



Articulation and Student Transfer

**House Bill 2382 Progress Report
January 2005**

**W A S H I N G T O N
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E D U C A T I O N
C O O R D I N A T I N G B O A R D**



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W A S H I N G T O N
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EDUCATION
C O O R D I N A T I N G B O A R D

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Part One

Associate Degree Pathways

January 2005

Articulation and Student Transfer: Associate Degree Pathways (House Bill 2382)

Executive Summary

House Bill 2382 required the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to “convene work groups to develop transfer associate degrees that will satisfy lower-division requirements at public four-year institutions of higher education for specific academic majors.” These degrees (also called “associate degree pathways”) are included in the HECB 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education, as a mechanism for promoting efficient transfer. House Bill 2382 requires that the HECB submit a progress report to the higher education committees of the Legislature by January 10, 2005.

Transfer associate degrees prepare students for transfer from a two-year institution to a baccalaureate institution. Transfer associate degrees typically take two years to complete at a community college. Transfer associate degrees currently exist for students who plan to major in liberal arts, business, secondary math and science education, or specific areas of science. House Bill 2382 required that three more degrees be developed in 2004-05 for pre-nursing, engineering, and elementary education. These degrees benefit students by giving them a specific plan to follow and by preparing them early for their intended majors. In addition, they help to prepare students for transfer to any public baccalaureate institution in the state, as well as to any private institution that wishes to participate. Since better student preparation reduces the possibility of students completing credits that will not transfer or count toward their degree, these agreements benefit the state as well.

Faculty from two-year and four-year public and private institutions have been working to reach agreement on the curriculum requirements for each new pathway. The work of the nursing group is near completion; the work of the elementary education and engineering groups is approximately halfway finished.

Once the three new pathways have been completed by the work groups and approved by academic leadership, community colleges will design associate degrees that follow the new pathways and advertise them to students. The new pre-nursing associate degree pathway is expected to be available to students at community colleges as early as fall 2006; the other two associate degree pathways are expected to be available by fall 2007.

The HECB is required to issue progress reports every two years to monitor the progress of these efforts, with the next report due in January 2007.

January 2005

Articulation and Student Transfer: Associate Degree Pathways (House Bill 2382)

Background

The Legislature has found that “community and technical colleges play a vital role for students obtaining baccalaureate degrees,” serving as an “essential partner” in meeting the demands of students. However, the Legislature also found that “current policies and procedures do not provide for efficient transfer of courses, credits, or prerequisites for academic majors” (House Bill 2382, Section 1).

House Bill 2382 (Section 2) directs the Higher Education Coordinating Board to “convene work groups to develop transfer associate degrees that will satisfy lower-division requirements at public four-year institutions of higher education for specific academic majors. The legislation requires the work groups to focus in 2004-05 on developing new associate degrees in nursing, elementary education, and engineering. Section 7 specifies: “Beginning January 10, 2005, the Higher Education Coordinating Board must submit a progress report on the development of transfer associate degrees to the higher education committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The first progress report must include measurable benchmark indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives in improving transfer and baseline data for those indicators before the implementation of the initiatives.”

The Council of Presidents (COP), the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW) offered to identify participants for the work groups required by House Bill 2382. Once participants were identified, each work group selected at least two co-chairs from the community and technical college system, the public baccalaureate institutions, and the independent baccalaureate institutions. Each work group also formed a steering group, which included the co-chairs, representative(s) from the private institutions, and agency staff from the HECB, COP, and SBCTC.

The work groups were provided a charge, general timeline, and suggested guidelines to follow from the Joint Access Oversight Group (JAOG). The JAOG is a voluntary group, composed of academic leaders from the two-year and four-year public colleges, as well as staff from the COP, HECB, and SBCTC, with regular participation by representatives of the independent institutions. HECB staff provided additional direction and support.

Each work group is following a similar approach. At the first few meetings, members review the charge and discuss a matrix of all of the course requirements at the different colleges and universities. Allowing each institution to see other institutions’ requirements in a matrix facilitates analysis and discussion of next steps. At subsequent meetings and through e-mails and telephone conversations, members discuss course requirements in more detail. They attempt to

come to agreement on the courses required for entry to a college major by discussing course content and the competencies or skills that students are expected to be able to demonstrate once the course is completed. Once course requirements have been agreed upon, a summary of those requirements will be reviewed by registrars, other faculty, and, ultimately, academic leadership (the Instruction Commission for the community and technical college system, the Inter-institutional Committee of Academic Officers for the public four-year colleges, and equivalent group(s) at the independent institutions). Following approval by academic leadership, community college leaders will begin developing the new associate degree pathways for students.

Objective

The objective of this work is to provide transfer students with a pathway that will prepare them in the same manner as direct entry¹ students for a specific major at *any* public baccalaureate institution in the state, and for any of the independent institutions that wish to join the agreement.

Wherever possible, the work groups were encouraged to stay within the boundaries of the current Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) or the current Associate of Science Transfer Degree (AS-T). The DTA and AS-T allow students to transfer to a baccalaureate institution as juniors, with most or all of their lower-division general education requirements fulfilled. All public and many private baccalaureate institutions accept students with a DTA or AS-T “package,” eliminating the necessity of evaluating each course on a transcript.

The DTA outlines broad areas in which students must complete credits (e.g., communication skills, quantitative skills, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and electives). The AS-T has a similar structure, with more specificity in math and science. The benefit of developing new pathways within the DTA and AS-T lies in the identification of specific courses that will better prepare students for their majors at baccalaureate institutions. For example, a student intending to major in English might choose among a variety of natural science courses, while a student intending to major in nursing would need to take certain chemistry courses as part of his or her natural science requirements.

House Bill 2382 [Section 2(1)] specifies that transfer associate degrees be developed that satisfy lower-division requirements at the *public* baccalaureate institutions. However, it also states that representatives from the independent four-year institutions may be included in the work groups. Representatives from the independent colleges are active participants in all of the work groups.

The legislation does not address capacity issues. Therefore, addressing the lack of enrollment capacity for transfer students was not part of the work group discussions, although it was acknowledged as an important issue impacting transfer in the state.

Finally, the work groups were advised by JAOG members and HECB staff that they were not necessarily limited to a 90-credit associate degree. If more or less than 90 (quarter-based) credits were determined as the best preparation for a student’s intended major, then the groups had the authority to recommend an associate degree pathway that would vary from the traditional 90-credit degrees now in place.

¹ Students who enter a baccalaureate institution directly from high school.

Nursing

Meetings

The main work group met on July 6, August 30, and November 4 in 2004. In addition to these meetings, the steering group communicated via conference calls and e-mail, and the baccalaureate co-chair presented an overview of the work group's progress at the fall meeting of the Council of Nursing Education in Washington State (CNEWS). Appendix A contains a list of work group participants.

Issues

One of the first issues identified by the work group related to the project scope. Two pathways for access to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) exist for community college graduates: 1) completion of an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) with transfer to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) designed for already licensed nurses (often referred to as an RN-BSN completion program); and 2) completion of an associate degree and transfer to a BSN that has been designed for those seeking to become licensed nurses at the baccalaureate level (often referred to as basic BSN programs).

The group agreed that the first pathway was working well overall through formal articulation agreements between community college nursing programs and the baccalaureate institutions providing BSN completion programs. The legislative charge seemed related more to accessing the entry-level BSN programs. Therefore, the group decided to address the second pathway intended for students who wish to transfer prior to entering the nursing career ladder. The group decided that the nursing pathway description should be expanded to include health sciences, since the prerequisites are similar. Therefore, the proposed title of the new pathway will be "Pre-Nursing and Health Sciences." Expanding the title in this way provides additional options for students who may not gain admission into a nursing program.

Issues related to curriculum have taken the most time and discussion. In many areas, all of the institutions reached agreement quickly. For example, all of the participating colleges and universities agreed to the same five credits of biology, five credits of nutrition, and 10 credits of anatomy and physiology as partial fulfillment of the 35 credits required for natural sciences.

The work group is still discussing, but is close to resolving, other curriculum issues, including specific requirements for chemistry, psychology, and quantitative reasoning content.

Indicators

Credits to degree will be collected for students who complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing through the basic BSN program. Three groups will be compared: 1) students who enter baccalaureate institutions directly from high school (direct entry), 2) students who enter baccalaureate institutions with the Associate of Arts (DTA), and 3) students who enter baccalaureate institutions using the new pathway. In addition, data on the number of students completing the new pathway at the community colleges will be collected.

Baseline Data²: Graduating class of 2000-01 (Nursing)

Student path to baccalaureate	Total number of credits to degree
Direct Entry (12 graduates)	208
Transfer from a Washington State community/technical college (51 graduates)	220

A total of 63 students graduated in 2000-01 from the University of Washington and Washington State University with a B.S. in nursing. Twelve of these students entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school and completed an average of 208 college-level credits toward their degrees. The remaining 51 students transferred from a Washington State community college without an RN via the associate degree in nursing and completed, on average, 220 college-level credits toward their bachelor's degrees. On average, transfer students completed 12 more credits toward their degrees than students who entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school. It is expected that when students enter a baccalaureate institution using the new pathway, this difference will be reduced or eliminated.

It is estimated that the new associate degree pathway will be available at community colleges beginning in fall 2006. Students are expected to complete the new pathway no earlier than spring 2008, and are expected to complete their BSN degree no earlier than spring 2010.

Members of the steering group have nearly completed their work. The work group will hold a fourth, and possibly final, meeting in February 2005. In the meantime, the steering group will work to resolve any outstanding issues.

Elementary Education

Meetings

The main work group met on October 6 and November 22 in 2004 and will meet again on February 11, 2005. The steering group and work group also have communicated through conference calls and e-mail.

Appendix B lists the work group participants. Many of the work group members participated in a previous group created by the two-year and four-year institutions in 2002-03 to discuss a pathway for elementary education. The current work builds on those earlier efforts.

Issues

Requirements for elementary education teachers are regulated by the state. For example, the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) lists competencies required for teacher candidates. Teachers must be certified and hold endorsements to teach in their specialty areas. Endorsements can be earned through completion of a college program and teachers are required to demonstrate their competencies by passing the Washington Educator Skills Test – Endorsement (WEST-E - Content Test). All teachers also are required to pass the WEST-B (Basic Skills Test).

² Source: Loretta Seppanen, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Graduate Administrative Record (GAR) class of 2000-01 database. Data are for graduates whose full transcripts consist only of credits from a community or technical college and/or Washington public baccalaureate institutions. Additional credits from advanced placement and other institutions or sources are not included.

The work group’s challenge is to design a new pathway within the existing Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) that aligns with the standards listed in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC). The DTA is course-based, while the WAC is based on competencies.

One of the first actions taken by the work group was to develop a matrix listing the current Direct Transfer Agreement requirements in each curriculum area, along with corresponding WAC sections addressing student competencies and lower-division college courses, with course and assessment details. The matrix helped ensure that there would be no gaps between the DTA, the WAC, and the lower-division courses that would be included in the new associate degree pathway.

In most areas, the work group reached quick agreement that a particular course that met the WAC standards would be required by all of the public four-year colleges, and could be offered by all of the public two-year colleges. Separate subgroups were created to engage in more detailed discussions regarding quantitative skills and psychology coursework requirements, design of an introductory course, and assessment of computer literacy. These subgroups are expected to report their progress at the meeting of the main work group scheduled for February 2005.

Indicators

Credits to degree will be collected for students who complete their bachelor’s degrees in education with an endorsement in elementary education. Three groups will be compared: 1) students who enter baccalaureate institutions directly from high school, 2) students who enter baccalaureate institutions with the Associate of Arts (DTA), and 3) students who enter baccalaureate institutions using the new pathway. In addition, data on the number of students completing the new pathway at the community colleges will be collected.

Baseline Data³: Graduating class of 2000-01 (Elementary Education)

Student path to baccalaureate	Total number of credits to degree
Direct Entry (182 graduates)	227
Transfer from a Washington State community/technical college (333 graduates)	237

A total of 515 students graduated in 2000-01 from Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, Western Washington University, and Washington State University with bachelor’s degrees in education and endorsements in elementary education. Of that total, 182 entered baccalaureate institutions directly from high school and completed an average of 227 college-level credits toward their degree. The remaining 333 students transferred from a Washington State community college and completed, on average, 237 college-level credits toward their degree. On average, transfer students completed 10 more credits toward their degree than students who entered baccalaureate institutions directly from high school. It is expected that, when students enter a baccalaureate institution using the new pathway, this difference will be reduced or eliminated.

It is estimated that the new associate degree pathway will be available at community colleges beginning in fall 2007. Students are expected to complete the new pathway no earlier than spring 2009, and are expected to complete their bachelor’s degree no earlier than spring 2011.

³ Source: Loretta Seppanen, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Graduate Administrative Record (GAR) class of 2000-01 database. Data are for graduates whose full transcripts consist only of credits from a community or technical college and/or Washington public baccalaureate institutions. Additional credits from advanced placement and other institutions or sources are not included.

Status

Members of the steering group consider the work 50 percent complete. They are confident that they will complete the work by July 2005.

Engineering

Meetings

The main work group met on July 26 and September 17 in 2004 and will meet at least one more time during winter quarter 2005. The steering group also communicated through conference calls and e-mail. Finally, work group co-chairs and staff held a statewide discussion about the new pathways with the Washington Council for Engineering and Related Technical Education (WCERTE) on November 22, 2004.

Appendix B lists the work group participants.

Issues

As with nursing, one of the first issues identified by the engineering work group related to the project scope. Engineering is a broad discipline and one pathway would not fit the requirements for all of the sub-disciplines contained within engineering. Therefore, separate pathways will be designed for the following major areas:

- Chemical and bio-engineering
- Electrical and computer engineering
- Aeronautical, civil, industrial, mechanical, and materials science engineering
- Engineering technology

The group will design new pathways for the first three sub-discipline groups by spring 2005 and discuss the fourth group in 2005-06. The new pathways will follow the broad requirements set out in the Associate of Science –Transfer Degree #2, which was designed for students in engineering, computer science, physics, and atmospheric sciences. More specificity within this degree will be developed, so that students can plan for their specific engineering field while attending a community college and know that their credits would be accepted the same way at different institutions.

The subgroups are now discussing matrices listing the courses required by the different institutions within the categories outlined above. Once the matrices have been reviewed, the subgroups will engage in more detailed discussions about curriculum.

Indicators

Credits to degree will be collected for students who complete their bachelor's degree in the disciplines listed above. Three groups will be compared: 1) students who enter baccalaureate institutions directly from high school, 2) students who enter baccalaureate institutions with the Associate of Science-Transfer Degree #2, and 3) students who enter baccalaureate institutions using the new pathways.

Baseline Data⁴:

Chemical and Bio-Engineering: The number of students completing their bachelor's degrees in 2000-01 was too small to report for a baseline.

Electrical and Computer Engineering:**Graduating class of 2000-01 (Electrical and Computer Engineering)**

Student path to baccalaureate	Total number of credits to degree
Direct Entry (46 graduates)	217
Transfer from a Washington State community/technical college (89 graduates)	253

A total of 135 students graduated from the University of Washington and Washington State University in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in electrical and computer engineering. Forty-six of these students entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school and completed an average of 217 college-level credits toward their degree. The remaining 89 students transferred from a Washington State community college with an associate degree and completed, on average, 253 college-level credits toward their baccalaureate degree. On average, transfer students completed 36 more credits toward their degree than students who entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school. It is expected that when students enter a baccalaureate institution using the new pathway, this difference will be reduced or eliminated.

Aeronautical, Civil, Industrial, and Mechanical Engineering:**Graduating class of 2000-01 (Aeronautical, Civil, Industrial, and Mechanical Engineering)**

Student path to baccalaureate	Total number of credits to degree
Direct Entry (83 graduates)	222
Transfer from a Washington State community/technical college (117 graduates)	246

A total of 200 students graduated from the University of Washington and Washington State University in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical, civil, industrial, or mechanical engineering. Eighty-three of those students entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school and completed an average of 222 college-level credits toward their degree. The remaining 117 students transferred from a Washington State community college with an associate degree and completed, on average, 246 college-level credits toward their baccalaureate degree. On average, transfer students completed 24 more credits toward their degree than students who entered a baccalaureate institution directly from high school. It is expected that when students enter a baccalaureate institution using the new pathway, this difference will be reduced or eliminated. In addition, data on the number of students completing the new pathways at the community colleges will be collected.

It is estimated that the new pathways will be available at community colleges beginning in fall 2007. Students are expected to complete the new pathway(s) no earlier than spring 2009, and are expected to complete their bachelor's degrees no earlier than spring 2011.

⁴ Source: Loretta Seppanen, SBCTC, Graduate Administrative Record (GAR) class of 2000-01 database. Data are for graduates whose full transcripts consist only of credits from a community or technical college and/or Washington public baccalaureate institutions. Additional credits from advanced placement and other institutions or sources are not included.

Status

Members of the steering group consider the work 50 to 60 percent complete. They are confident that they will complete the work by July 2005.

Summary and Next Steps

The nursing work group has made the most progress of the three work groups and has only minor curriculum issues to resolve; the other two groups will need at least two more meetings to complete their discussions. Once each work group has reached agreement and developed associate degree templates listing the course requirements, they will be forwarded to registrars for implementation planning and review and to academic leadership at the two-year and four-year colleges for approval. Once the templates have been approved by academic leadership, the community colleges will begin designing associate degrees that follow the new pathways and advertising them to students.

The new major-specific associate degree pathways require students to make choices early in their academic career. Students who decide to select a major later can still take advantage of the more generic pathways (e.g., the DTA and AS-T), which provide them with broad preparation for a variety of majors. However, those students who select the more specific pathways will be the best prepared for their majors. While the new pathways do not guarantee admission to a college major or to an institution, they do ensure that a student has received the best preparation possible, which can be a factor in admissions decisions at the baccalaureate institutions.

In its 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education, the HECB has adopted the following timeline for future work:

- **By June 2005**, new associate degree pathways will be developed for nursing, elementary education, and engineering. HECB staff will collect an inventory of existing associate degree pathways that prepare students for bachelor's degrees and the number of transfer students earning bachelor's degrees, by major. Additional pathways will be identified, primarily based on the volume of transfer students transferring into particular majors.
- **By December 2005**, the HECB will revise its program approval guidelines for four-year degrees to include a requirement that a corresponding associate degree pathway be identified to articulate with each newly proposed major.
- **By June 2006**, three additional high-demand associate degree pathways will be developed.
- **By June 2007**, all four-year degrees that are in high demand by transfer students will be matched to corresponding associate degree pathways.

Currently, HECB staff are working with members of the Joint Access Oversight Group (JAOG) to identify future pathways and to identify whether the current associate degree pathways already available to students (e.g., the DTA) adequately prepare students for their baccalaureate majors. JAOG has supported the major-specific associate degree pathways as part of their overall statement of intent (see www.hecb.wa.gov/research/issues/documents/JointAccessOversightGroup for further details.) Key stakeholders agree that it is important to provide these pathways to students and are committed to working together to provide students with the best preparation possible for their baccalaureate majors.

Appendix 1A**Nursing Work Group Participants**

Co-Chairs:	Stu Barger, Everett Community College Mary Baroni, University of Washington, Bothell
Staff:	Cindy Morana, Council of Presidents Nina Oman, Higher Education Coordinating Board Violet Boyer, Independent Colleges of Washington Pat Ward, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Community and Technical Colleges:	Maurice McKinnon, Bellevue Sharon Buck, Cascadia Nola Ormrod, Centralia Geary Greenleaf, Lower Columbia Rick Rausch, Clark Stu Barger, Everett Julie Short, Green River Marca Davies, Peninsula Heather Stephen-Selby, Renton Keith Ries, Spokane Gary Blevins, Spokane Falls Kathy Ashworth, Yakima Valley Rhonda Taylor, Yakima Valley
Baccalaureate Institutions:	Peggy Peterson, Eastern Washington University and InterCollegiate Nursing Education (ICNE) Audrey Cox, Pacific Lutheran University Ruth Adams, Seattle Pacific University Emily Hitchens, Seattle Pacific University Maureen Niland, Seattle University Mary Baroni, University of Washington, Bothell Susan Woods, University of Washington, Seattle Marjorie Dobratz, University of Washington, Tacoma Carolyn Denny, Walla Walla College Dorothy Detlor, Washington State University Anne Hirsch, Washington State University and InterCollegiate Nursing Education (ICNE)
Other:	Madeleine Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board

Appendix 1B**Elementary Education Work Group Participants**

Co-Chairs:	Valerie Appleton, Eastern Washington University Greg Brazell, Pierce College Ruth Adams, Seattle Pacific University
Staff:	Cindy Morana, Council of Presidents Nina Oman, Higher Education Coordinating Board Violet Boyer, Independent Colleges of Washington Tina Bloomer, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Community and Technical Colleges:	Margaret Turcott, Bellevue Mary Pack, Centralia Judy Cox, Columbia Basin Dale Hensley, Everett Steve Kinholt, Green River Leslie Heizer, Green River Alice Madsen, Highline Kathy Oberg, Highline Joan Graham, Highline Ann Williamson, Lower Columbia Mary Garguile, Olympic Vidya Thirumurthy, Olympic Barbara Clampett, Peninsula Greg Brazell, Pierce Judy DeJardin, Pierce Mary Kay Brown, Pierce Fort Steilacoom Lisa Saunders, Seattle Central Marilyn Chu, Skagit Valley Ron Averill, South Puget Sound Christine Moon, South Puget Sound Jim Minkler, Spokane Falls Judy Noel, Spokane Falls Loretta Seppanen, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Mary Skinner, Tacoma Celia Hall-Thur, Wenatchee Valley Sally Holloway, Whatcom Richard Fulton, Whatcom Glenda Orgill, Yakima Valley Patti Koluda, Yakima Valley

Appendix 1B (continued)

Baccalaureate Institutions:

Rebecca Bowers, Central Washington University
Carol Meller, Central Washington University
Valerie Appleton, Eastern Washington University
Shannon Carr, Eastern Washington University
Betsy Clewett, Eastern Washington University
Shannon Dineen Setzer, Eastern Washington University
Gayle McFarland, Eastern Washington University
Ann Wolf, Gonzaga University
Jim Borst, Heritage University
Karen Garrison, Heritage University
Paula Leitz, Pacific Lutheran University
Joyce Westgard, St. Martin's College
Carolyn Denny, Walla Walla College
Randy Michaels, Whitworth College
Linda Chaplin, Washington State University
Ed Helmstetter, Washington State University
Judy Nichols Mitchell, Washington State University
Dana Edwards, Western Washington University
Sheila Fox, Western Washington University
Jeanne Gaffney, Western Washington University
Mike Henniger, Western Washington University
Stephanie Salzman, Western Washington University
Lise Sellier, Western Washington University

Appendix 1C

Engineering Work Group Participants

Co-Chairs:	Jeff McCauley, Green River Community College Bob Olsen, Washington State University
Staff:	Cindy Morana, Council of Presidents Nina Oman, Higher Education Coordinating Board Violet Boyer, Independent Colleges of Washington Nancy Verheyden, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Community and Technical Colleges:	Chris Byrne, Cascadia Eric Davishahl, Edmonds Keith Clay, Green River Jeff McCauley, Green River Bob Maplestone, Highline Patricia Cheadle, North Seattle Dennis Schaffer, North Seattle Larry Smith, Peninsula James Bellotty, Spokane Falls
Baccalaureate Institutions:	Walt Kaminski, Central Washington University Don Richter, Eastern Washington University Paul Nowak, Gonzaga University James Brink, Pacific Lutheran University Mara Rempe, Seattle University Anthony De Sam Lazaro, St. Martin's College Chen-Ching Liu, University of Washington Larry Aamodt, Walla Walla College Jon Cole, Walla Walla College Carolyn Denney, Walla Walla College Bob Olsen, Washington State University Steve Dillman, Western Washington University



Part Two

**Statewide Course
Equivalency System**

January 2005

Articulation and Student Transfer: Course Equivalency (House Bill 2382)

Executive Summary

House Bill 2382, passed in 2004, requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board to “create a statewide system of course equivalency for public institutions of higher education,” with a progress report due January 10, 2005, that details options and cost estimates. The 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education includes an implementation strategy for a statewide web-based course equivalency system, and the HECB has requested funding for the system in its agency budget request.

Many other states have developed web-based course equivalency systems to expedite student transfer. These systems allow students to determine how courses taken at one institution will be accepted at another institution. Fully developed systems also allow students to upload their electronic transcripts for evaluation against degree requirements, provide electronic transcript exchange among institutions, and alert faculty when they need to make decisions regarding course equivalencies.

Five of the six public four-year institutions in Washington have developed, or are in the process of developing, their own web-based systems that enable students to understand how the courses they have taken will apply to their degrees. However, no statewide system exists that would allow transfer students to go to one site for degree planning and transcript evaluation.

In 2004, HECB staff assembled a work group comprised of representatives from two-year and four-year, public and private institutions. The group developed a list of requirements for a statewide system, and investigated three options for meeting those requirements. It is the consensus of the work group that Washington students would benefit from a statewide web-based transfer system.

Funding for this system was not included in Governor Locke’s proposed 2005-07 operating budget. If funding is approved during the 2005 legislative session, the HECB will develop more detailed specifications, issue a formal Request for Proposals, select a course equivalency system option, and work with the Department of Information Services to meet state requirements for developing the system.

January 2005

Articulation and Student Transfer: Course Equivalency (House Bill 2382)

Background

House Bill 2382, passed by the 2004 Legislature, requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to *“create a statewide system of course equivalency for public institutions of higher education, so that courses from one institution can be transferred and applied toward academic majors and degrees in the same manner as equivalent courses at the receiving institution. The higher education coordinating board must make a progress report on the development of the course equivalency system to the higher education committees of the Senate and House of Representatives by January 10, 2005. The report must include options and cost estimates for ongoing maintenance of the system.”*

The idea of developing a statewide advising system to assist transfer students has support from stakeholders at the state and institution levels. The 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education advocates for an on-line (web-based) advising system to help community college students quickly and easily transfer to the four-year colleges and universities. The Joint Access Oversight Group (JAOG) also has formally supported the development of a statewide system to facilitate transfer. JAOG is a voluntary group representing academic leadership from the public two-year and four-year colleges and universities, with participation by the private colleges and universities.

The strong support for a statewide advising system reflects the increasing use of transfer as a route to a bachelor’s degree. As tuition continues to rise at the baccalaureate institutions, transfer from a two-year college to a four-year college or university represents an affordable option for thousands of students each year. In fact, the number of students transferring in Washington increased almost 10 percent last year, with 15,366 students transferring from community and technical colleges in 2003-04, compared to 14,007 students transferring in 2002-03. The independent colleges and universities enroll about 26 percent of the transfer students in the state.⁵

While transfer students may access individual institution’s Web sites and advising staff for information, they cannot access the many options available in Washington quickly and easily at one location. Many states (e.g., Maryland, Illinois, Arizona, Ohio) have developed Web sites with state funding, which allow students to use automated systems in planning their route to a bachelor’s degree. These systems help to reduce expensive mistakes for students (and the state)

⁵State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2003-04 Academic Year Report, “Student Progress and Success”

by clearly outlining which credits can be transferred and which can apply to specific majors. Students can consult these automated systems at their convenience and investigate a variety of planning scenarios. For example, a student planning to major in a particular area who fails an important course can view how other credits they have earned might apply to a different major or a different college.

To investigate options for a statewide on-line advising system, HECB staff convened a work group in 2004 that included staff and faculty from both two-year and four-year public and private colleges and universities. The work group met five times and reviewed various Web-based advising systems developed in other states, and systems offered for purchase by vendors. Appendix A contains a list of work group participants.

The work group developed the following list of requirements and requested features for the Web-based system:

Web-based system requirements:

- 1) Interactive, web-accessible course equivalency tables (crosswalks that translate one course to another at different institutions);
- 2) degree audit (the ability to evaluate courses a student has completed or plans to complete based on degree requirements);
- 3) faculty communication (a vehicle for faculty to communicate online regarding course equivalency decisions);
- 4) interaction among existing systems (the ability to reduce additional work for institutions by electronically interfacing with degree audit systems already in place);
- 5) a Web-based survey for soliciting and collecting student feedback on the effectiveness of the system; and
- 6) the ability to send and receive electronic transcripts between institutions, and allow students to upload their electronic transcript for evaluation against various degree requirements.

Additional features of a Web-based system:

- 1) User-friendliness and a unified statewide “look and feel;”
- 2) capacity to link to a degree audit system developed by Washington community colleges, and accept both individual courses and a “package” of courses (such as an associate transfer degree) from community college transfer students;
- 3) inclusion of a comprehensive list of the degree programs offered in the state by both public and private colleges and universities, and “tips” to help transfer students plan; and
- 4) accommodation of start and end dates for courses and degree programs to reflect changing course content and degree requirements.

The options explored by the work group focused on technical solutions only, interpreting the word “system” in the legislation to mean an automated system. The group did not explore common course numbering, since common course numbering is not a technical solution, and since bill language requiring common course numbering was introduced and subsequently deleted during the 2004 legislative session.⁶

⁶ The fiscal impact of implementing a common course numbering system in Washington was estimated at \$494,050 for the 2003-05 biennium.

House Bill 2382 specifies student transfer among public institutions, but includes a provision that the work group “may include representatives from independent four-year institutions.” The Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW) participated in the work group, and expressed interest in participating in a statewide system. Therefore, information about including the ICW colleges in the statewide system is provided in this report.

House Bill 2382 also directs the group to “identify equivalent courses between community and technical colleges and public four-year institutions and among public four-year institutions, including identifying how courses meet requirements for academic majors and degrees.” The work group, therefore, investigated options for facilitating transfer from a two-year college to a four-year institution, and from a four-year institution to another four-year institution. The public community colleges, represented on the work group, emphasized a third type of transfer: students who transfer from one two-year college to another two-year college to earn their associate degrees, and then transfer to a four-year college. Estimated costs to accommodate this type of transfer are included later in this report.

Existing Systems in Washington

Transfer course lists or equivalency crosswalks

Washington does not require common course numbering among the public institutions. For example, a course titled “Math 201” at one college could be equivalent to “Math 205” at another college. Each of the six public baccalaureate institutions has developed some type of transfer course list or equivalency crosswalk. These lists and crosswalks help students learn how a course taken at one college would be accepted at another college.

Western Washington University provides lists of courses that students are allowed to transfer from two-year and four-year public colleges and universities in the state. WWU also provides information about how these transferable courses will apply to a limited set of majors and degree requirements.

The Evergreen State College has developed written documentation for students that explains how associate degrees and two-year college courses will apply toward degree requirements at Evergreen.

Central Washington University provides lists of course equivalency crosswalks, which list course names and numbers from other institutions, along with their equivalent name(s) and number(s) at Central. Central also provides written documentation to students explaining CWU’s policies for accepting credits from other institutions toward degree requirements.

The University of Washington, Washington State University and Eastern Washington University have developed online interactive crosswalks, where a student can use a menu on a Web page to enter a course name and number and receive its equivalent at another four-year institution.

Washington State University, Central Washington University, and Western Washington University include course equivalency crosswalks for other four-year institutions in the state. The remaining three public four-year institutions only include course equivalency crosswalks for the two-year colleges in the state.

The private sector inventory collected for this report includes the colleges and universities represented by the Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW). Of those colleges, Gonzaga and Pacific Lutheran University have developed interactive crosswalks. Seattle Pacific University is currently developing an interactive crosswalk. Seattle University, Whitworth College, and the University of Puget Sound publish equivalency crosswalk tables on their Web sites, but they are not interactive. HECB staff could not find any crosswalks (interactive or non-interactive) on the Web sites of Heritage University, St. Martin's College, Walla Walla College, or Whitman College. None of the private sector colleges have developed course equivalency crosswalks for other four-year institutions in the state.

Degree audit

Degree audit systems enable a student to evaluate how courses fulfill degree requirements. The University of Washington and Washington State University use an automated degree audit system purchased from a vendor called "DARS" (Degree Audit Reporting System). Eastern Washington University is currently transitioning to DARS. Central Washington University uses PeopleSoft. Western Washington University is currently transitioning to an interactive degree audit system purchased from Sungard. The Evergreen State College does not have an interactive degree audit system.

The ICW institutions use a variety of different degree audit systems: Datatel (Seattle University, Whitman, and Whitworth); and Sungard/Banner (Walla Walla College, Pacific Lutheran University, and Gonzaga University). The University of Puget Sound has developed its own Oracle-based system. Seattle Pacific University is developing its own system, expected to be available in March 2005. Heritage University and St. Martin's College do not have an online degree audit system.

The community and technical college system has purchased a degree audit system, which will allow a student to evaluate how courses taken at one two-year college would apply to an associate degree at that college. This system, developed by Bellevue Community College, has been enhanced to accommodate the other public two-year colleges.

Electronic transcripts

Each four-year institution has the capability to receive electronic transcripts from Washington community colleges, but only four (the University of Washington, Washington State University, Eastern Washington University, and Western Washington University) currently do so. The remaining public and private four-year institutions could receive electronic transcripts from Washington community colleges, but this would require extensive technical work. A fully implemented system in Washington would allow both two-year and four-year institutions (public and private) to send and receive electronic transcripts. Ideally, a national standard for transcript formats would be used so that transcripts could be sent and received among colleges in other states. The community colleges do not currently format their electronic transcripts according to a national standard, nor do the electronic transcripts include information about completed associate transfer degree packages.

Faculty communication/course equivalency decisions

None of the higher education institutions in the state have developed a system to automate faculty communication regarding course equivalency decisions. Currently, staff at the baccalaureate institutions manually review each community college catalog for changes to

course descriptions. If a change is found, then the four-year institution staff re-evaluate the course and inform community college staff if the course's equivalency status has been changed. This process is time-consuming and inefficient in terms of staff resources.

Arizona has developed an automated routing system for course equivalency decisions. When a course needs to be re-evaluated, emails are sent to defined groups, and decisions about the course can be tracked online. The University of Washington is currently working to obtain the Arizona system for its own use.

Student feedback

The institutions typically collect student feedback via alumni surveys. However, no college systematically collects feedback online specifically from transfer students.

Options

The work group considered three options for a statewide system. Two of the options are available for purchase. The third option would require hiring or contracting with programming staff to develop a customized system for the state. Summaries of these options are provided below:

Option 1: A statewide system that requires each institution receiving transfer students to enter and maintain degree requirements in addition to degree audit systems it might currently maintain. This option is currently used in two states.

Pros:

- User-friendly from a student perspective: This option allows students to compare how their credits would transfer to different majors and institutions and view the comparisons side-by-side.
- The output is fairly easy to read and presents a unified look and feel to students.
- Includes a feature for online faculty communication regarding course equivalency decisions.
- Includes the capability for routing electronic transcripts using a national formatting standard.
- Students can upload their entire transcript for evaluation.
- Includes a feature for gathering student feedback.
- Could be implemented in six to twelve months.

Cons:

- This option requires each institution to manually enter its degree requirements and maintain this information separately from any degree audit system it might currently maintain. Although this option does include some electronic loading of data, it does not automatically interface with existing systems on an ongoing basis.
- Attachments are limited to a text file format. When faculty communicate about course decisions, they need to be able to send attachments in different formats.
- If a course is no longer offered, it can be stored as an "inactive" course, or the start and end dates can be stored as comments. Members of the work group would prefer that the start and end dates for courses be built into the system.

Option 2: A statewide system that interfaces with the degree audit systems in place at each institution. This option is currently used by the University of Washington, as well as institutions in eight other states. It is also being implemented by institutions in four other states.

Pros:

- Is efficient from an institutional perspective, since it interfaces with degree audit systems already in place and eliminates duplication of effort.
- Would interface easily with the systems in place at the baccalaureate institutions.
- Includes start and end dates for courses built into the system.
- Includes a feature for gathering student feedback.
- Includes the ability for students to upload electronic transcripts for evaluation.
- Could be implemented in six to twelve months.

Cons:

- Output can be difficult to read for students (although enhancements are planned).
- Does not present a statewide “look and feel” (although enhancements are planned).
- Does not include the capability for online faculty communication regarding course equivalency decisions. Other states using this option have developed their own applications to accommodate course equivalency discussions.
- Does not currently include electronic transcript exchange between institutions, although the vendor expects these options to be available in early 2005.

Option 3: A customized system developed by the state. A third option is to hire or contract with programming staff or a consultant to develop a system for the state. The programming staff could potentially come from college campuses or the Center for Information Resources with experience in developing similar systems.

Pros:

- Unlimited flexibility: Options #1 and #2 can be modified when there is consensus from all of their users. However, a state-developed system could be customized to fit our state’s needs and scheduling requirements. The complex grading rules and academic policies among the campuses (e.g. repeated courses, counting physical education credits) make a customized system very attractive. A customized system could also be tailored to interface with each institution's existing degree audit system, increasing institutional efficiencies.
- The elimination of one-time licensing fees and annual maintenance fees.

Cons:

- A longer time frame for implementation: This option would require hiring two computer programmers over a period of two years. Options #1 and #2 could be implemented in six months to one year; while Option #3 will take two years to fully implement.

Costs

As required by HB 2382, the following table summarizes the estimated cost requirements for each option, by biennium, for implementation and maintenance of a system that would include transfer between the two-year and four year public colleges, and among the four-year public colleges. The costs include electronic transcript exchange and reformatting, program licensing (with a 5 percent increase per year in price assumed), staff at the state and institution level, interfaces to existing degree audit systems (if necessary), training, travel and marketing, and hardware and software.

Estimated Costs for a Statewide System

(Public Institutions: Two-Year to Four-Year Transfer, and Four-Year to Four-Year Transfer)

Option	2005-07	2007-09	2009-11	Nine Year Total
#1	\$2,974,680	\$1,587,180	\$1,607,433	\$6,169,293
#2	\$2,136,872	\$1,278,034	\$1,286,485	\$4,701,391
#3	\$2,173,080	\$1,195,580	\$1,195,580	\$4,116,240

Reasons for cost variations

Option #1 is the most expensive because the vendor includes in its license the ability for all institutions in the state to participate, both public and private, for all types of transfer. Option #2 only includes pricing for the public four-year colleges to participate as receiving institutions for students from other colleges. In other words, it does not include transfer between two-year public colleges, and it does not include the independent four-year colleges and universities as receiving institutions.

Option #1 also requires more staffing than the other two options, as each institution receiving transfer students would need to update and maintain its degree requirements in a separate system. Option #2 includes fees for developing interfaces between the new state system and existing degree audit systems at the institutions. Option #3 does not include any licensing fees but instead includes funding for a contract with two programmers who would work to develop a customized system for the state over a two-year period.

If the costs to develop transfer among the four-year institutions were removed from the budget, approximately \$576,000 could be subtracted for the 2005-07 biennium costs listed above, bringing them more in line with the \$1.6 million originally requested in the HECB 2005-07 agency budget for a statewide on-line advising system.

Accommodating Other Types of Transfer

The previous sections of this report have described costs for a system that would allow students to access an automated statewide system providing information for transfer from a single two-year college to a single baccalaureate institution. However, students also transfer from multiple two-year institutions to a four-year institution. In addition, approximately 26 percent of all students who transfer from a two-year institution transfer to an independent baccalaureate institution.⁷ The following sections describe the additional costs required to accommodate these types of transfer.

Additional costs to accommodate transfer among multiple two-year colleges to a four-year college

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) estimates that it will cost an additional \$100,000 to modify their own degree audit system to accommodate students who transfer between the two-year colleges to earn an associate degree, and then to a four-year institution to earn a bachelor’s degree. In addition, the SBCTC estimates that \$400,000 would be required to fund the staff work necessary to develop course equivalencies and associate degree templates. In addition, 1.0 FTE would be required at the state board level to oversee implementation and maintenance for each option. These costs will be incurred regardless of which option is purchased for a statewide system.

Options #1 and #3 would not require additional license fees, but Option #2 would charge additional licensing fees to accommodate transfer among multiple two-year colleges.

Estimated Additional Costs

(Public Institutions: Transfer among Multiple Two-Year Institutions to a Four-Year Institution)

Option	2005-07	2007-09	2009-11	Nine Year Total
#1	\$666,400	\$166,400	\$166,400	\$999,200
#2	\$934,464	\$250,909	\$259,572	\$1,444,945
#3	\$681,400	\$166,400	\$166,400	\$1,014,200

Additional cost to include the Independent Colleges of Washington

Assuming that the independent colleges would provide separate funding for staff, interfaces, and any programming necessary to exchange electronic transcripts, the only additional cost to include the independent colleges would be incurred by Option #2, which charges an additional licensing fee based on student headcount. The additional fees would be as follows (assuming a 5 percent increase per year).

Estimated Additional Costs

Independent Colleges of Washington (ICW)

Option	2005-07	2007-09	2009-11	Nine Year Total
#1	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
#2	\$122,934	\$45,349	\$49,997	\$313,626
#3	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Does not include staffing, programming, or interfaces

⁷ Eleven percent of these students transfer to colleges represented by the Independent Colleges of Washington; the remainder transfer to the University of Phoenix, City University, and other for-profit independent institutions.

Summary and Next Steps

The Higher Education Coordinating Board's 2005-07 agency budget request included \$1.1 million for the first year of a statewide advising system, with \$550,000 requested for subsequent years. This request did not include the costs to include the private colleges or to accommodate modifications for transfer from multiple two-year colleges.

If the state provides funding for this project, the next step in the process would be to develop detailed system specifications, and conduct a formal Request for Proposal (RFP). Through the RFP process, a vendor or contract would be selected. HECB staff will work closely with Department of Information Services staff to fulfill the state's requirements for making an investment in information technology.

The work group, and others who have been involved with this project, have unanimously agreed that our state needs a statewide transfer advising system. While it is not possible to place a dollar value on the benefit of early, accurate advising and planning, anecdotes from experts in other states confirm that their statewide systems are well worth the investment, as they promote efficient transfer with a minimal loss of credits.

Appendix 2A

Work Group Participants

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Representatives

Shari Rasmussen

Associate Registrar
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The background of the page is a grayscale, blurred image of various writing instruments. In the upper left, there is a portion of a blue highlighter. Below it, a pencil is shown horizontally. In the lower right, a fountain pen is visible, angled downwards. The overall effect is a soft, out-of-focus composition of stationery items.

Part Three

Substitute House Bill 2382

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2382

Chapter 55, Laws of 2004

58th Legislature
2004 Regular Session

HIGHER EDUCATION--TRANSFER STUDENTS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 6/10/04

Passed by the House March 8, 2004
Yeas 94 Nays 0

FRANK CHOPP

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Passed by the Senate March 3, 2004
Yeas 47 Nays 0

BRAD OWEN

President of the Senate

Approved March 22, 2004.

GARY F. LOCKE

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Richard Nafziger, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2382** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

RICHARD NAFZIGER

Chief Clerk

FILED

March 22, 2004 - 4:41 p.m.

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2382

AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2004 Regular Session

State of Washington 58th Legislature 2004 Regular Session

By House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Kenney, Cox, Fromhold, Nixon, Anderson, Ruderman, Chase, Schual-Berke, Miloscia, Hudgins, Wood, Morrell, Santos, Moeller and Kagi)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/04.

1 AN ACT Relating to improving articulation and transfer between
2 institutions of higher education; amending RCW 28B.80.290; adding new
3 sections to chapter 28B.80 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that community and
6 technical colleges play a vital role for students obtaining
7 baccalaureate degrees. In 2002, more than forty percent of students
8 graduating with a baccalaureate degree had transferred from a community
9 or technical college.

10 (2) The legislature also finds that demand continues to grow for
11 baccalaureate degrees. Increased demand comes from larger numbers of
12 students seeking access to higher education and greater expectations
13 from employers for the knowledge and skills needed to expand the
14 state's economy. Community and technical colleges are an essential
15 partner in meeting this demand.

16 (3) However, the legislature also finds that current policies and
17 procedures do not provide for efficient transfer of courses, credits,
18 or prerequisites for academic majors. Furthermore, the state's public
19 higher education system must expand its capacity to enroll transfer

1 students in baccalaureate education. The higher education coordinating
2 board must take a leadership role in working with the community and
3 technical colleges and four-year institutions to ensure efficient and
4 seamless transfer across the state.

5 (4) Therefore, it is the legislature's intent to build clearer
6 pathways to baccalaureate degrees, improve statewide coordination of
7 transfer and articulation, and ensure long-term capacity in the state's
8 higher education system for transfer students.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The higher education coordinating board
10 must convene work groups to develop transfer associate degrees that
11 will satisfy lower division requirements at public four-year
12 institutions of higher education for specific academic majors. Work
13 groups must include representatives from the state board for community
14 and technical colleges and the council of presidents, as well as
15 faculty from two and four-year institutions. Work groups may include
16 representatives from independent four-year institutions.

17 (2) Each transfer associate degree developed under this section
18 must enable a student to complete the lower-division courses or
19 competencies for general education requirements and preparation for the
20 major that a direct-entry student would typically complete in the
21 freshman and sophomore years for that academic major.

22 (3) Completion of a transfer associate degree does not guarantee a
23 student admission into an institution of higher education or admission
24 into a major, minor, or professional program at an institution of
25 higher education that has competitive admission standards for the
26 program based on grade point average or other performance criteria.

27 (4) During the 2004-05 academic year, the work groups must develop
28 transfer degrees for elementary education, engineering, and nursing.
29 Each year thereafter, the higher education coordinating board must
30 convene additional groups to identify and develop additional transfer
31 degrees. The board must give priority to majors in high demand by
32 transfer students and majors that the general direct transfer agreement
33 associate degree does not adequately prepare students to enter
34 automatically upon transfer.

35 (5) The higher education coordinating board, in collaboration with
36 the intercollege relations commission, must collect and maintain lists

1 of courses offered by each community and technical college and public
2 four-year institution of higher education that fall within each
3 transfer associate degree.

4 (6) The higher education coordinating board must monitor
5 implementation of transfer associate degrees by public four-year
6 institutions to ensure compliance with subsection (2) of this section.

7 (7) Beginning January 10, 2005, the higher education coordinating
8 board must submit a progress report on the development of transfer
9 associate degrees to the higher education committees of the house of
10 representatives and the senate. The first progress report must include
11 measurable benchmark indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the
12 initiatives in improving transfer and baseline data for those
13 indicators before the implementation of the initiatives. Subsequent
14 reports must be submitted by January 10 of each odd-numbered year and
15 must monitor progress on the indicators, describe development of
16 additional transfer associate degrees, and provide other data on
17 improvements in transfer efficiency.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The higher education coordinating board
19 must create a statewide system of course equivalency for public
20 institutions of higher education, so that courses from one institution
21 can be transferred and applied toward academic majors and degrees in
22 the same manner as equivalent courses at the receiving institution.

23 (2) The board must convene a work group including representatives
24 from the state board for community and technical colleges and the
25 council of presidents, as well as faculty from two and four-year
26 institutions, to:

27 (a) Identify equivalent courses between community and technical
28 colleges and public four-year institutions and among public four-year
29 institutions, including identifying how courses meet requirements for
30 academic majors and degrees; and

31 (b) Develop strategies for communicating course equivalency to
32 students, faculty, and advisors.

33 (3) The work group may include representatives from independent
34 four-year institutions. The work group must take into account the
35 unique nature of the curriculum of The Evergreen State College in
36 developing the course equivalency system.

1 (4) The higher education coordinating board must make a progress
2 report on the development of the course equivalency system to the
3 higher education committees of the senate and house of representatives
4 by January 10, 2005. The report must include options and cost
5 estimates for ongoing maintenance of the system.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The higher education coordinating board
7 must conduct a gap analysis of upper division capacity in the public
8 higher education system to accommodate transfer students. The analysis
9 must address the total number of enrollment slots, specific academic
10 majors, and geographic location of demand and supply of upper division
11 capacity.

12 (2) The board must examine the full range of options, including
13 costs, to close the gap between demand and supply of upper division
14 capacity. Options include expansion of main campuses, branch campuses,
15 off-campus education centers, distance learning, and other strategies.

16 (3) The board must make a progress report by January 10, 2005, and
17 a final report by December 10, 2006, with recommendations to the higher
18 education committees of the senate and house of representatives for how
19 the state should expand upper division capacity in various locations
20 across the state.

21 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28B.80.290 and 1983 c 304 s 2 are each amended to read
22 as follows:

23 The statewide transfer of credit policy and agreement (~~shall~~)
24 must be designed to facilitate the transfer of students and the
25 evaluation of transcripts, to better serve persons seeking information
26 about courses and programs, to aid in academic planning, and to improve
27 the review and evaluation of academic programs in the state
28 institutions of higher education. The statewide transfer of credit
29 policy and agreement (~~shall~~) must not require (~~nor~~) or encourage
30 the standardization of course content (~~and shall not~~) or prescribe
31 course content or the credit value assigned by any institution to the
32 course. Policies adopted by public four-year institutions concerning
33 the transfer of lower division credit must treat students transferring
34 from public community colleges the same as students transferring from
35 public four-year institutions.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** Sections 2 and 3 of this act are each added
2 to chapter 28B.80 RCW.

 Passed by the House March 8, 2004.

 Passed by the Senate March 3, 2004.

 Approved by the Governor March 22, 2004.

 Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 22, 2004.