

TRANSFER VIRGINIA

Annual Report

November, 2019

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Project Name: *Transfer Virginia (Transfer VA)*

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Project Site: <https://tinyurl.com/TransferVA>

INTRODUCTION

Transfer Virginia is a collaborative partnership between the State Council of Higher Education, the Virginia Community College System, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, HCM Strategists, and Sova. It embraces the growing need for seamless transfer among the Commonwealth's institutions by:

- Engaging key stakeholders to improve communication and facilitate collaboration.
- Engaging faculty across institutions to better align academic expectations at two-year and four-year schools.
- Developing program maps that will guide students from high school to community college to university degree completion.
- Streamlining transfer articulation agreements and improving guaranteed admission agreements.
- Creating models for regional dual-admission and co-enrollment programs.
- Developing an online transfer portal that serves all students.

As a result of this work, Virginia's transfer students will find their college education more affordable, efficient, equitable, and relevant.

TRANSFER VA PARTNERS

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) are the in-state lead organizations for *Transfer Virginia*. The national partners—the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program, HCM Strategists, and Sova—aim to foster the conditions in three states (Virginia, Minnesota, and Texas) for scaled and measurable improvements in attainment rates for baccalaureate-seeking community college students. These partners will work with SCHEV and VCCS to approach the work comprehensively, incorporating policy, practice, leadership, research, and strategic communications tailored to Virginia's needs.

In the Commonwealth, the partnership embraces the collaboration of 60 institutions of higher education including one two-year residential college, 23 community colleges, 14 public four-year institutions and 22 private four-year institutions. The Virginia Department of Education joins the partnership, providing the K-12 stakeholder perspective. Collaboration with out-of-state universities along our southwestern border plays a key role in serving students in that area.

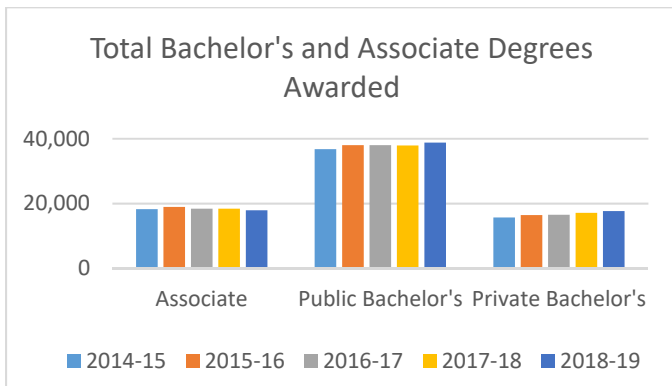
TRANSFER VA GOALS

Transfer Virginia focuses on one overarching goal: Improve the efficiency of the transfer system, while closing the gap for underrepresented populations and Pell Grant recipients. If this goal is met, the higher education institutions in Virginia will award an additional 6,600 baccalaureate degrees to transfer students each year. Other goals include:

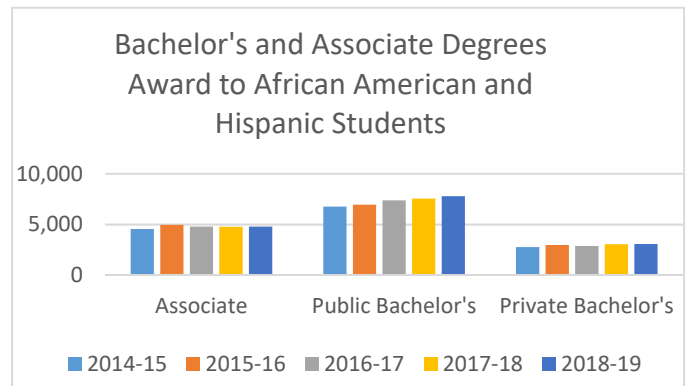
- **Gateway barriers:** Increase the share of students successfully completing gateway math and English in the first year of community college enrollment from 35 percent to 75 percent.
- **Mobility and timeliness:** Increase the percentages of community college students who transfer after two years from 35 percent to 40 percent and from 48 percent to 55 percent for those who transfer after three years. Improve time to transfer without reducing the number of students who complete an associate degree before transfer.
- **Degree attainment:** Increase the baccalaureate degree completion rate for students completing within two years of transfer from 26 percent to 40 percent, within three years of transfer from 63 percent to 70 percent, and within four years of transfer from 75 percent to 80 percent.
- **Credit efficiency:** Reduce the average number of degree credits earned by transfer students to be comparable to the number earned toward the same degree by native students.

VIRGINIA TRANSFER DATA

Ultimately, the goal of this work is to increase the number of baccalaureate degrees earned in Virginia, especially by underrepresented student populations.



https://research.schev.edu/completions/C1_Report.asp

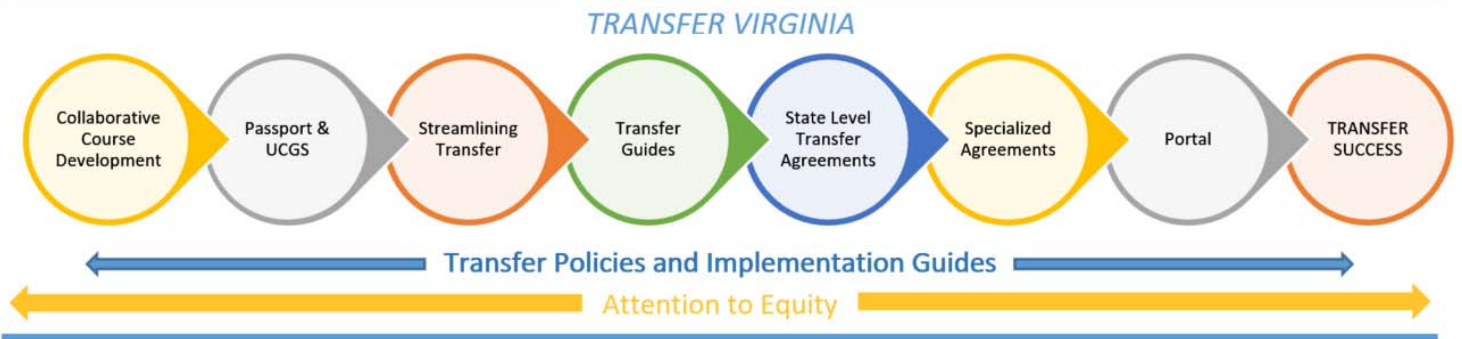


https://research.schev.edu/Completions/C5_Report.asp

As colleges and universities face declining enrollments, increasing the number of degrees earned each year will depend greatly on institutions ensuring that those students who do enroll, especially transfer students, are retained and complete degrees.

- Retention increases when students complete gateway math and English in the first year. Based on 2012-2013 cohort, 33 percent of students complete both of these courses within their first year of enrollment. Those students transferred at a rate of 48%, while students who completed neither gateway math nor English transferred at a rate of 6%.
- Completion leads to completion. Approximately 80% of students who transfer after completing an associate degree earn a baccalaureate degree. Students who transfer with less than 31 credits, however, complete at a rate of approximately 60%.

To support future conversations and the development of transfer strategies around data, institutional level *Transfer Virginia* data reports will be available in spring 2020, complimenting the SCHEV data already available at <https://research.schev.edu/>.



Transfer VA Activities, Deliverables, Status, and Challenges & Opportunities

Attention to Equity

Inequities that prevent students from completing are prevalent throughout all of higher education, but are especially evident in community college to four-year transfer. Decreasing all types of inequities in higher education, whether they are based on race/ethnicity, gender, social and economic factors, or lack of access to information, is important. University and college partners will engage in purposeful and productive conversations to develop specific strategies to close the equity gaps related to transfer and to provide solid opportunities for all students. Commitment to implementation and continuous improvement of these strategies is critical.

Deliverables

- Grant opportunities, such as the SCHEV Fund for Excellence and Innovation, which supports cross-institutional partnerships focused on improving access and completion of transfer students.
- *Transfer VA* Implementation through the Equity and Social Mobility Lens - a statewide convening of transfer and equity-focused stakeholders focused on developing strategies for implementing *Transfer VA* initiatives with a focus on improving access and completion of all students.
- The development of the statewide Transfer Portal provides accessible and understandable information to all students, closing the current information equity gaps that exist.

Status

- The first round of Fund for Excellence grants were awarded during the 2018-2019 academic year. Future awards in this area are pending.
- *Transfer VA* Implementation through the Equity and Social Mobility Lens convening is slated for spring 2020.
- The first phase of the *Transfer VA* portal is slated for summer 2021 reveal.

Challenges & Opportunities

- It is very easy to “talk” about the equity gaps but not as easy to identify and implement strategies that have a direct impact on access and completion for those most at risk. Our challenge, and our opportunity, is to identify strategies that have worked, encourage those to scale, and work to identify other ways in which the conversations around equity can result in action.

Transfer Policies and Implementation Guides

Transfer VA partners closely with the State Council of Higher Education (SCHEV) policy team to engage key stakeholders in informing policy development. After a year of research, information gathering, and strategy development, through the statewide Call to Action and institutional visits, the SCHEV policy team, *Transfer VA* leadership, and the State Committee on Transfer joined forces. This collective work resulted in strong policy recommendations based on practices and strategies identified as critical to improving transfer. The SCHEV policy team then developed policies that not only answered the legislative requirements but supports additional transfer practices necessary for improving the transfer paradigm for all students.

Deliverables

- State transfer policies applying to all public institutions and any private institutions engaging in transfer work in Virginia.
- Transfer policy implementation guides connecting goals to policy to practice.
- Reverse transfer toolkit providing recommendations for a shared approach to reverse transfer across institutions.

Status

- State policies are in draft form and being vetted with stakeholders with a goal to finalize policies in spring 2020. Additional policy needs may develop as work on transfer strategies develop.
- Implementation guides and toolkits will be developed and vetted with stakeholders beginning spring 2020.

Challenges & Opportunities

- The varying levels of commitment to and implementation of state policies at both two-year and four-year institutions through the use of waivers and exceptions threatens the ability to best serve students across the Commonwealth.
- The Commonwealth has an opportunity to become a model state for transfer if each institution commits to institutional level change that supports the common goals and embraces the transfer policies.
- With declining enrollment at our doorstep, the ability to achieve an increased number of graduates is dependent on doing better with the students already in our institutions. Great opportunities exist to retain and graduate more students through transfer if the barriers and cause of student stop-out are tackled.

Collaborative Course Development

The community colleges, Richard Bland College, and university faculty will partner in three phases to revise and/or develop the course content summaries for transfer level courses that include the course description, common learning outcomes, course credits and prerequisite requirements, technology requirements, and pedagogical and course material recommendations. The scope of this work will include clear expectations of what all community college students will learn in each class regardless of delivery modality, a streamlined and more detailed VCCS master course file, greater confidence amongst faculty, a collaborative relationship between two-year and four-year faculty with potential for continued work, and consistent transferability across all community colleges for courses transferring to each four-year institution. This work has high level faculty collaboration and multiple touchpoints throughout the process.

Deliverables

- Phase I course content summaries developed in the following disciplines: Art, Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Engineering, English, Geology, History, Foreign Language, Music, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology.
- Phase II course content summaries developed in the following disciplines: American Sign Language, Communication Studies & Theatre, Computer Science, Education, Geography, Health, Humanities, Philosophy, Physics, Religion, and Social Science.
- Phase III course content summaries developed in the following disciplines: Accounting, Administration of Justice, Business, Dance, Environmental Science, Marketing, Marine Science, and Information Technology.

Status

- Mathematics was completed as part of the 2015-2017 Math Pathways work.
- Phase I started in spring 2019 with approximately 90 courses under development. Most courses will be fully implemented in fall 2021 with early adopters implementing fall 2020. Over 175 two-year faculty and another 175 four-year faculty from public institutions are currently collaborating on the 90 courses mentioned. Plans for engaging Virginia's private institutions faculty are underway.
- Phase II starts in January 2020 with courses fully implemented by fall 2022 with early adopters implementing fall 2020 or 2021.
- Phase III starts in January 2021 with courses fully implemented by fall 2023 with early adopters implementing fall 2021 or 2022.

Challenges & Opportunities

- As courses are identified that best serve transfer students, one challenge is the faculty's reactions to possible change in what is taught in their departments.
- A challenge and opportunity is using the detailed information being gathered to reframe how and when we offer courses to best serve transfer students.
- Time is not only the enemy of transfer students, it is an enemy in this work. All faculty engaged are completing this work in addition to all other teaching and workload responsibilities. Faculty are off contract during the summer session resulting in, understandably, inconsistent progress. Additionally, because quality work takes time and multiple touch points, patience in the process is a necessity.
- A threat to this work is when departments within a senior institution provides conflicting transfer information to the two-year colleges and/or do not honor the designated transfer course equivalencies. One such example is when academic departments and transfer offices provide different answers to inquiries on the acceptance of online science labs.

Passport & Uniform Certificate of General Studies

Universities and colleges partner will develop a Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies (UCGS). The Passport will be a 16-credit hour community college program in which all courses are transferable and shall satisfy a lower-division general education requirement at any public institution of higher education. The Uniform Certificate of General Studies is a 30-credit hour program in which all courses shall be transferable and satisfy a lower-division general education requirement at any public institution of higher education. Virginia's private institutions have the opportunity to participate in the Passport/UCGS program.

Deliverables

- Passport structure, policy, and course roster.
- Uniform Certificate of General Studies structure, policy, and course roster.
- Identification of private institutions committed to honoring these programs.
- Clear definition of general education categories, which course disciplines fall under each category, and expectations of university general education programs for the areas: Communications, Mathematics, Lab Sciences, Humanities & Arts, Social & Behavioral Sciences

Status

- The Passport structure is established, and its related policy was approved by Council (July 2019). An initial course roster of 26 courses has been defined. Additional courses will be identified for inclusion on the Passport as the course collaboration process progresses.
- The UCGS structure is defined and the operationalizing of the different categories and initial population of the course roster are underway. Target January 2020.
- Twenty-two private colleges have indicated initial interest in *Transfer VA* work. The process for committing to and being identified as a Passport/UCGS institution is under development. Target spring 2020.
- A draft of general education categories is under consideration. Collection of general education expectations, such as two different lab sciences versus science sequence, is in progress. Target spring 2020.

Challenges & Opportunities

- This is a great opportunity to balance the academic portfolios of both dual enrollment students and students who have not chosen an academic direction. While major requirements may not be satisfied, the application of the Passport and UCGS to these two student populations increase the opportunity of credits applying to their future degrees.
- Imposing the Passport or UCGS when a student has clear direction would result in extra credits being taken that do not apply to a degree program or prevent the student from taking the appropriate courses at the right time, especially STEM students.
- If exceptions or waivers of the “applicable to all general education programs” is accepted, the guarantee of this program is no longer universal and the communication about it becomes increasingly more difficult.
- The UCGS provides an opportunity to dual enrollment students to achieve a milestone in academic progress that would be more universally beneficial. The earning of an associate degree, as a dual enrollment student, can also afford students a great opportunity when that degree program is structured to include appropriate major requirements beyond general education requirements.

Streamlining Curriculum

The Virginia Community College System has common degree requirements as described in table 5.1 of the VCCS policy manual. The curriculum that populates those requirements is currently developed by the faculty of the 23 individual community colleges. In the spirit of streamlining transfer for students and creating a structure in which this work can be taken to scale, the community colleges are collectively working towards a more collaborative approach to curriculum. The following approach is under consideration:

- The transfer degree requirements (table 5.1) would reflect the categorical requirements of the UCGS and referred to as the General Education Core of 30 credits. The remaining 30 credits would be designated as the Transfer Core and dependent upon the faculty collaboration to define the curriculum based on the major.
- The curriculum would be developed by the VCCS faculty at a state level in collaboration with four-year faculty from the receiving departments. A major-specific curriculum would include both universal requirements as well as institutional specific requirements with the minimum amount of variability. Two-year faculty at the institutional level would apply that highly informed curriculum to their degree or specialization programs.

Deliverables

- Policy revision (VCCS table 5.1) reflecting the UCGS requirements.
- New policy defining a VCCS Master Plan File and defining informed and streamlined curriculum plans across the system.
- A plan for sustainability of discipline courses and curriculum review and edits that has the commitment of both the two-year and four-year faculty.

Status

- Outreach to faculty stakeholder groups for feedback resulted in support of the work. We have conducted specific outreach to seven colleges, three major peer groups, and the Chancellor's Faculty Advisor Committee (CFAC) who specifically endorsed the plan.
- The VCCS Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) –Ed Programs Committee, has reviewed the proposals and discussed their merits. Based on their recommendation, a proposal will be submitted as an action item in March 2020.
- A sustainability plan is under development with a target date of March 2020.

Challenges & Opportunities

- The creation of a major plan that represents university course requirements and serves all transfer students with limited variability is threatened if universities make semester or annual changes that would impact the plan. The success of the sustainability plan is dependent on the commitment of both the two-year and four-year faculty to honor the plan for a designated number of years. Changes to four-year requirements are possible if the change fits within the established two-year major plan.
- Creation of major plans with limited variability depends solely on the willingness of four-year faculty to consider compromises to their curriculum requirements.
- The creation of streamlined curriculum plans across the VCCS create opportunities for colleges to support a wider variety of majors and increase opportunities for students.

Transfer Guides

University partners, in consultation with the two-year partners, will develop degree program requirements to guide students beginning at a two-year college with the aspiration for each university. Four-year institutions will create a program map for each degree program awarded that is accessible to transfer students and supportable by the two-year institutions. Initial priority will be given to degree programs receiving the highest number of transfer students at that institution as well as to critical need areas feeding workforce shortages.

Deliverables

- Statewide Transfer Guide that maps all four years of curriculum requirements (with the first 60 credits being mapped to an associate degree) and that provides key transfer information.
- *Transfer VA* facilitated mapping days to engage faculty and guide them in developing the curriculum plans and institutional transfer guides.

Status

- Statewide Transfer Guide template has been submitted for inclusion with transfer policy drafts. Sample guides have been created.
- Research to prioritize majors for mapping days to be completed December 2019.
- Development of mapping teams and scheduling of mapping days will begin in spring 2020.

Challenges & Opportunities

- The opportunities increase when these maps are completed in conjunction with the two-year curriculum plan work, as most maps will then have statewide applicability, serving all students.
- The scalability and sustainability of these plans is a challenge that must be managed through the use of technology, systematic updates, and commitment by each institution.
- Successfully streamlining transfer and transfer guides depends on the trust between the two-year and four-year institutions to commit to the change and the work required to make it happen.

Transfer Agreements and Specialized Regional Agreements

University partners, in consultation with two-year partners, develop guidelines, processes, and supporting policy for transfer tools that best serve our collective students through program level articulation agreements, reverse transfer agreements, and guaranteed program admission agreements with the aspiration for regionally created agreements to be more universally applicable across the Commonwealth.

In addition, university partners, in consultation with two-year partners, develop resources and guidelines to support neighboring institutions in establishing dual-admission or co-enrollment programs that offer students appropriate opportunities for higher level engagement with the university environment prior to transfer.

Deliverables

- State policy and guidelines to streamline agreements and create opportunity to apply to multiple institutions.
- Reverse transfer toolkit providing recommendations for a shared approach to reverse transfer across institutions.
- A system of tracking students who are completing the requirements of an agreement.
- Development of outreach strategies, connecting students to four-year advisors sooner.

Status

- Policy under review, guidelines and toolkit development spring 2020.
- Tracking of agreement use and student connection to four-year advisors are capabilities of the transfer portal under development.

Challenges & Opportunities

- When the consistency in course transfer, streamlining of transfer curriculum, and the development of Transfer Guides all come to fruition, students' access to admission and transfer opportunities increases significantly. While many students attend local institutions, state level agreements open the doors to many different options for students.
- The streamlining of agreements decreases the number of agreements each institution must maintain, creating more time for transfer staff to spend with students.
- Implementation of reverse transfer recommendations, specifically those related to the use of technology, across all participating institutions creates a paradigm where normally regional work loses its borders and students transferring across the state or country can benefit from earning an associate degree through reverse transfer.
- Specialty agreements such as dual-admission inspire institutions to think beyond course requirements and find ways to improve retention of students through the transfer pipeline by engaging with them early and often. This opportunity has potential to extend beyond regional boundaries to reach students truly dedicated to attending a particular institution or enroll in a specific program of study.
- Excellent work is already underway across the Commonwealth to better serve students through unique agreements. For example: Pathways to the Arts & Humanities, ADVANCE, the Ferrum Promise, and the Hampton Roads Strategic Transfer Alliance.

Transfer Portal

VCCS colleges, Richard Bland College, and senior institutions partner to develop an online transfer portal available through all SCHEV, university, colleges, K-12, and DOE websites. The portal will provide information on transferability of college courses, their applicability to degree programs, availability of degree programs, ability to compare options, and transfer resources. The portal will include data from both public and private Virginia institutions as well as the border state universities serving the southwestern areas of Virginia.

Deliverables

- The online transfer portal will serve as a resource to students as they choose the right pathway, start on the pathway, stay on the pathway, and complete by providing a 24/7 resources for prospective and current students of Virginia's two-year and four-year institutions of higher learning. Through the portal students will be informed, educated and guided as they explore transfer-related topics, options, and pathways relevant to their specific needs.
- The portal will leverage data and information resources – those that currently exist as well as those developed via *Transfer VA's* collaborative partnerships.
- Using an underlying comprehensive repository of academic and transfer related data and content, the online portal will function as a dynamic informational tool for transfer-oriented users – all students, families, and educators with the continuing option to reach out to and connect with transfer advisors at participating institutions.
- Portal users will be able to see how their education equity – academic credentials, courses, Credits for Prior Learning (CPL) for professional, workforce and technical credentials and work experiences– will transfer to a Virginia institution of higher learning and apply to a degree program.

- Sustainability and maintenance of the information resources within the portal will be a significant consideration in the design and deployment of the system.

Status

- The vendor contract is under negotiation. Target November 2019.
- A portal coordinator position is being developed and filled. Target January 2020.
- Development of institutional portal “points of contact” for data management. Target January 2020
- Four portal teams are being organized and a call-to-action meeting planned. Teams: technology, content, student experience, implementation/training. Target February 2020.

Challenges & Opportunities

- While the gathering and development of portal content is a challenge – it is an exciting one. The success of the transfer portal is dependent upon the institutional commitment to provide support staff and accurate and timely data to the portal host. Accuracy of portal information is the number one priority of this work.

GENERAL TRANSFER LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout the first year, we have learned how students and transfer systems are directly impacted by certain practices, or how many can become victims of unintended consequences of decision that result in less than desirable outcomes.

Editorial note: While the lessons learned below focus on barriers to students and the *Transfer VA* work, it is very important to recognize that there are many stakeholders who do believe in transfer, who do commit to making decisions that are right for students, and who do honor transfer agreements – who in short respect and support the idea of transfer and all its moving parts. Because of these dedicated individuals, we will, together, overcome the challenges below. .

Impact on Students

- Inconsistent communication and information results in student and parent misconceptions about college credits.
- Students earning an Associate Degree focused on “general education” leaves gaps in major requirements.
- Accumulating too many credits results in credits that do not apply and jeopardizes future financial aid.
- Courses that transfer as general electives overfills the “elective bucket” quickly and results in credits not applicable to a degree.
- A sequence of classes often transfers and applies as one course.
- Not all four-year faculty believe that transfer students are or can be of the same quality as native students, though data indicates otherwise.
- Students are sometimes strongly encouraged to retake courses because of concern for prior quality of instruction and student preparedness.
- A student earns an associate degree with a high GPA, but because of variability in required scores for AP, IB, etc., the student may have to repeat lower division general education or pre-major courses.

- A student follows a university's prescribed courses for the first two years of his higher education experience but has to retake courses because upon entry at year three, the catalog for that year has different requirements.
- A transfer student is asked to complete competency testing based on prior community college work, but native students are not subjected to the same assessment of skill level.

Impact on Work

- Students cannot meet lower-level general education or degree requirements by earning an associate degree.
- Some lower-level courses are required to be taught by a four-year faculty member preventing it from being taken as part of an associate degree or retaken at the four-year institution.
- Institutional level policies or practices prevent departments from working towards state-level compromises or approving transfer alternatives.
- The desire by some four-year departments to accept a specific general education or pre-major course through transfer is prevented by the discipline department under which that course falls.
- Struggles to find credentialed faculty across discipline areas often results in unbalanced course offerings.

Reflecting on these findings and using them to inform future work will benefit students. When making decisions at an institution that could affect transfer, the following questions and practices may help form policies and practices with purely positive impacts.

- Ask why is this change or requirement important?
- Ask if this promotes completion?
- Ask if this creates a barrier for transfer students and if so what might be transfer alternatives?
- Ask if this takes into consideration that associate completers are bachelor's completers?
- Know how your faculty and staff actions speak for the institution.
- Use data specifically about transfer students as part of the data that drives your decisions.
- Know if "transfer" or "*Transfer VA*" is a positive common word on your campus.
- Review transfer related policies to assure policy and practice match.
- Reach out to partnering institutions to resolve challenges.
- Dare to change when the change is hard.
- Support collaboration and compromise amongst institutions.

Transfer VA Funding and Budget

The *Transfer VA* work is funded primarily by a state budget allocation of \$480,000 and by a three-year grant provided by the ECMC Foundation, Ascendium, The Joyce Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation of \$50,000 per year. This budget provides for the following through July 2022:

- ✓ A *Transfer VA* Director
- ✓ A Portal Coordinator
- ✓ IT Program and Systems Support
- ✓ Part-time support for UI development, SIS input, and Mapping Teams
- ✓ Travel and Professional Development of Director and Coordinator
- ✓ Supplies and Meeting Costs.

TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

	SPRING 2020	FALL 2020	SPRING 2021	FALL 2021	FALL/SPRING 2022	FALL/SPRING 2023
COURSES PHASE 1	Courses Approved	Early Adopters		Final Implementation		
COURSES PHASE II	Course Development/Approved		Early Adopters		Final Implementation	
COURSES PHASE III			Course Development/Approved		Early Adopters	Final Implementation
PASSPORT	Course Roster Additions	Implementation				
UNIFORM CERTIFICATE GENERAL STUDIES	Structure Finalized	Course Roster Additions		Implementation		
STREAMLINING TRANSFER	Policy Considerations Mapping Plan	Discipline Mapping Days and Follow-up Workgroups				
TRANSFER GUIDES	Policy Considerations Mapping Plan	Discipline Mapping Days and Follow-up Workgroups				
TRANSFER POLICIES	Finalization of Policies	Revisions as identified through implementation work.				
TRANSFER POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE	Development	Implementation Support				
REVERSE TRANSFER TOOLKIT	Development	Reverse Transfer Support & Facilitation				
PORTAL	Call to Action Requirements Defined Develop Enhancements and Content Phase 1 Platform Development	Content Development Phase 2 Platform Development and Testing	Acceptance Testing Training Deployment to Live	Operations & Support Regional Transfer Training (K-20)		

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Institutional Level Convening

- *Transfer VA Call to Action*, March 2019, 257 participants, 60+ institutions.
- *Transfer VA Implementation with an Equity and Social Mobility Lens*, spring 2020 (pending)
- *Transfer VA Goes Live*, spring 2021 (pending)

Institutional *Transfer VA* Partners

Each of the two-year and four-year institutions participating in *Transfer VA* work have one or two dedicated individuals who serve as the *Transfer VA* Partners. These partners serve *Transfer VA* and their institutions by:

- Serving as a conduit for information flow related to the work.
- Meeting monthly with the *Transfer VA* Project Director to receive updates, provide feedback, offer suggestions, and connecting their institution to this work.
- Organizing *Transfer VA* events on campus to broaden stakeholder involvement.
- Championing the *Transfer VA* work institutionally and across the state.

Faculty Engagement

Partner and faculty engagement are critical pieces to the *Transfer VA* success. Both two-year and four-year faculty come together to develop relationships, develop content and curriculum, and develop strategies for strengthening the student pipeline to their programs.

- Over 350 faculty are currently engaged in course development. This high touch, highly collaborative process has faculty working through Google Docs and web-based conferencing at various stages of the work.
- As a result of a SCHEV Fund for Excellence Grant, VCU's School of Engineering hosted an "Engineering through Transfer" work day, bringing together Engineering program faculty from across the Commonwealth to develop strategies to diversify and grow the STEM and specifically Engineering pipeline through transfer.
- Similarly, a "Teacher Preparation through Transfer" work day brought together faculty from two-year and four-year programs preparing students for careers in education. Faced with a critical teacher shortage in all of our communities, these educators worked together to create plans that would increase the opportunity and chance of students completing bachelor's degrees through transfer and joining the ranks of Virginia educators.

Through the *Transfer VA* work, more and more faculty will have the opportunity to participate in activities such as course development and mapping days. Faculty committed to change and compromise are best suited for this work.

Workgroups

A variety of workgroups support the *Transfer VA* work through diverse perspective and input from broad stakeholder groups. While the State Committee on Transfer is a leading team of transfer professionals, additional workgroups are necessary.

- Reverse Transfer
- Policy Review
- Portal Teams: Technology, Portal Content, Student Experience, Implementation & Training
- Portal Institutional Points of Contact
- Transfer Guide Development (Mapping)

- Event Planning
- Mapping Days Team

Participation on these teams are voluntary and require some travel, though most work is web-based. When teams are developed, representation from different types of institutions is a priority.

Stakeholder Communication

Communication with all stakeholder groups occurs through a variety of modalities and in a timely fashion. Communication strategies include

- Use of Google folders to house internal and public documents. *Transfer VA* public documents are housed at <https://tinyurl.com/TransferVA>.
- Monthly or regular update web-calls are provided for *Transfer VA* campus partners, VCCS Vice-Presidents and Deans, and VCCS departments.
- Future plans include web-call updates/discussion sessions for VCCS faculty, RBC, and four-year faculty.
- Visits to all 14 public universities and 24 two-year colleges with some second visits to discuss transfer, identify challenges & opportunities, and gather input.
- Presentations with discussion with the Presidents of all private institutions attending the annual State Council meeting. Additional private college outreach through events sponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia.(CICV)
- Presentations with discussion with stakeholders such as the Secretary of Education and legislative staff, State Council of Higher Education, VCCS State Board, VCCS Presidents, Virginia Association of School Superintendents (K-12), and the Virginia Department of Education (K-12).
- Weekly strategy calls with ASPEN partners as well as outreach to partnering states Texas and Minnesota.

Project Director Comments

In its first year, *Transfer VA* has brought together faculty and staff from over 60 institutions, broken down barriers, fostered relationships, created strong platforms for collaboration, and truly focused on what is important – the students! It was easy for us all to agree that change is needed, that things can be simpler, and that the integrity of our individual institutions is important. We are now approaching the phase of our work in which the idea of change becomes reality. There is fear alongside excitement with any major change; *Transfer VA* is no different.

I challenge each and every one of us to embrace this opportunity to do something big in Virginia. To make changes that lead to more students earning degrees and reaching their career goals. Let's not alone aspire to be the most educated state in the country by 2030, let's join together to also become the best system for serving students through transfer.

It is my honor to lead you in these efforts.

Respectfully submitted,
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