

UT System Campus Change Workshop: Spring Meeting

March 23, 2021; 9:00-11:00 AM EST

General Education Break-out Room Notes

Attendees: Leigh Cherry, Patty Flowers, Judy Cheatham, Chuck Collins, R. J. Hinde, Tammy Garland, Lane Morris, Matt Matthews, Nancy Buschhaus, Molly Sullivan, John Stier, Chris Hill, and Victoria Seng

Advising and Dual Enrollment - concern about the student who had 10 or 11 courses that would not transfer into her major. Perhaps better advising for high school students, particularly dual enrollment, IB/AP students, to avoid having students take (and pay for) too many courses that do not transfer into their program of study. Consider looking at the North Carolina model where students can graduate high school with an associate degree that would satisfy their Gen Ed requirements and transfer easily. We would want to avoid having students take too many hours that don't transfer into their major. But, as RJ pointed out, we should not make policy based on the experiences of a single or a small percentage of students. Many students, and some advisors, do not understand how credits transfer and/or equivalencies or substitutions.

It is awful that students could not transfer within the system without loss of credit. It should be easier.

Nancy mentioned possible training for advisors to assist with transfers, both within the system and from outside the system. The majority of transfer students at UTM are transferring from community college. They can transfer blocks of Gen Ed, for example, a block of Science Gen Ed or a block of Humanities requirements. If a student transfers in with an associate degree, the Gen Ed is considered satisfied. If we can identify and agree on blocks of Gen Ed, without a complete overhaul of the Gen Ed across the state, that would be helpful. But consider the idiosyncrasies of each campus. For instance, UTK does not recognize Pre-Algebra or Pre-Calculus as satisfying the math requirement. They also require a non-US History. The Fall Core will begin at UTK in fall 2021 as an attempt to address some of these differences.

Some of the block requirements are satisfied in the Registrar's office when a student transfers. There already exists an equivalency table for TBR course transfers, by course numbers. Perhaps we can build this out to include courses transferring within the system as well. We need a trigger mechanism to review these in the event of curricular changes on any of the campuses. We will also need a review cycle, perhaps every five years, to ensure that the table stays current. (Don't we need to do that with the TBR schools already? Wouldn't it make sense for these review cycles to coincide?)

Keeping in mind that students do not usually begin at one campus with a plan to transfer to another, students are normally trying to wrap the coursework they have into a Pathway, rather than starting with a Pathway and transferring within the same Pathway. Establishing Pathways could help with this. Three to nine credits do not sound like such a great loss. There should be some expectation of minor losses when a student changes campuses, especially if they are also changing majors. (Again, the idea of creating policies for the many to address the needs of the very few). But Pathways within the same majors or clusters of majors is an area ripe for discussion, perhaps in small groups with representatives from those clusters of majors.

Going forward:

- Work with the currently existing Equivalency Tables to expand them beyond the TBR courses to include Gen Ed from all UT campuses.
- Meet with representatives from the various majors to establish general Pathways into the majors. This will accommodate transfer students from within and from outside the system to transfer with minimal loss of credit. Post these Pathways to a website to make it easier for students (and advisors) to see
- Develop blocks of credit that can transfer as a block, without infringing on majors. For example, a student transferring from one campus to another might transfer a block of Gen Ed Science that would satisfy the science requirement for a non-Science major, or a block of Humanities requirements for an Engineering major.
- Communication between the originating campus and the receiving campus regarding “checking off” blocks of Gen Ed requirements with considerations for the majors’ requirements for each campus.
- Training for faculty advisors and staff who work with transfer students, especially regarding equivalency tables and major requirements

According to student comments from earlier, social integration into the receiving campus is a large issue. The Transfer Bootcamp that Dr. Jamie Mantoosh runs on the UTM campus was considered a great idea, along with student clubs/organizations to deal with the social aspects of these transferring students, their sense of belonging.