

# Do You plan to Earn a Bachelor's Degree?



## Know the Basics of How to Transfer to a 4-Year Institution

(specifically from a California Community College to a public California University<sup>1</sup>):

At times it can seem like a complex confusing project, yet when you identify the parts of the transfer process and the steps to take, you will be in charge of your transfer. You are the main person directing this process, and there are many resources at BCC to inform and support you as you progress toward your goal (see the list of resources at the end of this sheet). The following is not as linear as it appears—for example, you might start with Part 2...

### **Part 1: Choose a Major/Identify a Career Goal**

Often students know they want or need a Bachelor's Degree (also called an undergraduate degree) because they have a career goal in mind and will pursue an academic major related to this goal. If you are undecided in terms of a career goal or major as you start your college work, recognize that part of your process involves identifying a major.

You can take a course in career and life planning (COUN 57), you can take a variety of career and interest assessments and review your findings with your academic counselor, you can engage in other self-reflection and research. Choosing an academic major, and/or changing majors is a process most students go through. Many students will change their major while working toward transfer, or will have several areas of interest they are focusing on. Engage this part of the process early on if you are not clear on career goals and interests.

### **Part 2: Follow a Transfer Curriculum**

When choosing classes, follow the transfer curriculum<sup>ii</sup> that is recommended for your major, or is the most flexible, if you are undecided. Meet with an academic counselor during your first semester to create your student education plan (SEP), with transfer as your goal. If you know your major and have a sense of where you would like to transfer, your counselor will help you choose classes that are specifically recommended or required. Check in periodically with your counselor to assess your progress, and to revise your SEP.

In terms of transfer to a University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) campus, many students will follow the Intersegmental<sup>iii</sup> General Education Transfer Curriculum (**IGETC**) or a General Education Breadth Curriculum, **depending on their major**. For example, certain majors such as Business, CIS, or Natural Sciences may require specific and additional coursework—plan early for this if you can.

[Assist.org](http://assist.org) is a comprehensive and well-designed resource that links information from UCs, CSUs, and California Community Colleges. ASSIST can be invaluable as you explore majors and research various public universities in California. Copies of the general transfer curriculum patterns are available in the BCC Catalog, from Academic Counselors, in the Transfer Center, and can be found on ASSIST.

### **Part 3: Decide which Universities or Colleges you would like to Attend**

There are various factors that students consider when choosing a university, such as a good program for the major, cost, location, perceived prestige, etc. Again, ASSIST is a great tool as it links basic and detailed information and will allow you to research many options within California public higher education. Check the monthly calendar from the Transfer Center, and speak to the representatives that visit BCC every month. Explore various transfer support programs that can help you gain exposure and decide among local universities.

Consider applying to several institutions. Establish your top choices as well as institutions that you think will offer you good educational experiences. In many cases you will find out if you've been accepted in April or May before the fall term, and it's good to have options.

### **Part 4: Learn about the Application Process for your chosen institution(s)**

As you finish 30 units of your transfer coursework, it will be time to start thinking about applying to the 4-year institutions. Most if not all applications are submitted electronically these days, and once the application is available you can start the process and complete it bit by bit. There is one application for the UC system, and one application for the CSU system, regardless how many campuses you are applying to<sup>iv</sup>.

To apply to any of the UCs, you must submit your application during November of the year *before* you plan to start as a fall admittance. There is a personal statement portion of the UC application that you will want to take your time

crafting: plan for the time it will take to fill out the on-line application as well. Take the application seriously (capitalize when appropriate, no text message lingo, etc.)—be accurate and thorough as careless mistakes can cost you your acceptance. In many cases, it is a competitive process to gain admittance.

Depending on which CSU campuses you are applying to, the application deadline can vary. If an institution or major is impacted (meaning highly competitive—more students applying than there are spaces) deadlines will be earlier than for campuses and programs that have room for more students. Some programs, such as nursing, may require additional application materials, and may have additional deadlines to meet. Good research can keep you from being unpleasantly surprised. Also, follow education coverage in the news as admissions policies can change in relation to annual state budget issues.

### **Part 5: Follow-Up after Application is Submitted**

After you've submitted your application(s), watch your email for messages asking for follow up actions (like submitting final grades<sup>v</sup> from the classes you were taking at the time you applied). After you are accepted, many institutions will need you to turn in an IGETC Certification that your academic counselor will complete—allow time for this before the end of the spring semester. {Also, if you are earning an Associate Degree as well as transferring, petition for your degree by early March with your academic counselor.} Note: if you are denied admittance, in some cases you will be able to appeal this decision.

**Congratulations!** Much of the work you've done in the transfer process demonstrates your personal and academic abilities: take stock of all you've done!

Once you've made your choice, you can get ready for the transition. Research and check out the resources at your new school for transfer or re-entry students, connect with your department, and academic advisors at your new school; it can take time to adjust to a new environment—be sure to give attention to this.

## **Berkeley City College Resources to Support Transfer Students**

- **Academic Counseling** (located on the second floor of campus)—establish a good working relationship with an academic counselor. All BCC counselors can help with transfer issues, and can direct you regarding TAGs (Transfer Agreement Guarantees), Concurrent Enrollment, and other useful transfer support programs and resources. Also, these classes are offered by counseling faculty:
  - Career & Life Planning Class (COUN 57—3 units)
  - Preparing for College/University Transfer Class (COUN 221—.5-1 unit)
- **Transfer & Career Information Center** (room 161)—check here for college literature, visits to campus from 4-year institution representatives, take career and interest assessments such as EUREKA, use [assist.org](http://assist.org), attend related workshops
- **Faculty, Classified Staff, and Administrators**—talk to people on campus, ask questions about their field, their college experience/alma mater
- **Fellow students**—other students may have insight into the transfer process that will be helpful

***It takes a college to support the successful transfer of students.***



<sup>i</sup> This handout provides general information. Private California schools, out-of-state public and private colleges and universities all have unique guidelines to follow—you will need to learn the application details for schools you are seriously considering. For example, many private schools will accept students to transfer in as sophomores and do not require a certain number of courses to be completed.

The internet is the main tool you will use; do not hesitate, however, to contact admissions staff directly at the transfer college or university. Remember, this is your project, and professionals will be helpful, yet it is not wise or realistic to expect anyone else to know everything you need, or track your progress in detail. Build your support system, keep yourself in the "driver's seat," persevere, and you'll get to your destination.

<sup>ii</sup> In general students complete lower division general education coursework, the freshman and sophomore year, in community college, then transfer to the 4-year institution to focus on the major subject and complete upper division courses during the junior and senior year, and earn their undergraduate degree.

<sup>iii</sup> Intersegmental refers to the relationship between the 3 segments of public higher education in California: Community College, CSU, and UC systems.

<sup>iv</sup> CSU application address is [csumentor.edu](http://csumentor.edu); UC application address is [universityofcalifornia.edu/apply](http://universityofcalifornia.edu/apply)

<sup>v</sup> How important are grades? In a word, important. However, there are many options for students with lower GPAs, and advisors often state that a bad semester doesn't mean all is lost. If needed, prepare yourself by taking and doing well in pre-requisite classes before doing your transfer level work.