Provost's Advisory Committee on Transfer Student Success
Recommendations to the Provost
February 4, 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Provost's Advisory Committee on Transfer Student Success recommends that the administration and the colleges, schools, and departments at CU Boulder undertake the following actions in order to improve transfer students' experience from the stage of being a prospective student through graduation. We also include actions that will benefit students who are planning intra-university transfer from one college or school to another. We believe that if implemented, these processes, practices, and initiatives will bring our campus into line with best practices and aid in transfer student enrollment and success

A. Recruit prospective and newly admitted transfer students more effectively.

1. Grow an ongoing partnership with Front Range Community College and other two-year colleges.
2. Improve access to scholarships and financial aid for transfer students.
3. Create processes for faster early analysis of transfer credit for prospective, incoming, and current transfer students, and for faster mapping of transfer credit onto CU Boulder college/school and major requirements.

B. Improve transfer student experience, retention, and progress to degree.

1. Improve the transfer student experience to create a greater sense of welcome and belonging.
2. Employ a coordinator and establish a dedicated Transfer Center as one-stop shops for transfer student needs and for campus needs related to transfer students.
3. Improve advising and career services in ways specific to transfer students.
4. Align colleges and schools in order to create better curricular opportunities for transfer students and a more seamless process for intra-university transfer and changes of majors.
5. Enhance and coordinate data collection and assessment regarding transfer student success and the transfer student experience.

C. Coordinate communication and information for students, faculty, and staff.

1. Consolidate transfer-related information for students, faculty, and staff onto a single portal.
2. Enhance and align communication and education efforts regarding transfer students.

In the detailed report below, each of these recommendations includes specific steps as well as an estimate of the time line for implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation code:
Tier 1: easy to undertake and complete; possible to complete in spring 2019 semester
Tier 2: requires cross-functional implementation teams and buy-in from key stakeholders; implement for AY 2019-2020
Tier 3: requires cross-functional implementation teams and a lengthier timeline

A. RECRUIT PROSPECTIVE AND NEWLY ADMITTED TRANSFER STUDENTS MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. Grow an ongoing partnership with Front Range Community College and other two-year colleges.

- Establish a two-year, cross-institution working committee CLARIFY with Front Range Community College to maximize collaborative efforts. **Tier 1**
- Expand what is learned from partnership with FCC to other two-year colleges and to efforts in conjunction with the Colorado Community College System. **Tier 3**

2. Improve access to scholarships and financial aid for transfer students.

- Improve the timeline of scholarship allocation in relation to admission and confirmation timeline. **Tier 1**
- Identify avenues to offer transfer-specific financial support or scholarships, including merit-based scholarships as well as work study or need-based scholarships. **Tier 1**

3. Create processes for faster early analysis of transfer credit for prospective, incoming, and current transfer students, and for faster mapping of transfer credit onto CU Boulder college/school and major requirements.

- Establish a process to be proactive on course evaluation and increase transfer tables to be more attractive to prospective students. **Tier 1**
- Establish a formal process for timely, consistent and transparent assessment of undergraduate transfer (and study abroad) course equivalencies by degree-granting departments/units:

  o Create a provost-level Transfer Advisory Committee, composed of faculty, that: **Tier 2**
    - Coordinating with transfer credit evaluation processes in colleges/schools and departments, has high-level campus responsibility for supervising the evaluation of transfer credit.
    - Has authority to break logjams and make decisions for specialized/difficult cases.
    - Reviews other states' requirements for associate's degrees or general education to determine if a waiver can be applied toward CU Boulder general education.
    - Determines if waiver for general education can be applied for students who have a prior bachelor's degree.
  o Colleges/schools: develop (a) regular orientation sessions for faculty course evaluators (b) evaluation guidelines for faculty and departments; (c) policy for how/when a course without a direct CU Boulder equivalent may apply the credit toward college/school requirements. **Tier 2**
  o Departments: develop a course evaluation procedure that outlines the department's (a) process for selecting an annual course evaluator; (b) decision-making process for evaluations relevant to

      major and minor requirements; (c) commitment to quick turnaround for each assessment (ideally, one week or less); (e) process for ensuring smooth transition between evaluators. **Tier 2**

- Establish processes for speeding up evaluation of international courses, including (a) obtaining course information when a course description is not available online; (b) obtaining information on the institution itself, if possible; (c) creating an email campaign targeting students with international course work; (d) using online resources to determine different pedagogical systems and levels; (e) sending staff to AACRAE International Institute for training. **Tier 2**
- Implement an ongoing process between the campus, colleges/schools, and departments to train new evaluators; keep centralized and accessible records of past decisions, faculty course evaluators, and department procedures; and update department as necessary. **Tier 2**
- Create/adapt a transfer case tracking/reporting computer application tool for use by faculty evaluators. **Tier 2**
- Establish a process by which syllabi are submitted to a central location and the result of the review process is recorded for historical purposes. **Tier 2**
- Continue and increase participation in current state-wide grass roots effort to accept and send EDI/XML transcript data, in order to speed up the entry of transfer credit and eliminate human errors. **Tier 2**
- Establish a process for evaluating transfer credit from programs not offered at CU Boulder. **Tier 2**
- Create transfer guides for all CU Boulder majors with sample curriculum by semester or year, including specialized transfer guides for students transferring from (a) Colorado Community College system; (b) two-year colleges in areas/institutions where we benefits from recruitment. **Tier 3**
- Implement ongoing creation of transcript templates for OCR as new institutions are accepted within EDI/XML effort. **Tier 3**

B. IMPROVE TRANSFER STUDENT EXPERIENCE, RETENTION, AND PROGRESS TO DEGREE

1. Improve the transfer student experience to create a greater sense of welcome and belonging.

- Conduct T-shirt trade-up events in which transfer students trade in a shirt from previous institution for a CU Boulder shirt. **Tier 1**
- Develop a CU Boulder tradition for transfer students. **Tier 1**
- Establish and encourage transfer affinity groups:

  - Establish transfer affinity groups at Transfer Student Welcome—e.g., transfer students from two-year colleges, out-of-state transfers, transfer students who are parents, etc. Look for "transfer student communities" that may have spontaneously formed; support them and help them expand. **Tier 1**
  - Expand the New Student and Family Programs Journey Leader (peer mentor) program; collaborating with Office-Campus and Neighborhood Relations and the UEAC to enhance transfer transitions. **Tier 2**
  - Support and strengthen the Non-Traditional Student Organization and Tau Sigma, organized and recognized by the Center for Student Involvement and funded by Student Government, in order to build transfer affinity and provide support to the transfer population. Develop these groups through strong advising support and setting goals and outcomes. **Tier 2**
  - Target admitted and arriving transfer students with outreach to assist them in finding their communities at CU Boulder and/or offering support services they may not be aware of as

> prospective students or recent arrivals on campus. Piggy-back this with the Transfer Admitted Student Day and Unified Student Experience project. **Tier 2**
>> ○ In collaboration with Strategic Relations, create a blog written for transfer students by transfer students, sent out in the transfer-targeted new student email campaigns and posted on the University of Colorado Transfer Facebook page. Consider blending with current modes of communication. The Non-Traditional Student Organization could also manage or promote if appropriate education and collaboration are established. **Tier 2**

- Enhance the Transfer Student Orientation program from New Student and Family Programs to create more social programming focused on developing student sense of belonging. **Tier 2**
- With a partnership among New Student and Family Programs (peer mentors), Undergraduate Education, and/or the Undergraduate Exploratory Advising Center, design a peer-led curriculum targeting transfer student success; coordinate/combine with Residential Life curriculum and/or CU 101. **Tier 3**
- Coordinate discussions between Undergraduate Education and Residence Life to direct and inform the development or possibility of a Transfer Student LLC. **Tier 3**
- Through Undergraduate Education and/or schools and colleges, create a Faculty Fellows Program for faculty to mentor transfer students. **Tier 3**

2. Employ a coordinator and establish a dedicated Transfer Center as one-stop shops for transfer student needs and for campus needs related to transfer students.

- To support many of the recommendations in this document, appoint a staff position with authority to survey and coordinate transfer-student efforts on campus, to recommend changes in processes, and to coordinate implementation of improvements. **Tier 2**
- Establish a dedicated Transfer Center that would include a student lounge, staff offices for advisors, and program space. **Tier 2**
- Create graduate Internships to support the Transfer Center. **Tier 3**

3. Improve advising and career services in ways specific to transfer students.

- Provide access to Transferology Lab, in addition to a Transferology Lab and transfer credit evaluation training, during academic advisor onboarding. **Tier 1**
- Centralize IUT advising within the Program in Exploratory Studies. Students do not need to IUT into PES for this service. **Tier 1**
- Coordinate Student Affairs, college/schools, and campus offices to offer transfer-student-specific academic advising, career services, and student life workshops and to provide cohesive, federated academic and transition advising for prospective, admitted, and in-transition transfer students. (Example: University of Wisconsin BadgerCETE). **Tier 2**
- Establish Transfer Student Advising specialists who would work with transfer students from the prospective stage through admission and serve as a resource throughout the student's career at CU. **Tier 2**
- Create targeted programming from Career Services for transfer students. **Tier 2**
- Offer transfer advising on-site at targeted colleges and community colleges. **Tier 2**
- As part of creating peer mentors for transfer students, assign prospective IUT students an "IUT Guide," a student who has already successfully IUTed, akin to a Peer Advisor or Journey Leader; could be Peer Advisors in receiving programs. **Tier 3**
- Develop personalized "why not" conversations within each college for rejected IUT applicants. **Tier 3**

4. Align colleges and schools in order to create better curricular opportunities for transfer students and a more seamless process for intra-university transfer (IUT) and changes of majors.

● Have the Program in Exploratory Studies admit the transfer ACOs (approximately 250) as well as the first-year ACOs, unless a transfer ACO student opts into a degree-granting program after conferring with CU advisors. **Tier 1**
● For the ACO (future IUT) population, "personalize" admissions letters for the Program in Exploratory Studies so they offer more targeted messaging at the point of admission that varies by student cohort according to likelihood of successful IUT. **Tier 1**
● Institute a Welcome Message for all Major Changes. Be sure to include summer IUT/major changers processed by Admissions. Ensure communication isn't missed. **Tier 2**
● Establish IUT consistency across colleges and programs:

  ○ Mandate that changes to IUT requirements align with the catalog cycle. **Tier 1**
  ○ Establish consistent deadlines (dates IUT applications are due). **Tier 1**
  ○ Establish a centralized (perhaps in Registrar's Office) automatic approval up to a college/school-defined threshold, with fringe cases going to a school/college-based IUT coordinator. **Tier 2**
  ○ Create a consistent protocol for IUT logistics; e.g., when changes apply and when advisor assignments change. **Tier 2**
  ○ Create a mechanism for tagging "intent to IUT" to get an accurate sense of success rates. E.g., create subplans or courses of study for all colleges/schools to indicate IUT interest (advisors add the sub plan based on conversation w/ student and then Registrar's Office removes it once student IUTs). **Tier 2**

● Create a mechanism, based on the above tagging, to be agile in terms of offering sufficient sections of prerequisite courses to meet demand. **Tier 2**
● Create undergraduate "leveling" courses or workshops for transfer students that don't have an exact equivalent to sequenced courses, such as Math, Chemistry, Biology, and Physics (see University of Illinois MCB 215):

  ○ Create an assessment for what is needed by each student. **Tier 3**
  ○ For students preparing for IUT, develop 1-credit survey/skills courses or workshops to be used as required add-ons to prerequisites; e.g., Engineering pre-reqs + APPM1390 (Calculus skills course); Business pre-reqs + 1 credit course that supports success in both micro and stats and contextualizes that content in the larger business curriculum. **Tier 3**

5. Enhance and coordinate data collection and assessment regarding transfer student success and the transfer student experience.

● Inventory campus-wide information gathering, surveys, and analysis of data. **Tier 1**
● Build a campus culture of using data to improve Transfer Student recruitment, success, and retention:

  ○ Determine measurable indicators that reflect CU's definition of transfer student success (community college transfer students and four-year college transfer students characteristics, both in-state and out-of-state transfer students). Track those indicators and

share them widely with the campus to serve as a benchmark and ongoing progress markers of the changes the Transfer Success Committee proposes. **Tier 2**
- o Create a full-time Institutional Research staff position to serve as Transfer Data Specialist, with responsibilities including managing data gathering, analyzing surveys, and, most importantly, proactively communicating data on the points listed above. The Transfer Data Specialist will create data-rich reports on transfer student experiences and share them with the relevant offices and academic units. **Tier 2**
- o As a partnership among Institutional Research, Undergraduate Education, and New Student and Family Programs, develop targeted retention early alert and "taking stock" surveys to identify "at risk" transfer students at the admissions phase and/or after matriculation. **Tier 2**

- Let the students lead. Follow data collected directly from transfer students about where CU is encouraging their success or inhibiting it. Collect information from interested transfer students who don't come to CU about why they choose a different path for their education. **Tier 2**
- Create a dedicated website for Transfer Student Data for easier access to high quality data for units across campus. **Tier 2**

C. COORDINATE COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF

1. Consolidate transfer-related information for students, faculty, and staff onto a single portal.

- Establish "colorado.edu/transfer" as the hub for all existing transfer-related information and communication. **Tier 1**
- Inventory existing web sites and update pertinent sites with transfer-inclusive language. **Tier 2**
- Create a campus-wide IUT landing Page/website that includes marketing material, links to individual colleges/schools' IUT websites, etc. **Tier 2**

2. Enhance and align communication and education efforts regarding transfer students.

- Create a definitive "checklist" of communication content for new students, distinguishing transfer vs. first year vs. all students. **Tier 1**
- Create a "Transfer Advocate" training for university staff that includes information about our transfer population, challenges, and ways in which faculty and staff can best support our transfer students. **Tier 1**
- Communicate proactively with prospective and admitted transfer students on the expectations of processes and the timelines involved in the transfer credit process. **Tier 1**
- Develop marketing materials (infographic, website, etc.) for the IUT population that communicate excitement and welcome from colleges (content determined by the colleges) just as recruitment materials do for incoming students, and that include transparency about success rates. **Tier 2**