

# Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) Transfer and Articulation Policy (TAP) Implementation Plan

## **Overview**

The Board of Regents (BOR) for the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (ConnSCU) recently approved policy designed to facilitate the transfer of the State's community college students into their junior year at the State universities. Among the key elements of this policy initiative are 1) the development of a common, competency-based general education core and 2) the development of common lower division pre-major pathways that include thirty credits of transferable general education credits that address the core competencies.

As presently constituted, the ConnSCU institutions are a composite of diverse institutions which, while maintaining this valued diversity, will now require a measure of system-wide curricular coherence to implement the transfer policy. The successful implementation of the policy will make significant improvements to our current transfer pathways. This document outlines a structure through which we can achieve our goals. It fosters collaboration among the 17 ConnSCU institutions and reflects the policy's timelines.

To begin the change process, the BOR has appointed a Coordinating Council, charged with formulating processes for developing common core competencies and transfer pathways across the 17 ConnSCU institutions that are responsive to demands on higher education to dramatically increase post-secondary degree and certification attainment in the state of Connecticut.

The implementation plan reflects the following principles:

1. The common general education core should be intellectually compelling and coherent.
2. The common general education core should function as an "integrated learning experience transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries while also respecting academic traditions of basic skills proficiency, intellectual rigor, and the value and methods of critical inquiry (Liberal Education Program, Southern Connecticut State University)."
3. The common general education core should be general enough to allow for significant campus level creativity in determining how to develop institutional core curricula consistent with the framework and also responsive to differing student populations and institutional missions.
4. The common general education core should facilitate student transfer among ConnSCU institutions.

5. The establishment of common competencies and transfer pathways should include the establishment of assessment measures (tools, rubrics) to guide institutions in determining if students are achieving system-wide competency expectations.

With respect to the principal components of the policy change, the Coordinating Council offers the following summary.

### **The Common, Competency-based Core Curriculum**

Consistent with NEASC Standard 4, the BOR expects the general education requirement to include a balance among “the arts and humanities, the sciences, including mathematics and the social sciences. General education requirements include offerings that focus on the subject matter and methodologies of these primary domains of knowledge as well as their relationships to one another.”

Students should demonstrate competency in the following **foundational skills**:

- written and oral communication in English;
- scientific and quantitative reasoning,
- critical analysis and logical thinking;
- and the capability for continuing learning, including the skills of information literacy.

Students should also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the following **content areas**:

- scientific,
- historical and
- social phenomena, and
- appreciation of the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of humankind.” (NEASC ACCREDITATION STANDARD 4)

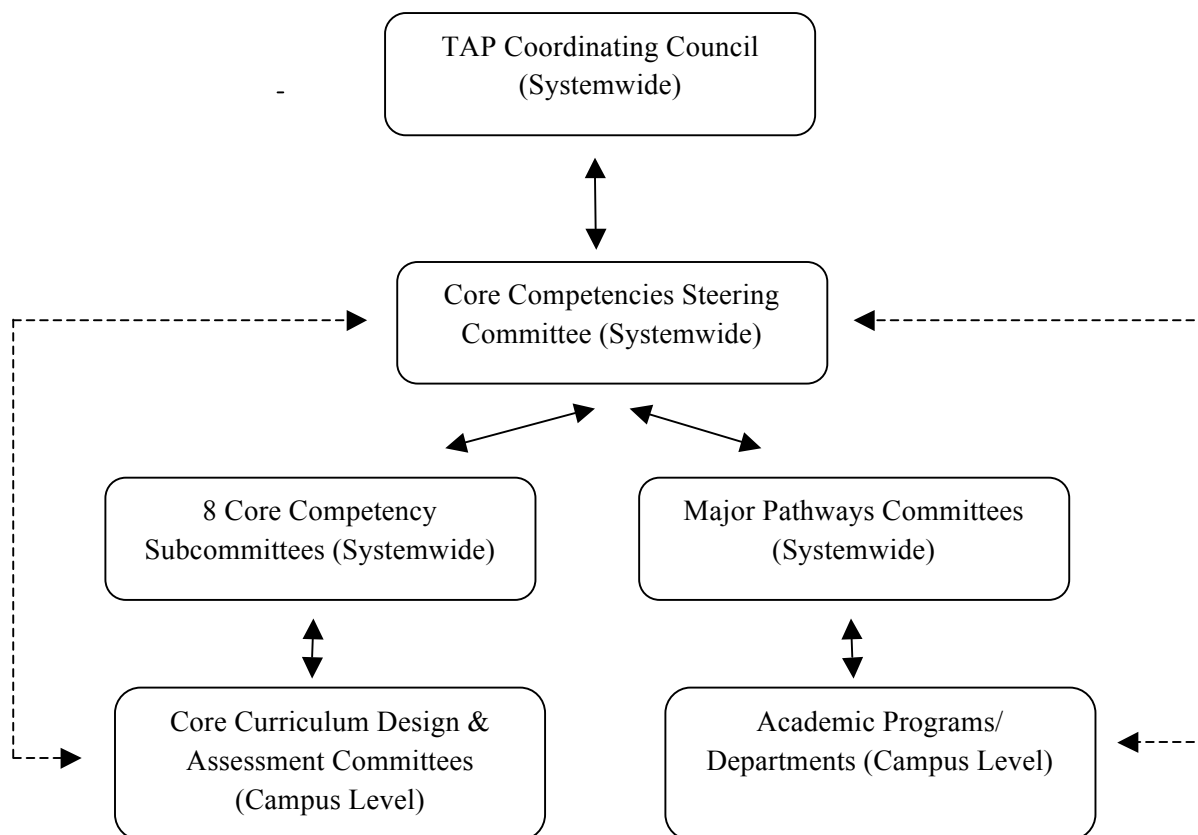
The BOR policy requires that the general education program be competency based and include outcome assessments for continuing program improvement.

### **Common Transfer Pathways**

Further, the BOR policy states that there shall be transfer associate degrees common to all of the Connecticut Community Colleges that shall include at least 30 credits of transferrable general education, liberal arts core (LAC) or liberal education program (LEP) courses, and the remaining

credits shall be articulated with major programs at the Connecticut State Universities. Earning a transfer associate degree will grant its recipients junior status at each of the Connecticut State Universities and Charter Oak State College.

To implement the BOR Transfer and Articulation policy, the Coordinating Council recommends the structure depicted and described below.



### **Systemwide Transfer Policy Coordinating Council**

The role of the Coordinating Council is to provide the infrastructure that supports the faculty committees that develop, implement, and assess the curriculum.

**Starting date: March, 2012**

#### **Charge:**

- Coordination of policy's goals and timelines
- Develop infrastructure for implementation
- Support committees as outlined in this document
- Insure appropriate technical assistance and administrative support is provided

- Provide input and feedback on project design, implementation, communication strategies, and work products of committees
- Create an electronic library of relevant literature on the following: the role of general education, the emerging knowledge and skill priorities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, how to develop data-based expectations for a core curriculum.

**Membership:**

- BOR Vice Presidents of the state universities and the community colleges, Co-chairs
- BOR Faculty Advisory Committee
- Representative group of ConnSCU chief academic officers

**Term:** Ongoing

**Systemwide Core Competencies Steering Committee**

The Core Competencies Steering Committee will be responsible for identifying, from the eight specified areas in the BOR's TAP, the competencies to be addressed in the 30 credit common general education core and for formulating initial recommendations regarding learning outcomes for each competency.<sup>1</sup> Subcommittees of this group will work on individual competency areas and define the appropriate rising junior competency and proficiency levels

**Starting date:** April 2012

**Charge:**

- Develop timeline and periodic benchmarks for work that meets the TAP requirements
- Review relevant literature including resources offered by the Coordinating Council
- Identify parameters of the TAP policy competencies for the sub-committees
- Provide agreed-upon learning outcomes for each competency through sub-committees
- Support and serve as resource for sub-committees
- Provide input and feedback on sub-committees' progress and work products
- Coordinate sub-committees' efforts as needed
- Function as liaison between campus committees and coordinating council
- Review assessment methodologies recommended by Campus Core Curriculum Design and Assessment Committees
- Develop guidelines for determining necessary level of agreement to be reached by the Core Competency Subcommittees

**Membership:**

- 17 faculty members, one representative from each ConnSCU institution
- 1 alternate from each institution

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<sup>1</sup> The committee may wish to consider adopting the *AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes* as the basis for its work.

- Committee will choose its own co-chairs: one from a CSU and one from a community college
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**Selection:** Each campus will elect or appoint their faculty representative no later than April 20

**Term:** One year; intensive summer work required

**Criteria:** Knowledge of and experience in general education and competency assessment

**Payment:** \$3000 stipend for period ending August 2012

### **Core Competency Subcommittees (Systemwide)**

There will be eight competency subcommittees, one for each of the foundational skills and knowledge areas as defined in the TAP.

**Starting date:** May 2012

#### **Charge:**

- Operate as sub-committees of the Core Competency Steering Committee
- Review relevant literature
- Consider AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes and VALUE rubrics
- Develop learning outcomes for sub-committee's assigned competency
- Foster consensus among all parties throughout the process
- Work with campus level committee(s) to develop assessment strategies
- Determine level of proficiency necessary in the competency for junior status

#### **Membership:**

- Each committee will consist of one faculty from each CSU, three faculty from the community colleges, and one representative from Charter Oak College
- Each committee will chose its own chair(s)

**Selection:** Each CSU and Charter Oak will appoint or elect its own faculty representative; the CC CAO's will select representatives from campus nominations. Final selections will be coordinated to ensure the committees have the appropriate range of expertise.

**Criteria:** Degree in related discipline. Knowledge of and experience in general education and competency assessment

**Payment:** \$3000 stipend for period ending August 2012

**Term:** one year; intensive summer work required

## **Campus-level Core Curriculum Design & Assessment Committees**

**Starting date: September 2012**

**Charge:**

- Ensure that existing campus curriculum approval processes are followed and completed within the required timeframe.
- Align campus core competencies and curriculum with the work of the system committees,
- Design assessment methodologies that will guide institutions in determining if students are achieving system-wide competency expectations
- Work with program faculty on mapping the curriculum to align with common core competencies
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**Membership:** To be decided by each campus, preferably using existing curriculum structures

**Selection:** To be decided by each campus, preferably using existing curriculum structures

**Criteria:** To be decided by each campus, preferably using existing curriculum structures

**Payment:** Part of contractual duties

**Term:** As determined by existing campus curriculum committee structures

## **System-wide Major Pathways Committees**

Major Pathways Committees for each university major will be responsible for developing pre-major pathways. Each campus will elect a faculty representative to each major pathways committee.

**Starting date: September 2012 or earlier**

**Charge:**

- Ensure that CC transfer degrees
  - Include 30 credits of transferable gen ed courses
  - Articulate remaining credits with intended degree program at the receiving 4-year institution
  - Clearly spell out any additional GPA or other requirements for the program
  - Allow students to be admitted to a 4-year institution with junior status
- Work with campus level academic departments

**Membership:**

- 17 faculty members, one representative from each ConnSCU institution

- Committee will chose its own co-chairs: one from a CSU and one from a community college

**Selection:** Each campus will elect or appoint their faculty representative

**Criteria:** Degree in discipline. Knowledge of and experience in transfer issues and competency assessment

**Payment:** Part of contractual duties

**Term:** Academic Year 2012-2013

### **Conclusion**

The BOR will support the implementation plan for the Transfer Articulation Proposal by providing ongoing financial support to the TAP Coordinating Council, the Core Competencies Steering Committee, and the Core Competency Subcommittees. It will also provide ongoing administrative support to these committees, including establishing and maintaining channels of communication between them.

Members of the system and campus-based committees will participate in periodic regional faculty seminars/workshops designed to provide a forum for discussion and deliberation on topics related to the Transfer and Articulation Policy.