



**MHEC**

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

**Student Transfer Advisory Committee  
(STAC)  
Findings and Report**

Report #9153

January 2014

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**BACKGROUND**

In July 2012, the Student Transfer Advisory Committee (STAC) was created by statute (Chapter 327, Acts of 2012), although the committee itself has been in place since 1990, formed as a statewide advisory group to address issues related to transfer and articulation. The current role of the STAC as determined by statute is to analyze and review articulation and transfer student support services, including admission and advising practices, and to consider issues relating to student transfer referred by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). This current report serves as STAC's biennial report on transfer and articulation to the Governor and General Assembly. A current membership list is included at the end of this report.

**STATEWIDE CONTEXT FOR TRANSFER**

Transfer has continued to serve as an important student pathway in the State of Maryland's postsecondary education system. In FY12, a total of 8,610 associate's degrees were awarded in transfer programs at Maryland community colleges, including arts and sciences, engineering and information technology, general studies, teacher education, and business administration. This FY12 number represented an increase of 9.2% over FY11 transfer program degree figures, and 28.8% over FY10.<sup>1</sup> (Note: The total number of associate's degrees awarded by Maryland community colleges in FY12 was 13,793, which includes associate's degrees granted in career-oriented areas in addition to transfer programs.)

Among the 148,670 students enrolled in a Maryland community college during the fall 2011 semester, 9,807 (6.6%) transferred to a Maryland four-year public institution the following fall. During this same time period, 1,499 students transferred from a Maryland four-year public institution to another Maryland four-year public institution.<sup>2</sup> Between fall 2009 and fall 2012, the number of Maryland community college students transferring to a Maryland four-year public institution increased by 14.3% (+1,225 students).<sup>3</sup>

In terms of their performance once transferring, among the 2007-2008 cohort of Maryland community college transfer students to Maryland four-year public institutions, 62.1% had attained a bachelor's degree within five years of transferring (data current as of the 2011-2012

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Association of Community Colleges. (2013). *2013 Data book*.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Higher Education Commission. (2013). *Undergraduate transfers among Maryland public institutions (2011-2012)*.

<sup>3</sup> Maryland Higher Education Commission. (2011). *Undergraduate transfers among Maryland public institutions (2008-2009)*.

academic year).<sup>4</sup> This represented a six percentage point increase over the 2002-2003 Maryland community college transfer cohort, which had a five-year graduation rate of 56.1%.<sup>5</sup>

## **CURRENT TRANSFER INITIATIVES**

Student transfer was prominently featured in both the *2013 State Plan for Postsecondary Education: Maryland Ready* and in the *College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act of 2013* (SB 740). In the State Plan, policies and initiatives related to transfer and articulation are mentioned a total of 39 times in goals related to Quality and Effectiveness (Goal 1); Access, Affordability, and Completion (Goal 2); and Innovation (Goal 4), including the following action recommendation with associated benchmarks: “The Commission and Maryland colleges and universities will work to strengthen the quality of the student academic experience and to enhance the ease of credit transfer among public institutions in the State.”

In SB 740, specific provisions related to student transfer include the development and implementation of statewide transfer and reverse transfer agreements; the development and implementation of incentives for students to obtain an associate’s degree prior to transfer (including dedicated institutional financial aid); and a review of the State’s academic course articulation data system (ARTSYS).

MHEC and the segments have begun work in each of the areas described above. The review of ARTSYS, coordinated by STAC, is addressed in a separate report required by SB 740. Recent progress on reverse transfer is described in the next section of this report, including new grant-funded initiatives to support ADAPTS, the State’s reverse transfer program launched in 2012. As public institutions bring their associate’s and bachelor’s degree programs within the 60-credit and 120-credit degree limits established in SB 740, corresponding revisions to transfer and articulation agreements in the disciplines will be made.

In November 2013, MHEC’s Segmental Advisory Council (SAC) held a discussion about incentivizing associate’s degree completion through targeted financial aid for transfer students. To further this discussion, MHEC will develop a current inventory of incentive plans and programs both in Maryland institutions and in other states. For example, the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) recently launched the UMUC Completion Scholarship, which is targeted to associate’s degree recipients from Maryland community colleges who transfer to UMUC. This program will reduce UMUC’s tuition and fees from \$273 per credit hour to an average of \$199 per credit hour, making the total cost of a bachelor’s degree (including the cost of the associate’s degree) approximately \$20,000 for scholarship awardees.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to new transfer-related provisions in SB 740, there is ongoing work in the State around transfer programs currently in place, including the statewide Associate of Arts in

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<sup>4</sup> Maryland Higher Education Commission. (2013). *2013 performance of Maryland community college transfer students at four-year public colleges and universities*.

<sup>5</sup> Maryland Higher Education Commission. (2008). *2008 performance of Maryland community college transfer students at four-year public colleges and universities*.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.umuc.edu/globalmedia/umuc-completion-scholarship-for-community-college-graduates.cfm>

Teaching (AAT) and Associate of Science in Engineering (ASE). In the past year, new ASE programs were approved at both Baltimore City Community College (Electrical Engineering) and the Community College of Baltimore County (Computer Engineering and Electrical Engineering). In addition, the Nursing Academic Progressions Committee has continued its work, with representatives from the State's two-year and four-year nursing programs as well as hospitals, to look at strengthening and increasing the number of articulated pathways for Maryland students from the RN to the BSN, MSN, and beyond.

### **ADAPTS REVERSE TRANSFER PROGRAM**

In 2012, MHEC began a pilot reverse transfer program, ADAPTS (Associate's Degree Award for Pre-degree Transfer Students), with funding from a Complete College America (CCA) Completion Innovation Challenge Grant. Through reverse transfer, community college transfer students who either have enough credits, or who are a few credits short of receiving an associate's degree at the time of transfer, can be retroactively awarded that credential once the appropriate credits are earned at the four-year transfer institution. Through the CCA grant, an inventory of current institutional efforts to award reverse transfer associate's degrees, an expansion of ARTSYS to include reverse transfer (ARTSYS-RT), and training in the use of ARTSYS-RT were conducted. Mini-grants were also provided to support institutional efforts to scale up reverse transfer initiatives. During the CCA grant period, a total of 452 reverse transfer associate's degrees were awarded by nine Maryland community colleges.

Also in 2012, Maryland was one of 12 states to receive an award from *Credit When It's Due* (CWID), an initiative led by the Lumina Foundation and funded by a consortium of grantors. (Maryland's award is funded by USA Funds.) The overarching goals that were established for Maryland's CWID project were to expand the number of Maryland two-year and four-year institutions participating in reverse transfer, to increase the number of degrees awarded to eligible students, and to continue the development of institutional and statewide transfer and articulation policies that remove potential barriers to reverse transfer. Maryland's CWID project includes a competitive sub-grant program, open to all public and independent Maryland two-year and four-year institutions, that provides support to expand the implementation of ADAPTS. Proposals were submitted to MHEC in December 2013, and a total of 12 to 15 sub-grants are expected to be awarded in mid-January 2014.

### **STAC PRIORITIES IN 2014 AND 2015**

STAC anticipates working on the following agenda related to transfer and articulation in Maryland over the next two years:

- Collaborate with MHEC on the development of the statewide transfer and reverse transfer agreements as specified in SB 740, for implementation no later than July 1, 2016. Consult on processes for developing agreements, help facilitate discussions with key stakeholders, and make policy and regulatory recommendations to guide this work.
- Analyze the impact of credit limit changes on the articulation of degrees and programs between two-year and four-year institutions, and, where needed, facilitate discussions among

the Intersegmental Chief Academic Officers and faculty discipline groups to address any articulation-related issues.

- Examine existing policies and practices for awarding financial aid to Maryland community college transfer students, including those programs designed to incentivize associate's degree completion prior to transfer, and make recommendations to MHEC and the segments.

### **STAC MEMBERSHIP**

Susan Bennett, *Registrar, St. Mary's College of Maryland*

Vivian Boyd, *Commissioner, Maryland Higher Education Commission*

George Brelsford, *Dean of Student Life, Garrett College*

Matt Daly, *School Director, North American Trade School, and Vice President, Maryland Association of Private Colleges and Career Schools*

Jennifer Frank, *Acting Assistant Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission*

Lynne Gilli, *Program Manager, Career and Technology Education Instructional Branch, Division of Career and College Readiness, Maryland State Department of Education*

Diane Hampton, *Director of Institutional Relations, Maryland Independent College and University Association*

Teri Hollander, *Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University System of Maryland*

Tracey Jamison, *Director of Articulation and Enrollment Services, University System of Maryland*

Jody Kallis, *Legislative Liaison, Maryland Association of Community Colleges*

Khellya Okunor Osei, *Undergraduate Student, Salisbury University, and President, MHEC Student Advisory Council*

Julie Squire, *Assistant Secretary, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation*

Kara Turner, *Associate Provost for Enrollment Management, Morgan State University*

Sandra Ugol, *Vice President of Field Academics, Kaplan Higher Education*