

**Transfer Student Issues Work Group**  
**Annual Report: 2006**  
**Spring Meeting: April 18, 2006**

## **Introduction**

The 2004 Final Report of the Committee on the Transfer Student Experience ([http://apa.wisc.edu/CTSE/CTSE2004\\_Final.pdf](http://apa.wisc.edu/CTSE/CTSE2004_Final.pdf)) recommended that a continuing working group be established that would monitor progress on implementing the recommendations. The Transfer Student Issues Work Group was established in 2004-05 to meet annually each spring to monitor progress and identify new issues and challenges as they arise, and to recommend continuing work.

## **2006 Summary: Progress and Issues**

Colleges and offices around campus continued the progress in implementation of the recommendations and spirit of the 2004 report that began during the 2004-05 academic year. Most importantly over the long haul, the Transfer Student Issues Work Group serves as an ongoing source of coordination, communication, and reminder about the importance of transfer student issues. The 2004 report highlighted the importance of continuing communication and coordination.

The most public and notable change during the 2005-06 academic year was the new set of transfer agreements forged with the Madison Area Technical College, the Milwaukee Area Technical College, and Nicolet College. The "Transfer Contract" program is designed for students beginning as freshmen in particular programs in the technical colleges specified levels of academic achievement at those colleges and meet requirements for transfer admission to UW-Madison.

Admissions has worked hard over the past two years to facilitate the transfer process. The admission decision turn-around time was cut from 8 weeks to 4 weeks and the office is completing transfer credit evaluations for new UW System students within 3 weeks of enrollment information.

Advising was a core part of the 2004 report. Both the Cross-College Advising Service and the college-level advising services have made conscious advances in providing better advising to transfer students on campus and to identifying specific individuals to serve as primary transfer student advisors. Colleges such as Education are increasing their contacts with sending campuses to assist with advising and linkage. SOAR is leading an effort to move toward requiring transfer students to participate in SOAR in order to be sure they get the advising and assistance they need.

The 2004 report also underscored the importance of increasing social integration of transfer students into campus. The Office of Orientation and New Student Programs and the Dean of Students Office this year continued to increase the programming for transfer students, and the transfer student group is becoming more active. UW Housing opened a new Transfer Student House in 2005-06 with 41 new transfer students joining the house.

An ongoing issue that confronted the campus this year was a proposal discussed within UW-System calling for a common core set of general education requirements that would be sufficient to allow and transferring student to have completed the general education requirement on any campus. Various UW-Madison offices and administrators, including the General Education

Committee and the Interim Provost expressed grave misgivings about the plans as they were conceived. Our preference has been to assure students the ability to make informed decisions about their course programs that are right for them individually by providing adequate advising and by urging UW-System to proceed with the TIS4 pilot rather than creating “one-size-fits-all” curricular decisions at the System level.

Above all, those who work closely with transfer students have been gratified by the positive responses they have had from students transferring into UW-Madison. We will be able to check progress in student perceptions more systematically when data from the 2006 Student Survey are available.

### **Addendum: Reports from the Units**

#### *Jocelyn Milner, Academic Planning and Analysis*

UW-Madison has implemented three new transfer contracts this year with the Madison Area Technical College, Nicolet College and Milwaukee Area Technical College. The goal of the “Transfer Contract” agreements is to expand access to UW-Madison for students from all parts of the state, and ultimately, increase the state’s number of four-year degree recipients. The contracts allow a qualified student to begin postsecondary education as a freshman at any of these institutions and after completing 54 credits (typically two years) in specific areas and earning a 3.0 GPA, the student would be guaranteed admission to UW-Madison. The agreements were finalized in April, May and June respectively. These agreements attracted lots of favorable press.

#### *Jeff Hamm, School of Education*

The School of Education continues to provide group advising for transfer students; they hold a first semester group advising session in late September/October. The School has had a strong working relationship with the Madison Area Technical College, and they look forward to continued success as part of the new transfer agreement. Further, the School is excited about the possibilities of working closer with Nicolet College, particularly with students who seek admission to the elementary education program.

#### *Sharon Nellis, School of Nursing*

The School of Nursing has increased their transfer student advising staff including adding group advising for both transfer and new students. A new development is a “mapping” project for degree requirements to assist all students in understanding course or course sequencing toward degree. Further, nursing faculty meet one-on-one with students, particularly transfer students, to talk about the field, opportunities for clinical training and research. The School is celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Collaborative Nursing Program.

#### *Ann Groves-Lloyd, Student Academic Affairs (L & S)*

Groves-Lloyd appointed this year as the new associate dean for Student Academic Affairs (SAA) in the College of Letters and Science. Ann outlined two new initiatives that her office has developed for transfer students: 1) all transfer students will receive a “named” advisor, and 2) the office has identified a specific staff person to assist transfer students and field questions on transfer student admissions and advising. SAA also has been part of discussions with Admissions, SOAR and other advising units on campus to implement mandatory attendance at SOAR for new UW System transfer students, beginning with the spring 2007 class.

#### *Tim Walsh, Cross-College Advising (L & S)*

Cross-College Advising has now identified a point person to work directly with transfer students. The office is also part of the ongoing discussions to develop a plan for requiring mandatory attendance at SOAR for new UW System transfer students.

*Joanne Berg/Susan Fischer, Enrollment Management, Registrar and Student Financial Aid*  
The Office of Enrollment Management, the Registrar and Student Financial Aid are applying for State funds to upgrade TIS4 which will include course applicability information.

*Ann Morris, School of Engineering*

As the School's point person for all engineering transfer students, Ann is recognized throughout the campus community as the "model advisor." She noted that transfer applications continue to increase each year.

*Kay Reuter-Krohn, UW Housing*

UW Housing opened a new Transfer Student House in 2005-06 with 41 new transfer students joining the house. Overall, 141 transfer students were housed in UW Housing facilities this past year and there are approximately 295 contracts out to incoming transfer students for 2006-07. Several activities for transfer students have also been developed including a transfer student welcome dinner and a transfer student steering committee. UW Housing is working closely with Office of New Student Orientation better coordinate SOAR activities in January of each year.

*Carren Martin, SOAR*

They are currently working toward making SOAR mandatory; SOAR office has been leading discussions (with Admissions, Provost Office) to develop a pilot project. The original CTSE report emphasized the need for increased social integration of transfer students; ONSP is working on instituting more activities such as transfer socials, not just during Wisconsin Welcome, but through the year. The transfer student organization is becoming more active.

*Judith Strand, Council of Academic Advising (CAA)*

The Council of Academic Advising established a work group on advising for transfer students including point people from several schools and colleges. In addition, another work group of the Council focused their efforts on reviewing campus structures or processes that might improve transfer student access to campus. They made and are pursuing two recommendations: (1) establish a transfer student point person or team in each college (such as L&S did this year); (2) establish a working group of advisers to meet regularly and talk about transfer advising and report back to CAA. The group also considered whether the campus should have a centralized gateway for transfers, but decided decentralized is more appropriate on this campus.

*Mary Schey, Office of Admissions*

The Office of Admissions has worked to improve several service areas for transfer students. The admission decision turn-around time was cut from 8 weeks to 4 weeks and the office is completing transfer credit evaluations for new UW System students within 3 weeks of enrollment information.

The Office has expanded its outreach and education opportunities for transfer students. Prospective transfer students can visit campus monthly to meet with an academic advisor in the school/college of their choice. On average, 45-50 students attend per visit and the feedback from students about the campus visits is positive. To better inform transfer students about our general education requirements, Admissions created a one-page handout to help transfer students select courses which will satisfy UW-Madison's general education requirements.

In conjunction with ONSP and other advising groups across campus, Admissions is working in implementing mandatory attendance at either an early advising session or a regular SOAR session for new UW System transfer students, beginning with the spring 2007 class.

As the implementation of the new transfer contracts with MATC-Madison, MATC-Milwaukee and Nicolet College go forward, the Office of Admissions will work with advisers to provide appropriate course information to students, and expand the website with relevant information for these transfer students.

*Nancy Westphal-Johnson, University General Education Committee (UGEC)*

The University General Education Committee reviewed the Communication A course credit policy that allowed students to receive credit for only one Comm A course. The current policy inadvertently created problems for transfer students and for students who receive AP credit by creating confusion for students. In addition, various schools and colleges use a variety of *ad hoc* transcription “fixes” that have included removing transfer courses from the academic record. Such adjustments to the transcript are not regarded as a desirable practice. The proposed policy which states: *Students may receive degree credit for only one Communication A course taken in residence* was endorsed by the UGEC (a subcommittee of which studied the issue and composed the proposed policy in consultation with the Office of Admissions), and by the campus-wide Associate Administrative Council. The UAPC approved the policy change in May 2006

L&S has also investigated problems of transfer credit with titles that resemble our “Comm B” courses but don’t actually include Comm B content. Identified “worst offenders” to make sure students don’t get unwarranted credit for Comm B.

The UGEC also worked with the Admissions Office to create a one-page handout to help transfer students select courses which will satisfy UW-Madison’s general education requirements.