

The CSCU Biology Pathway that you are considering marks an important milestone in the implementation of the CSCU Transfer and Articulation Policy. It represents the work of faculty, staff and administration first begun in 2011 and the summer of 2012 and then taken up again in the 2014-2015 academic year. In order to make this pathway available to students for transfer from any state community college to any state university or Charter Oak so they can complete a baccalaureate degree in biology with no loss of credit, many things had to happen.

- In 2011 and 2012, the Board of Regents for the merged system developed the Transfer and Articulation Policy with the assistance of colleagues from across the system.
- In the summer of 2012, 17 faculty, one from each of the system's institutions, created the framework for the completion of 30-31 credits of general education in the associate degree.
- In the summer of 2012, 75 discipline faculty developed outcomes for each of the 11 competencies addressed in that 30-31 credits.
- Since 2012 and currently, 17 faculty, serving on the Framework and Implementation Review Committee have developed clear guidelines for the creation and review of TAP pathways; these faculty review and provide feedback for each pathway, as well as serve as liaisons between their campuses and TAP on a system level.
- Since the fall of 2014, TAP Co-Managers, with the assistance of many faculty and academic leaders in the system, identified and addressed the needs for common forms and templates, as well as policies, protocols and practices for implementation; they have also visited many campuses and provided assistance to the work groups.
- Discipline faculty from each institution were appointed for disciplinary work groups in order to develop transfer pathways for sixteen majors.

All of this groundwork made it possible for the faculty in each discipline to work together and create an associate degree that is common to all community colleges and transfers without loss of credit toward a baccalaureate degree at any of the system's 4-year institutions. The Biology pathway represents conversations among 17 Biology faculty in the system, conversations that found a way to balance the differing requirements of Biology programs at the 4-year institutions and the availability of courses at the community colleges, all the while keeping in mind the overall goal – to provide seamless transfer for our students within the CSCU system. This very difficult task was completed by the colleagues who should be doing the work – faculty within the discipline.

You are also considering the overall shape of the TAP pathway degree. It has been developed as an umbrella degree, similar to the way the Liberal Arts and Sciences degrees work on community college campuses, with the exception that each discipline will actually be a separate concentration instead of an advising pathway. The umbrella degree solves a good number of logistical issues, from how the pathways will be managed administratively on each campus according to its resources and needs, to how the pathways will appear to students on the system website and in campus catalogues.

Your vote on endorsement represents your voice on the work of your colleagues at your institution and across the system. We hope that much of the groundwork for endorsement has been laid by your campus colleagues who have played roles in the pathway and degree. We also continue to be very interested in your feedback, especially should you choose not to endorse either the pathway or the umbrella degree.

These two votes on endorsement mark an important step as we continue to learn how to take advantage of the merged system; to balance local autonomy, expertise and governance with our membership in the system; and, most of all, to better serve our students.