

FOUNDATIONS OF EXCELLENCE – TRANSFER STUDENTS



TULSA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

FALL 2019



FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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A Letter From TCC President Leigh B. Goodson

In June 2019, Tulsa Community College adopted a new mission and vision statement. Our mission is building success through education, leading to our vision of an educated, employed, and thriving community. TCC joined the Tulsa Transfer Project in Spring 2018 to work towards making that vision a reality. The project has challenged us to analyze and reflect on how we are preparing our students for their entire educational journey, not just their time with us at TCC. As the state of Oklahoma's top provider of transfer students, we have a responsibility to ensure our students who intend to transfer are given a clear pathway from application to graduation, and on to their transfer institution, and that they are prepared to succeed when they arrive.

TCC is not traveling this path alone. Our partners Langston University, Northeastern State University, Oklahoma State University, Rogers State University, University of

Oklahoma, and University of Tulsa are collaborating with us to improve transfer outcomes and increase baccalaureate attainment in our region. TCC is committed to advocating for our students in all aspects of the transfer experience, including ongoing work with these partners to create smooth and supported transitions between institutions.

I would like to thank our TCC Tulsa Transfer Project team for their dedication over the last year, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation for their support, and the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education for their guidance. I am confident the outcomes of this project will make TCC stronger and help our students to achieve their goals.

Dr. Leigh Goodson

TCC President and Chief Executive Officer

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Our team would also like to extend sincere thanks to all stakeholders who participated in surveys, brainstorming sessions, and who provided feedback to our team members during this process. This list includes students, faculty, staff, department chairs, and our partners at Langston University, Northeastern State University, Oklahoma State University, Rogers State University, University of Oklahoma, and the University of Tulsa.

The State of Transfer



National

Student enrollment in public community colleges surpasses enrollment in other higher education institution types making up 47% of all undergraduates in the United States. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 2003-2004, 81.4% of first-time beginning community college (FBCC) students identified a bachelor's degree or higher as their educational goal. Of these students, 49.9% were still enrolled or had attained a degree or certificate five years after beginning at the community college. 21.1% had transferred to a 4-year institution. Within six years, 22.9% of these students had earned an associate's degree or certificate while only 11.6% earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

In 2017, the Census Bureau estimated the number of individuals in the nation obtaining a bachelor's or higher degree to be 10.5% for ages 18-24, and 30.9% for ages above 25.

Oklahoma

While Oklahoma community colleges rank third in the nation for student transfer to 4-year institutions, we are performing below average on transfer students earning credentials. A study published by Columbia University's Community College Research Center found that while 42% of Oklahoma students transferred from a community college to a 4-year institution, 9% higher than the national average, only 22% of those students transferred with a credential, 7% lower than the national average. 40% of Oklahoma students transferring into a 4-year institution obtained a Bachelor's degree, 2% below national average.

In 2017, the Census Bureau estimated the number of individuals in Oklahoma obtaining a bachelor's or higher degree to be 7.5% for ages 18-24, and 24.8% for ages above 25.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) is the coordinating board for Oklahoma's 25 state institutions: twelve community colleges, ten regional universities, two research universities, and one liberal arts university, along with eleven constituent agencies and two university centers. The OSRHE prescribe standards of education and determine functions and courses of study.

The current system offers community college students the freedom to transfer to any four-year public institution in the state. However, without robust community college and four-year institution partnerships, community college transfer students may struggle to determine the most direct and cost-efficient path to degree completion without losing course credits.

Community colleges in Oklahoma have many functions including providing developmental education, general education, transfer preparation, workforce development, and continuing education for people of all ages. In addition, Oklahoma community colleges are charged with participation in programs of economic development for their geographic region, either independently or with area universities.

The State of Transfer (Continued)

For many Oklahomans, community college is the gateway to higher education. As the cost of higher education continues to rise, community colleges attract Oklahomans as a more affordable option. According to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) Research Center, 57% of Oklahoma students who completed a degree at a four-year institution were enrolled at a two-year institution at some point in their past academic career. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) indicates that community colleges also attract students from underserved populations, particularly among underserved students whose goal is to attain a bachelor's degree or higher.

In 2017, the State Regents established the Task Force on the Future of Higher Education to examine how the state can improve degree completion and productivity. In 2018, the Task Force recommended that State Regents endorse the implementation of Oklahoma's statewide Guided Pathways plan to provide students with a clear and direct route to graduation. The Task Force also recommended that State Regents work with community colleges and four-year institutions on reverse transfer agreements, as well as making the Course Equivalency Project more accessible and user-friendly.

The Oklahoma State Regents identified college completion as their top priority. By 2023, their goal is to increase the number of degrees and certificates earned in Oklahoma by 67%. To this aim, they have joined Complete College America (CCA), an alliance of forty states and territories dedicated to improving college success. The Oklahoma plan focuses on college readiness, transforming remediation, strengthening pathways to college degrees and certificates, rewarding performance, and increasing adult degree completion.

Tulsa County

In 2017, the Census Bureau estimated the number of residents in Tulsa County who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher was 9.6% for 18 to 24 year olds, and 30.9% for those over 24. Within the city of Tulsa, the numbers are similar: 9.9% of 18 to 24 year olds, and 30.8% of those 25 years old and older. Comparable cities within the US include Oakland, California (18-24 years: 16.8%; and, 25 years and over: 40.6%), Minneapolis, Minnesota (18-24 years: 20.9%; and, 25 years and over: 48.3%), Cleveland, Ohio (18-24 years: 10.7%; and, 25 years and over: 16.4%), and Wichita, Kansas (18-24 years: 10.0%; and, 25 years and over: 29.5%).

In the Tulsa area, Tulsa Community College serves as the sole public-institution provider of freshman and sophomore level coursework. As a result, many TCC students transfer to area four-year institutions including Langston University-Tulsa, Northeastern State University-Broken Arrow, Rogers State University, Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, Oral Roberts University, the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa, and the University of Tulsa.

There are 21 high schools and 11 rural and urban school districts within the Tulsa County area with a combined 2016-17 graduating class of 6,834. Tulsa's five largest districts accounted for 80% of county graduates in 2016-2017: Tulsa Public Schools (1,594 graduates), Broken Arrow (1,276 graduates), Union (1,151 graduates), Jenks (781 graduates), and Owasso (692 graduates). The Tulsa Achieves funding program provides 100% tuition and fees to graduating Tulsa County students with a 2.0 GPA or higher who enroll at TCC the fall after they graduate from high school. The funding pays for up to three years of college or 63 credit hours, whichever comes first.

What surprised you during your transfer experience (good or bad)?

"What surprised me the most was that the colleges do not talk. I cannot ask an advisor at one school to tell me how to go through the whole process, I had to run back and forth trying to gather the information I or the other school needed."

— Spring 2019 Transfer Student,
Liberal Arts

Tulsa Community College



Tulsa Community College is a large, urban community college in Northeastern Oklahoma founded in 1970. We have four main campuses across the Tulsa region, and a few community and satellite campuses. We offer 125 credential programs (AA, AS, AAS, and Certificates). Fifty-two of those programs are intended for transfer to a four-year institution (AA, AS programs). To ensure smooth transferability, we have over 130 articulation agreements with four-year partner institutions. However, only 30 transfer degree programs have articulation agreements that have been reviewed or updated in the past three years.

We serve about 24,000 students annually. In Fall 2018, we had 16,475 students. Of these, 63% were female, 44% were non-white, 37% were first-generation, 33% were non-traditional (over 24 years of age), and almost 30% were attending full-time. Of the 16,475 students, 9,711 (58.9%) were majoring in one of our transfer programs. During the 2018-19 academic year, we had 2,781 students graduate with a credential. Of the credentials earned, 69% were AA or AS degrees.

Fall 2018 First-time Entering Cohort Transfer (AA/AS) Majors Only

We had 3,499 first-time entering college students in Fall 2018. Of our 3,499 first-time entering students, 2,312 (66.1%) were majoring in one of our transfer programs. Below is a demographic breakdown of the first-time entering students enrolled in a transfer program at TCC for Fall 2018.

Full-time/Part-time Status

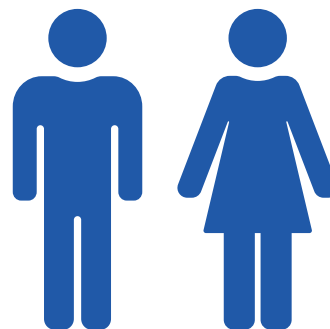
50.1%
Full-Time



49.9%
Part-Time

Gender

45.3%
Male



53.8%
Female

0.9%
Unknown

Fall 2018 First-time Entering AA/AS Cohort



59.9%
Tulsa Achieves Cohort



18.3%
Previously Concurrent
High School Student

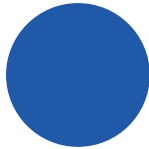
First Generation College Student



25%
Yes

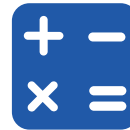


59%
No



16%
Unknown

Developmental Educational Needs



56%
Math

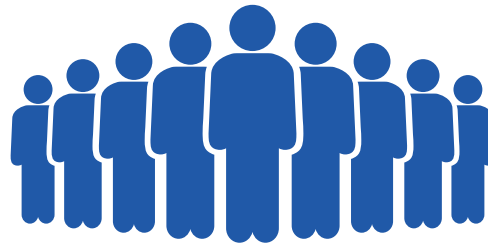


33%
Writing



23%
Reading

Race/Ethnicity



45%
White

13%
Two or more races

6%
Unknown

5%
Asian

0.1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

15%
Hispanic/Latinx

8%
Black or African American

5%
American Indian or Alaska Native

3%
International Non-Resident

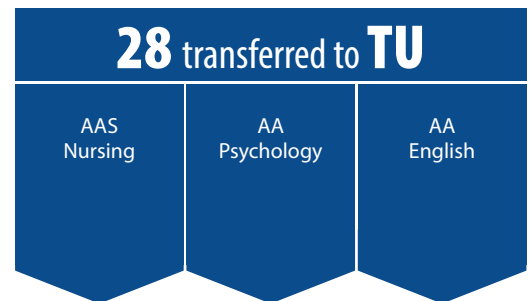
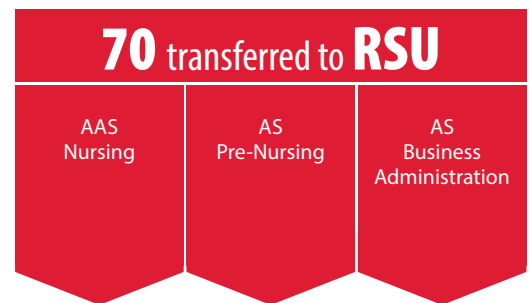
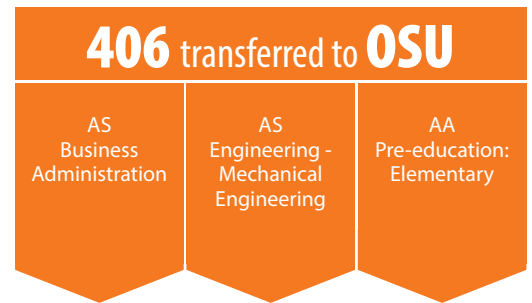
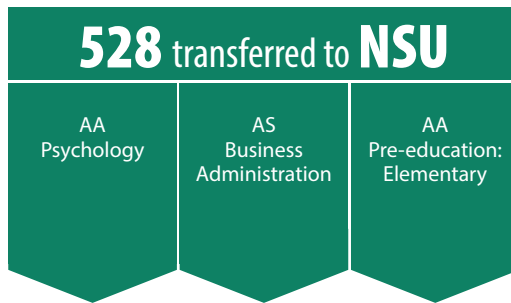
Tulsa Community College (Continued)

Transfer Statistics

53.1%
of AY 14-15
graduates
transferred
to a four-year
institution within
three years.

733
AY 14-15
graduates earned
a bachelor degree
within three years.

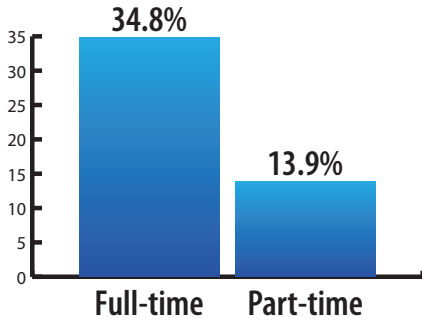
The Top Three Transfer Programs for Academic Year 2014-15



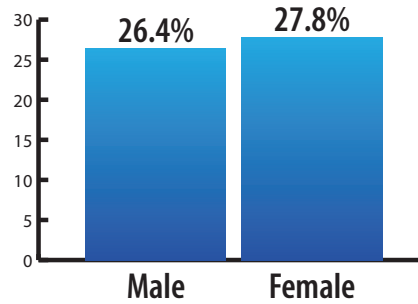
Fall 2015 First-time Entering Cohort Transfer Rates

In Fall 2015, we had 3,264 first-time entering college students. Of those, 2,132 (65.3%) were transfer majors (majoring in an AA or AS degree option). Of the transfer majors, 579 (27.1%) transferred to a four-year institution within three years. The following graphs show the percentage of AA/AS students who transferred to a four-year institution for each demographic group.

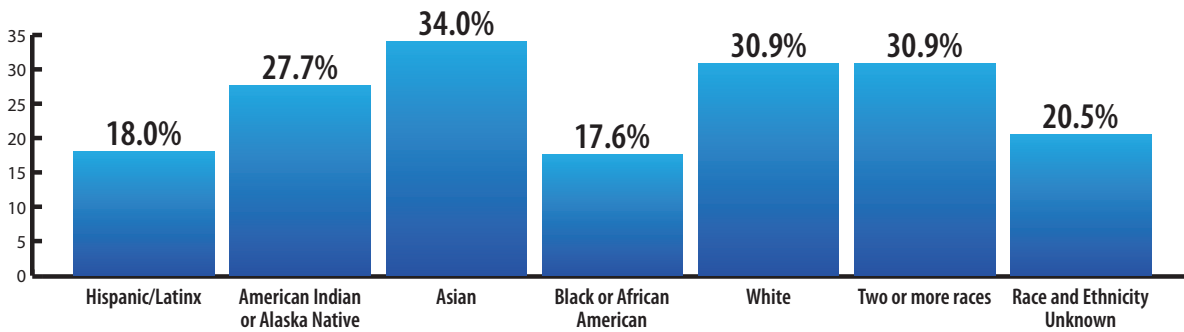
Full-time/Part-time Status Fall 2018



Gender

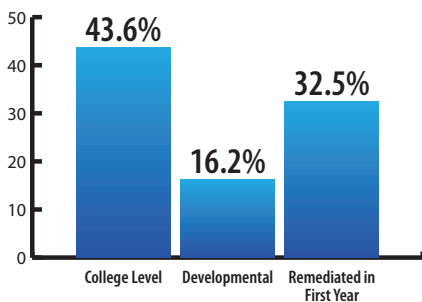


Race/Ethnicity

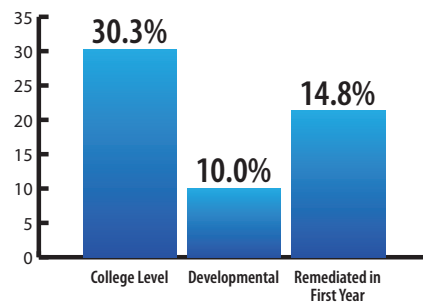


Developmental Education Needs

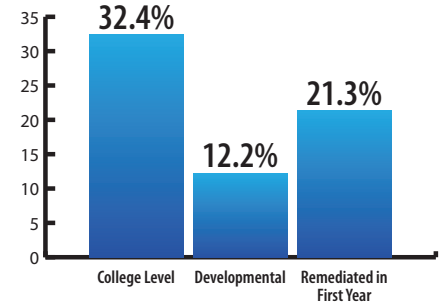
Mathematics



Reading

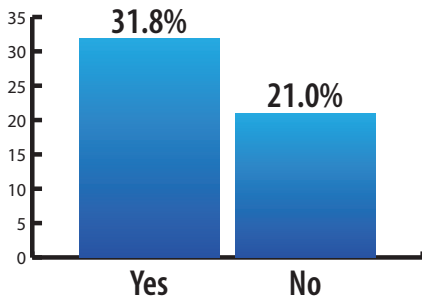


Writing

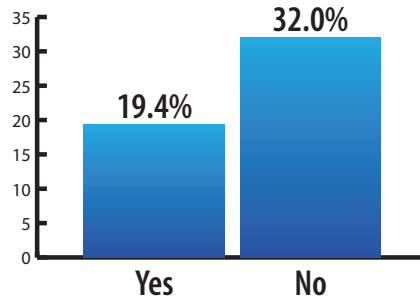


Tulsa Community College (Continued)

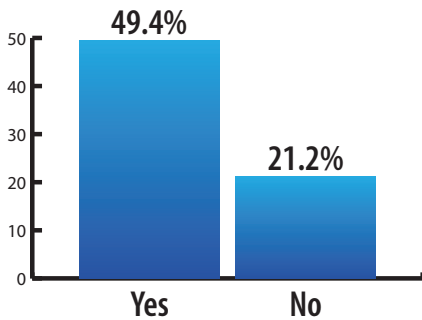
Tulsa Achieves



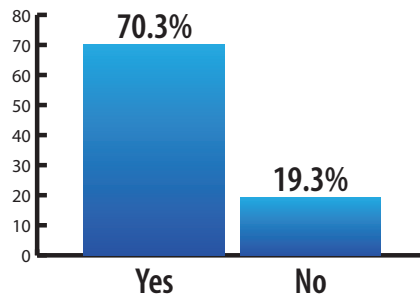
First Generation College Student



Attended TCC as a Concurrent High School Student



TCC Credential Earned



Transfer Student Survey

71.3% of transfer-bound students would highly or very highly recommend TCC as a good place to acquire the first two years of a four-year degree.

64.6% of transfer-bound students rate the degree to which TCC is meeting their academic needs as high or very high.

63.9% of transfer bound students indicate the encouragement to learn about universities to which they intend transfer has been moderate, slight, or not at all.

49.2% of transfer bound students indicate their academic advisors' explanation of the transfer process has been slight or not at all.

59.5% of transfer-bound students indicate TCC has provided moderate, slight, or no help in making decisions about transfer.



Tulsa Transfer Project Summary of Work



Project Overview

In 2018, TCC and six regional universities (five public, and one private) with the support of Schusterman Family Foundation began participating in a two-year guided Foundations of Excellence program on improving college transfer coordinated by the non-profit John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The program focuses on self-study, data analysis, policy and practice review, and collaboration leading to recommended actions to improve institutional organization, activities, and communication to support transfer students.

Project Goals

- Increase the number of transfer students from TCC to regional universities
- Reduce the loss of credits during the transition from TCC to receiving institutions
- Increase the rates of bachelor's degree completion among transfer students at receiving institutions

Project Timeline to Date

Spring 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faculty/staff and student Foundations of Excellence college-wide surveys• Participation in Gateway Course Experience Conference in Houston with John N. Gardner Institute
Summer 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of Current Practices and Data Inventory
Fall 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative kickoff meeting with all project teams and Gardner Institute• College-wide brainstorming sessions
Spring 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion and revision of nine foundations of Excellence dimension reports• Generation of recommended action items and communication to college stakeholders• Participation in Gateway Course Experience Conference in Atlanta with John N. Gardner Institute
Fall 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completion of Final Report and Action Plan• Early implementation of recommended action items
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Guided training and support with the Gardner Institute</i>• <i>Participation in regional collaborative discussions with university partners</i>

Tulsa Transfer Project Summary of Work (Continued)

Foundations of Excellence –Transfer Students

The John N. Gardner Institute provides two-year institutions nine aspirational dimensions to evaluate current practices and beliefs about the transfer student experience. The nine dimensions align with TCC's 2016-2020 Strategic Plan goals for ensuring academic quality in instruction, providing student centered services, and optimizing partnerships to create a seamless process for university transfer. Also, the Guided Pathways Essential Practices followed by TCC espouse many of the same beliefs about mapping students to their end goals through well designed programs and intentional communication and services. These existing organizational priorities contributed to and enhanced the analysis of how TCC currently embodies the nine Foundations of Excellence dimensions.

The TCC Tulsa Transfer Project team began in early 2018 assembling data and documentation to support our current state in supporting transfer students. This comprehensive review of information, along with feedback from stakeholders via surveys and brainstorming sessions, formed the basis for reports on the nine dimensions listed below.

1. **Philosophy Dimension:** Foundations Institutions develop intentional policies and practices related to student transfer based on a clear philosophy/rationale. The philosophy/rationale is explicit, clear and easily understood, consistent with the institutional mission, widely disseminated, and, as appropriate, reflects a consensus of campus constituencies. The philosophy/rationale is also the basis for transfer policies, practices, structures, leadership, department/unit philosophies, and resource allocation. This philosophy recognizes the institution's role in serving and supporting transfer students.
2. **Organization Dimension:** Foundations Institutions create organizational structures that provide oversight and coordination of student transfer. Coherent oversight of the transfer process is realized and maintained through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student services, and other administrative units and is enhanced through appropriate budgetary allocations. Foundations Institutions are organized to guide transfer students through a wide range of essential services. They assure communication and collaboration with receiving institutions at multiple levels including senior administration, academic departments, academic advising, and other administrative units.
3. **Learning Dimension:** Foundations Institutions assure the seamless development of transfer students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution's philosophy and mission. They coordinate with receiving institutions to determine common course goals, learning outcomes, and pathways to degree completion. They encourage the participation of transfer students in engaging learning experiences both in and out of the classroom.
4. **Campus Culture Dimension:** Foundations Institutions make transfer students a high priority for faculty and staff. A culture of responsibility for the preparation of transfer students characterizes these institutions. This culture is articulated by campus leaders and realized through high-quality instruction, services, and support as well as substantial interaction with students both inside and outside the classroom. Campus leaders nurture this culture and support it by appropriate institutional recognition and rewards.

What is the most important thing you would tell a fellow student who is preparing to transfer to do?

"Make sure all credits taken are credits that will transfer to the other institution so you aren't taking unnecessary courses. Talk with both schools' advisors. And if you're trying to graduate in 4 years, take summer classes... more than 2."

*– Spring 2019 Transfer Student,
Business Administration*

Tulsa Transfer Project Summary of Work (Continued)

5. **Transitions Dimension:** Foundations Institutions facilitate appropriate transfer student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with the institutional mission. Chief among these practices is a competent and caring approach to advising for transfer students. Beginning with the admission of students preparing to transfer, institutions and academic departments/units communicate clear curricular and co-curricular expectations and provide appropriate support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to transfer students as well as students' responsibilities to themselves and the institution. They create and maintain administrative linkages with receiving institutions, assist students in learning about the culture of receiving institutions, and endeavor to provide accurate and timely information to assure successful transfer.
6. **All Students Dimension:** Foundations Institutions serve transfer students according to their varied needs. The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is continuous and is subject to routine assessment and adjustment. Institutions provide services with respect for the students' abilities, prior academic experiences, academic goals, and current needs and interests. Institutions also ensure a campus environment in which transfer students are encouraged to develop and pursue their goals for higher education.
7. **Diversity Dimension:** Foundations Institutions ensure that all students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities. Whatever their demographic composition, institutions introduce transfer students to the standards of behavior expected in diverse, open, and civil environments that characterize higher education.
8. **Roles and Purpose Dimension:** Foundations Institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society. These roles and purposes include knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning to become engaged citizens, and learning to serve the public good. Institutions encourage transfer students to deepen and strengthen their understanding of the value of general education and to examine or reexamine their motivation and monitor their progression toward personal educational goals.
9. **Improvement Dimension:** Foundations Institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing improvement in the transfer process. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision-making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies that affect transfer students. As a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as research and scholarship on transfer students and the transfer process.

What can TCC do to better prepare and support our transfer students?

"Helping to centralize all of the information students need for online searches is a good starting point. I think encouraging emails to advisors is also something we should be pushing in First Year Experience classes, so that there is less hesitancy to reach out based on scheduling. TCC is full of non-traditional students who work full time (myself included) and who need more than a time slot of availability in 3 weeks or more."

– Spring 2019 Transfer Student,
Business Administration

Transfer Dimension Performance Assessment

TCC Transfer Project dimension team leads provided an assessment of the college's current performance in each of the nine Foundations of Excellence dimensions. These dimension assessments are accompanied by recommendations for action to improve performance and outcomes. The following two sections of this report provide an overview of dimension assessment findings and recommended next steps to improve transfer preparations and support at the college.

Dimension	Assessment
Philosophy	<p>While TCC does include transfer as a priority in our strategic plan, there is no consistent, widely disseminated, and explicit philosophy on transfer that guides behaviors, policy, and procedures. Many pockets of excellent transfer work are happening across the college, but they are independently guided by department/discipline beliefs and priorities, often without clear connection to the work happening in other areas. The development and adoption of philosophy statement on transfer will help tie all college employees to transfer as an essential part of the college's mission.</p>
Organization	<p>Many TCC departments/disciplines work hard to maintain a good relationship with partner colleges, but there are key deficits. Those include the transfer website, outdated articulation agreements, frequency and quality of interactions between faculty, department chairs, and advisors at each college, more routine transfer fairs and outreach efforts held at TCC. In general, we have several pathways to multiple surrounding schools, but there is still room to grow and improve.</p>
Learning	<p>The processes within areas of assessment, prior learning, and program review are not fully developed or institutionalized. TCC's reorganizations created the need for more intentional conversations, but areas within student and academic affairs are still operating in silos. Some faculty and staff participate in co-curricular activities and high impact practices, but it is not as widespread as it needs to be to enhance the learning of all transfer students. Communication between community college and university faculty regarding transfer students, transferable courses/coursework, and programs of study is low.</p>
Campus Culture	<p>TCC has firmly embraced the mission of building success through education for all students, and college leaders, faculty, and staff are all dedicated to preparation of students for their next steps after TCC. But, after reviewing the documentation, feedback, and survey results, it is clear that our communication with and support of transfer students is often more random than intentional. We need to develop a culture whose executive level and department teams intentionally communicate about transfer student outcomes and needs and regularly celebrate excellence in supporting transfer students.</p>
Transitions	<p>TCC has some key strengths in this area, but many are recently implemented and rely heavily on one department: academic advising. TCC requires students to meet with an advisor, advisors use checklists to ensure they are asking appropriate transfer questions, and advisors meet at least once a year with our top two transfer institutions. But, TCC provides poor and confusing printed and online information about transfer opportunities. There are not enough coordinated opportunities for students to find information about transfer institutions, financial support, and preparation. There is ongoing work to strengthen program MAPs and articulation agreements. TCC has room to improve, but now has the models in place to meet the criteria outlined in this dimension.</p>

Transfer Dimension Performance Assessment (Continued)

Dimension	Assessment
All Students	<p>This dimension requires that the process of “anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs (of transfer students) is continuous and is subject to routine assessment and adjustment.” In review of this dimension, the TCC team determined we are not reaching this threshold because there is not clear ownership or a guiding principle behind creation of transfer student supports. Academic advisors and faculty play a large role in guiding students in their preparations for transfer, but they are often not talking to each other about this ongoing work. A very limited amount of transfer guidance is available on the TCC website and the information that is present has uncertain ownership. TCC is also not being systematic about our preparation of special student populations for transfer, although TRiO, Accessibility Services, and other departments have good models in place to build from.</p>
Diversity	<p>The Diversity Dimension team concludes that while TCC is diverse in areas of conveying standards of behavior, exhibiting diversity awareness, and presenting diverse ideas in both the curriculum and co-curriculum, there are many opportunities for growth. Recommendations from this dimension committee include further incorporation of diversity into general education coursework, mandatory diversity training during the first-year of college, increased service learning and community engagement, and student focus groups.</p>
Roles and Purpose	<p>TCC, and many other community colleges, often do not articulate the importance general education requirements to personal and professional goals. This dimension committee concluded that TCC is more intentional in providing workforce and career information to students in workforce program than in university transfer program. Building upon existing resources in Career Services and College Success courses can help improve our performance on this dimension.</p>
Improvement	<p>TCC has not fully integrated the use of transfer data and outcomes into institutional planning and decision making. The Tulsa Transfer Project has already made strides in improving the quality and accuracy of data shared between our transfer partners. Internally, TCC needs to work to make the sharing of transfer outcomes to improve practices and procedures more systematic and routine. College disciplines and departments need to recognize their interdependency in creating full, coordinated support for transfer students.</p>

Sources of Evidence

- Dimension Team Reports
- Foundations of Excellence Staff/Faculty Survey
- Foundations of Excellence Student Survey
- Guided Pathways Essential Practices
- TCC 2016-2020 Strategic Plan
- TCC Mission, Vision, and Values and Beliefs
- Institutional transfer, outcomes, and success reports
- Brainstorming sessions with faculty, staff, students, and colleagues at partner institutions
- Interviews with TCC faculty, staff, and current and former students
- Jenkins, Davis and John Fink, “Tracking Transfer: New Measures of Institutional and State Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students Attain Bachelor’s Degrees,” Community College Research Center.
- “S1501. Educational Attainment” 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, United States Census Bureau FactFinder.
- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Report on the Future of Higher Education, February 2018
- Table 1-A. “Community College Student Outcomes: 1994-2009,” National Center for Education Statistics.
- “S1501. Educational Attainment” 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, United States Census Bureau FactFinder.

Recommendations for Action

The TCC Tulsa Transfer Project team generated over 100 recommendations for action based on the nine Foundations of Excellence dimensions. The recommendations have been sorted by theme and placed in seven categories for action. The committee worked to align recommendations with TCC's strategic plan, mission, values and beliefs, and the Guided Pathways Essential Practices.



TCC Transfer Culture

While TCC team members are dedicated to supporting our students' pursuits, we are not unified or guided by a common culture of transfer support. This culture should be developed by a central philosophy statement, intentional communication, and strategic planning. In order to reach this, we recommend:

1. Adopt a guiding philosophy on transfer that informs policy, procedures, and individual actions. This statement should serve as a touchstone in articulation agreements, memorandums of understanding, program decisions, advising practices, support services, and beyond.
 - a. **Suggested Transfer Philosophy Statement:** Tulsa Community College is committed to ensuring all students who intend to transfer are supported along a clear pathway from application to graduation, leading to academic and personal success at their next educational institution. TCC will actively advocate for students with partner institutions to create a seamless transfer experience with minimal loss of time, money, and course credit.
2. Adopt the Community College Research Center's *Tool for Assessing Progress Toward Adoption of Essential Transfer Practices for Community Colleges* and administering it with key stakeholder groups in 2019-2020. This tool is aligned with Guided Pathways Essential Practices and is designed specifically to help community colleges assess their transfer priorities and practices.
 - a. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/transfer-playbook-assessment-tool-2-years.docx>
3. Regular, intentional communication from college leaders with the college and community at large about TCC transfer outcomes in order to connect every stakeholder with the following foundational transfer information.
 - a. Annual transfer rates
 - b. Top transfer degrees
 - c. Top transfer partners
 - d. Success of TCC transfer students at receiving institution
4. Incorporate Tulsa Transfer Project recommendations for action into the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

Organizational Roles and Support

Throughout our Tulsa Transfer Project work, Dr. John Gardner has reminded us that our organization is perfectly set up to keep getting the results we are already getting. To improve transfer outcomes for our students, we need to systematically analyze our current organizational structure. Each of our nine dimension reports recommended some form of additional organizational support for transfer, ranging from a Transfer Council, to campus transfer coordinators, transfer advisory boards, or a transfer Dean or Vice President. All reports echoed the sentiment that transfer responsibility is too decentralized in multiple departments, leading to ignorance of functions and duplication of effort. In order to move forward, we recommend:

5. Create a white paper recommendation for a transfer organizational structure at TCC. The paper should be informed by our peer institutions, national best practices, and should include an analysis of current transfer supports in advising, student success centers, academic affairs, career services, and other college departments.

Communication and Resources

Another consistent theme in all nine dimension reports was the lack of a centralized source of transfer information for TCC students. The current TCC transfer website is brief and perfunctory; it does not connect to articulation agreements and transfer pathways, nor does it allow for exploration of transfer scholarships and resources. Printed materials available to TCC students about transfer are also variable. Most are provided by our transfer partners and left at tables, on bulletin boards, or in transfer offices. While some partner universities have advisors on TCC campuses, a student has no way to see a schedule of when or where advisors are located or to book an appointment online. Often, referrals to advisors are provided via word of mouth by our TCC advisors at point of need. An intentional communication plan is needed from point of application to graduation for TCC students planning to transfer, making vital conversations with faculty and advisors an inescapable part of the TCC transfer experience. To ensure better communication and resources, we recommend:

6. Redesign the TCC Transfer website to fully support the student transfer experience from choosing TCC to transferring to a four-year university. The redesigned website should include, but is not limited to, the following elements:
 - The TCC transfer philosophy statement.
 - Program MAPs for TCC transfer degrees that include program costs, key transfer milestones, and links to active articulation agreements at partner universities.
 - A self-service transfer equivalency tool.
 - Career guidance that connects TCC transfer degrees to Bachelor degrees in the region, workforce demand, and estimated wages.
 - Transfer Scholarships and financial resources.
 - Application information, including deadlines, and links for partner universities.
 - An interactive Frequently Asked Questions tool for top regional transfer questions.
 - Contact information for academic advisors at partner universities, including details of when and where they will be at TCC campuses.
 - Resources for partner transfer institutions on how to reserve space on TCC campuses to meet with students and how to request meetings with TCC advisors/faculty to discuss transfer.
7. Provide a consistent and intentional transfer marketing campaign for students based on the TCC Transfer Philosophy Statement and focused on the importance of completing a credential at TCC before transfer, the cost savings of starting a four-year degree at TCC, and the opportunities and resources for transfer students. This would include social media and print materials to support all school, advising, career services, and student success center spaces. The campaign should begin at recruitment and be embedded in College Success courses for new students.

Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities

TCC joined the American Association of Community Colleges Guided Pathways Project in early 2016. By following the Pathways Essential Practices, TCC has created multiple programs and supports to help students enter and stay on an academic pathway. The analysis of the TCC Tulsa Transfer Project team found that this work has laid a strong foundation and TCC is now ready to take the next step and extend the pathway for transfer students through to their Bachelor's degree. To extend the pathway, all faculty and staff need to adopt a mindset of planning the entire journey of the student through TCC academic programs and beyond. Co-curricular supports should be embedded along the path to ensure students are financially, emotionally, and academically prepared to make the transition to a four-year university and achieve success. To this end, we recommend:

8. Highlight clear and supported transfer pathways as a priority for all academic programs. Thus, TCC should adopt the practices below for articulation agreements and program MAPs.
 - Define a “current” articulation agreement as no older than three years.
 - Require a mandatory program review for any transfer degree that has no current articulation agreements.
 - Ensure all TCC transfer degrees have at least one current articulation agreement and that transfer opportunities are highlighted in program maps and published in the catalog.
 - Ensure students are provided information about total estimated program cost of their academic program of study, through to a Bachelors degree at a partner university.
9. The Diversity Dimension of Foundations of Excellence asks “institutions introduce transfer students to the standards of behavior expected in diverse, open, and civil environments that characterize higher education.” The Tulsa Transfer Project team recommends the following actions to support this dimension:
 - Introduce students to standards of behavior and expected models of civility through required diversity learning experiences during their first year, including but not limited to College Success courses, New Student Orientation, and core general education coursework.
 - Utilize the new TCC Common Book program to further expose students to ideas surrounding equity and social justice. Discussions and experiences around a common read will encourage students to acknowledge and think critically about diversity in their world view.
 - Conduct an audit of courses using the “I” International designation in the TCC Catalog and consider adding a “D” Diversity designation. Review the alignment of these designations with regional transfer partners. These designations will encourage more consistent engagement with diversity throughout the curriculum.
10. Explore the creation of a 37-40 hour General Education Certificate at TCC that would satisfy general education requirements at all regional partner universities. Increase communication about the role and purpose of general education requirements.
11. Explore the high-impact practice of student learning communities across the TCC curriculum. Student learning communities for transfer students can connect students with similar academic goals and increase retention.
12. Concerns about financial resources, living arrangements, and navigating a new campus were expressed frequently by students in our TCC Tulsa Transfer Project activities. To support students in preparation for the transition to their next academic institution, TCC should provide specific co-curricular supports, especially for first-generation or non-traditional students. These supports could include, but are not limited to:
 - Family meetings for prospective transfer students, explaining the transfer process and available financial resources.
 - Targeted retention and transfer interventions for high-risk student populations.
 - University Day (or similar programing) at multiple campuses and times of day/week.
 - Financial planning workshops.
 - Increased TCC coordinated opportunities to visit regional transfer partner campuses and participate in tours and prospective student activities.

Recommendations for Action (Continued)

Data

More purposeful and timely review of data and reporting related to the transfer experience is necessary to support a culture of transfer at TCC. Programs, departments, and college leaders should have access to rich data about our transfer students at TCC and beyond to develop action plans and interventions. To this end, we recommend:

13. Add an intent-to-transfer question to the TCC application. This question would ask students if they intend to transfer to a four-year university and provide a menu of regional universities and top transfer universities. This data will be used to guide advising conversations and can inform articulation agreements.
14. Continue annual analysis of high-enrollment, high-DFW (Drop-Fail-Withdrawal) courses that are a barrier for many transfer students. Develop action plans to improve student retention and achievement of learning outcomes.
15. Create a Cognos/Banner report that will notify advisors when transfer students reach 24, 30, and 45 hours. This report will inform focused advisor conversations about transfer. This report would be provided to advisors via a caseload dashboard. The report can also be used for bulk notices of student completion to faculty department chairs.
16. Conduct surveys and focus groups with transfer students every two years. We should use information from focus groups to improve curricular and co-curricular supports for the transfer student population.

Professional Development

The TCC Tulsa Transfer project team found a wide disparity in faculty and staff knowledge about transfer resources and trends across departments and academic programs. To close the information gap and support a culture of transfer at TCC, we recommend the following:

17. Provide faculty professional development to support interdisciplinary collaborations in general education courses, leading to better alignment of student learning outcomes and more intentional design of coursework across the curriculum.
18. Recognize staff and faculty for above-and-beyond work in supporting student transfer. TCC does not currently have a specific way to highlight excellent transfer support. Regular recognition could allow the college to demonstrate for all employees what excellence is in mentoring and advising transfer students, and collaborating with other institutions on behalf of students. The TCC Tulsa Transfer Project team recommends the following possible recognitions:
 - a. Service Excellence Award in Transfer Support.
 - b. Annual Goody Award for Excellence in Transfer Support.
 - c. Area in the faculty portfolio or Promotion in Rank applications that specifically recognizes support of transfer students and pathways.
19. Provide annual academic advising and transfer faculty professional development focused on Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education transfer policies and regional/national trends and developments.

What is the most important thing you would tell a fellow student who is preparing to transfer to do?

“Meet with an advisor from both colleges, ask what they recommend you do, and get email addresses from both for the many follow-ups you’ll have. Then find a mentor who has also gone through this transfer process personally.”

– Spring 2019 Transfer Student,
Liberal Arts

Recommendations for Action (Continued)

Relationships

TCC is dedicated to actively advocating for our students with our community partners, the Oklahoma legislature, and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Perhaps most importantly, TCC is dedicated to advocating for our students with our regional university partners. The relationships with and between our partners is critical to the future success of our transfer students and the economic and social success of our region. The relationships developed during the Tulsa Transfer Project with Langston, NSU, OU, OSU, RSU, and TU will be most effective for the Tulsa region if formalized around a specific set of commitments and core values. In Fall 2019, the Tulsa Transfer Collaborative institutions drafted a regional philosophy statement which may be, if adopted, the first step in the formalization of this vital partnership.

- **Suggested Tulsa Region Transfer Philosophy Statement:** The Tulsa Transfer Collaborative is a group of public and private higher education institutions committed to working together to increase baccalaureate attainment in the region by providing seamless and supported transfer pathways for students with minimal loss of credits. Members actively communicate, plan, and share data to ensure students are supported in transfer exploration, scholarship opportunities, degree planning, and articulation.

The philosophy statement is profound in that the focus is squarely on the whole student experience, not just the experience at a single institution. It recognizes that it is a priority for our students to have multiple options in completing their Bachelor's degree, and that their success, and protection of their investment of time and money, is the goal of every higher education institution in the collaborative.

The Tulsa Transfer Project team studied many states, like Arizona, New Jersey, and Texas, where more oversight and direction regarding course transfer between public institutions is provided by the state system. Oklahoma transfer students would greatly benefit from more coordination and data sharing across state public institutions and requirements for communication between institutions on program changes that impact transfer.

The Tulsa Transfer Project team recommends the following actions to maintain and improve relationships to support transfer.

20. Formalize the Tulsa Transfer Collaborative with memorandums of understanding between all institutions or a consortium agreement. Formalizing the collaborative with a signed agreement between all seven schools will define regional priorities and solidify commitments to make institutional decisions that help Tulsa area students achieve their goals.
21. Partner with Tulsa Transfer Collaborative schools to create an Annual Transfer Report for the Tulsa region, highlighting transfer statistics, trends, and outcomes. This report will highlight areas for improvement and the overall success of higher education pathways in the region. It will be shared with all regional and statewide stakeholders.
22. Develop a consistent rotation of review and update for articulation agreements with partner institutions. TCC will serve as a leader in seeking out and initiating review of key agreements with all collaborative partners, with a goal of having a current articulation agreement for every transfer degree.

What can TCC do to better prepare and support our transfer students?

"I thought the process was very smooth. Maybe give more information to students on nearby universities. I liked how my transfer school has a transfer scholarship for students who are TCC transfers. Maybe let students know more about that."

— Spring 2019 Transfer Student,
Business Administration

Recommendations for Action (Continued)

23. Expand on the new TCC Transfer Centers recently launched at each campus, as a part of the new Student Success Center model, to provide students consistent access to partner institution advisors in a central space. Transfer Centers will provide an online calendar to view when advisors are scheduled to be at TCC and how to contact them to make an appointment.
24. Build routine and inescapable communication opportunities for faculty, advisors, and academic leaders across institutions. These can take the form of annual meetings, visits to department and discipline meetings, transfer events, or trips to partner campuses.
25. Work with the TCC Foundation and the Tulsa philanthropic community to create scholarships and transfer grants that help TCC students complete their academic journey and join the Tulsa regional workforce.

Summary

Supporting transfer students is a part of every single employee and faculty member's role at TCC. The Tulsa Transfer Project team believes seeing graduation from TCC as the finish line is not the best way to serve our students. The finish line must always be their success in finding employment with a family sustaining income or fulfillment in meeting personal goals, either by entering the workforce or graduating with a Bachelor's or advanced degree. The 25 recommendations in this report are chiefly focused on building a culture of transfer awareness and support, planning for the student's entire journey, and building and sustaining partnerships that provide a clear pathway for success.



Implementation Timeline

Category	Recommendation	Status
Transfer Culture	Transfer Philosophy Statement	In Progress
Transfer Culture	Use of the CCRC Tool for Assessing Essential Transfer Practices	Begin in Spring 2020
Transfer Culture	Annual Transfer Communication Plan to Stakeholders	In Progress
Transfer Culture	Transfer as a Priority in 2020-2025 Strategic Plan	In Progress
Organizational Roles and Support	White Paper on Transfer Roles	In Progress
Communication and Resources	Comprehensive Transfer Website	In Progress
Communication and Resources	Transfer Student Marketing Plan	Begin in Spring 2020
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Articulation Agreement, Program Review, and Program Map Practice and Procedure Updates	Fall 2019 Implemented
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Enhance diversity learning opportunities throughout the first-year experience	TBD
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	TCC Common Book Program Expansion	In Progress
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Audit "I" course designations in the TCC Catalog and explore adding "D" Diversity Designation to Courses throughout the curriculum.	In Progress
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Explore a General Education Certificate	Begin in Fall 2019
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Explore Student Learning Communities for Transfer Students	Begin in Spring 2020
Curriculum and Exploration Opportunities	Increased Outside of the Classroom Supports for Transfer Students	Begin Spring 2020
Data	Intent to Transfer Question on TCC Application	In Progress
Data	Continued Analysis of High Enrollment, High DFW Barrier Courses	In Progress
Data	Cognos/Banner Report for Student Transfer Milestones	Begin in Spring 2020
Data	Every Other Year Survey and Focus Group for Transfer Students	TBD
Professional Development	Professional Development to Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration in General Education Courses	TBD
Professional Development	Recognitions and Awards for Excellent Work Supporting Transfer Students	Begin in Spring 2020
Relationships	Formalize the Tulsa Transfer Collaborative	In Progress
Relationships	Participate in Creation of an Annual Regional Transfer Report	In Progress
Relationships	Develop a Rotation of Articulation Agreement Review with Partners	In Progress
Relationships	TCC Transfer Centers Implementation and Development	In Progress
Relationships	Improve Cross-Institutional Communication with Advisors, Faculty, and Academic Leaders	In Progress
Relationships	Explore Opportunities to add Transfer Scholarship and Grant Opportunities for TCC Students	Begin in Fall 2019

From the Transfer Faculty and Staff Survey

67.6% of TCC faculty and staff indicated the college's commitment to increasing the number of transfer students to four-year universities is high or very high.

49.5% of faculty and staff rated TCC high or very high in demonstrating through student preparation for transfer, that transfer is an important institutional goal.

56.9% of faculty and staff rate TCC the accuracy of information about transfer provided to students as moderate, slight, or not at all accurate.

60.4% of TCC faculty and staff said they are slightly or not at all encouraged by TCC to mentor transfer-bound students.

45.3% of TCC faculty and staff indicated their interaction with counterparts at transfer universities take place slightly or not at all.



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