eligible for transfer are identified by program title and type of degree (AA/AS/AAS to a BA/BS are all options).
- Courses to be transferred at both institutions are identified in a Course Transfer Matrix.
- A process identifies required steps and timelines.
- Limitations and restrictions are identified. Some or all of the following are may be present:
 - Required admission, program, and academic policies that must be met are specified.
 - A grade requirement is mandated for all transfer credits, generally C or higher.
 - Transferred courses may not be applicable to the academic program chosen by the student.
 - Curriculum changes at either institution may affect transfer.
 - A time limit may be imposed on the ability to transfer credits for some courses (i.e., credits more than five years old may not be accepted).
- Typical "institutional safeguard" language may indicate that the guide is not a contract and/or the guide is not a commitment to award credit.

"The first time my college began a 'customer focused' discussion as it related to students, my fellow faculty and I were all dismayed. Customers? The student as a customer was a new and uncomfortable thought. Customers have choices, and we were concerned that customer (or student) choice would somehow lessen the academic rigor of our program. Over time faculty mellowed; the term customer reverted back to student; but ways of supporting student choices is an ongoing discussion in education circles. – Higher Education Faculty Member

"Education is not preparation for life. Education is life itself."

John Dewey

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