
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Carol Liu, Chair
2015 - 2016 Regular

Bill No: AB 1016
Author: Santiago
Version: May 28, 2015
Urgency: No
Consultant: Kathleen Chavira
Hearing Date: June 24, 2015
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Public postsecondary education: Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges (CCC) to report to on the status of each community college's compliance with the creation of associate degrees for transfer under the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act and requires the California State University (CSU) to similarly report on campus acceptance of transfer model curricula by concentration, to the Legislature, as specified and also require the CSU to post specified publicly available data on associate degree for transfer students.

BACKGROUND

Existing law establishes the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act under which a CCC district is required to develop and grant a transfer associate degree that deems the student eligible for transfer into the CSU, when the student meets specified course requirements. (Education Code § 66746)

Existing law also requires the CSU to guarantee admission with junior status to any community college student who meets these requirements, but provides that the student is not guaranteed admission for specific majors or campuses. However, the CSU is required to grant a student priority admission to his or her local CSU campus and to a program or major that is similar to his or her community college major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Students that utilize the associate transfer degree process are required to receive priority over all other community college transfer students, except for community college students who have entered into a transfer agreement between a community college and the California State University prior to the fall term of the 2012-13 academic year. (EC § 66747)

Existing law requires the Legislative Analyst's Office to review and report, as specified, on the implementation of the Act by Spring of 2012. (EC § 66749)

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Requires the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges (CCC) to report to the Legislature the status of each community college's compliance with the creation of associate degrees for transfer by March 1, 2016.

- 2) Requires the California State University (CSU) to submit 2 reports on campus acceptance of transfer model curricula by concentration by March 1, 2016 and by March 1, 2017.
- 3) Sunsets the March 2016 reporting requirements on March 1, 2020, and the March 2017 reporting requirements on March 1, 2021.
- 4) Requires, beginning December 1, 2016 and until November 30, 2021, the CSU to annually post publicly available data on:
 - a) The number of students admitted with an associate degree for transfer.
 - b) The proportion of students with an associate degree for transfer who graduate from the CSU within 2 or 3 years.
 - c) The number of students with an associate degree for transfer who applied to one campus and were redirected to another campus other than that indicated on the application.
 - d) The number of those students who ultimately enrolled at a CSU campus.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** This bill responds to recent recommendations of the Legislative Analyst regarding transfer reform implementation. It will provide additional information for the Legislature to track the progress of the CCC/CSU implementation of the Student Transfer Achievement Reform Act.
- 2) ***Technical amendment.*** It is the intent of this bill that the CSU annually post available data, as specified, in a manner which is publicly accessible. Staff recommends the bill be amended on page 3 line 4 to insert a comma after “publicly.”
- 3) ***History.*** In an effort to address long standing issues and concerns about the need to ensure a clearer, transparent and more navigable transfer process between the CCC and the CSU, the Legislature and Governor enacted SB 1440 (Padilla, Chapter 428, Statutes of 2010). This legislation required community colleges to create two-year 60 unit associate degrees for transfer that are fully transferable to CSU. These degrees require completion of (1) a minimum of 18 units in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by each community college, and (2) an approved set of general education requirements. Students who earn such a degree are automatically eligible to transfer to the CSU system as an upper-division student in a bachelor's degree program. Though these students are not guaranteed admission to a particular CSU campus or into a particular degree program, SB 1440 gives them priority admission to a CSU program that is "similar" to the student's CCC major or area of emphasis, as determined by the CSU campus to which the student is admitted. Once admitted, SB 1440 students need to only complete two additional years (an additional 60 units) of coursework to earn a bachelor's degree.

SB 440 (Padilla, Chapter 720, Statutes of 2013) expanded these provisions to require that the California Community College (CCC) create associate transfer degrees in every major, and in areas of emphasis, and required that the California State University (CSU) accept these degrees, and develop an admissions redirection process for students who complete these degrees but are denied admission to the CSU campus to which they have applied. SB 440 also required the CCC and the CSU to establish a student-centered communication and marketing strategy to increase the visibility of the associate degree for transfer pathway.

- 4) **LAO Report - 2012.** In May 2012, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) issued *Reforming the State's Transfer Process: A Progress Report on Senate Bill SB 1440*. According to the LAO, although the CCC and CSU had made notable progress on multiple fronts, both segments had much room for improvement. According to the LAO, an average of just four associate degrees for transfer had been developed per community college. In addition, a number of community colleges expressed reluctance to create more than a handful of such degrees despite the CCC Chancellor's Office goal that, by 2014, each community college have a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) aligned associate degree for transfer in every major it offered. The LAO also reported that CSU campuses and academic programs varied significantly in terms of accepting the associate transfer degrees for their bachelor's degree programs. Although the CSU Chancellor's Office had set a goal for each CSU campus to offer at least one similar degree for each TMC-aligned associate degree for transfer, only six CSU campuses had achieved this goal.

The LAO made several recommendations in their report, including that the Legislature provide additional guidance and clarification to CCC and CSU on their responsibilities, as well as continued oversight to track their progress.

- 5) **Updated report.** The LAO recently updated its 2012 report with its February 2015 report, "Implementation Update: Reforming Transfer from CCC to CSU." The LAO found that since 2012, both CCC and CSU have made substantial progress in meeting the legislation's goals. The 33 model curricula developed to date cover majors selected by roughly 80 percent of CCC to CSU transfer students. Although some community colleges and CSU campuses were lagging in meeting specific statutory targets, both segments were making a good faith effort to comply with the legislation. Other specific findings included the following:
- a) Several colleges offer all the associate degrees they are required to offer by fall 2015, and others have developed these degrees and are awaiting approval. Most colleges, however, still have a few degrees left to develop and a few colleges are lagging far behind.
 - b) Despite various communication efforts, most CCC students are unfamiliar with the new degrees and mistakenly believe that the regular associate degree they have earned is an associate degree for transfer. The LAO notes that recent CCC investments in education planning for students could improve understanding of transfer reform.
 - c) CSU admitted every applicant the system identified as earning an associate degree for transfer and nearly all students who earned the degree but were not

identified during the application process. The California State University (CSU) was unable to provide data on the extent to which students were admitted into their campus or major of choice.

- d) Most CSU campuses accept associate degrees for transfer and honor the 60-unit guarantee in at least one concentration within each related major. Nonetheless, a few campuses are lagging in acceptance, and a few majors have low acceptance among several campuses.
- e) While growing numbers of students are earning an associate degree for transfer and successfully transferring to CSU, outcome data are too preliminary to draw conclusions, since most students currently completing degrees began their postsecondary education prior to transfer reform.

To help the Legislature monitor these reform efforts, Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recommends one near-term report from California Community College (CCC) (in fall 2015) and two from CSU (in fall 2015 and fall 2016) to track the segments' progress in creating associate degrees for transfer and accepting transfer model curricula. LAO also recommend the Legislature require the CSU annually to provide data on certain student outcomes (including admittance to campuses and programs of choice, units taken, and graduation rates) beginning fall 2018.

This bill generally implements these recommendations.

SUPPORT

Board of Governors, California Community Colleges
Cal Chamber
Campaign for College Opportunity

OPPOSITION

None received.

-- END --