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## Oregon Moves Forward with Universal Transfer Agreement in Education

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University transfer has long been a recognized goal for community college students. However, the actual details of transfer have often been tricky and changeable and many students have faced unnecessary challenges on the path to degree attainment. In Oregon, legislators took notice of the difficulties presented in transfer, and initiated a dedicated “transfer bill”, known as House Bill 2998 in July 2017. The bill mandates the establishment of “Universal Statewide Transfer Agreements (USTAs) between community colleges and universities in all high utility discipline majors. In Oregon, the first four majors chosen were Biology, Business, Education and English. The transfer legislation aligns with the national *Guided Pathways* movement and embraces a call to better serve first generation and diverse students engaged in higher education.

The Oregon Education *USTA* committee was selected in February 2018 and is comprised of faculty and representatives from all public universities and community colleges with Education departments in the state. NACCTEP Board Member Dr. Cecelia Monto co-chairs the ED *USTA* committee in Oregon and has been an active champion in the transfer work. The committee’s goal is to develop a consistent and efficient *two plus two* transfer agreement that aligns with baccalaureate elementary education programs in Oregon. The committee also recognizes the positive potential that a community college pathway into education could have for recruitment and retention of diverse teacher candidates in the state.

To accomplish the assignment, the Oregon Education *USTA* committee reviewed numerous individual transfer agreements between specific community colleges and universities in the state. Evidence of the various agreements serves as a reminder that transfer pathways are possible in Oregon. However, the uniqueness of curriculum and approaches present in the university programs have created obstacles in creating consistency in a statewide community college transfer agreement. And while the individual agreements work for students who create and stick with one transfer plan to a specific university, community college students are highly mobile and often change their transfer destination plans. Deviation from a plan currently results in extra or different required coursework, which means a loss of time and money for students. Under new financial aid restrictions, students who accrue too many elective credits deplete their financial aid.

The ED *USTA* committee continues to move forward in Oregon despite the difficulties, due to a deep commitment to student success. The committee acknowledges that real students are suffering the consequences of inaction around transfer by institutions of higher education in Oregon. As the *USTA* committee moves forward, questions have arisen about the ability of the Oregon legislature to mandate policy upon higher education institutions. The target date for completion of the transfer agreement was set for December 2018. NACCTEP continues to play an active role in the adoption of a consistent transfer path from community college to university in Oregon. Look for further updates on this Oregon initiative in upcoming editions of the NACCTEP newsletter this year.



Magali Hernandez Navarrete began at Chemeketa Community College and then transferred to Pacific University so that she could stay in her community of Woodburn where she hopes to eventually teach.

Zaretta Hammond and Carlos Sequeira join future teacher candidates from Hillsboro School District pathway who transferred to Chemeketa and then to Pacific University.



Bilingual students who transferred from Chemeketa Community College to a university expressing gratitude for tuition supports from the Mexican Consulate.