

SB24-164 Institution of Higher Education Transparency Requirements

Summary and Implementation Planning

May 2024

Student Bill of Rights

SB24-164 adds the following to the Student Bill of Rights:

Cost transparency of postsecondary education programs;

Seamless transfer of guarantee transfer pathway matrix courses and a timely response by institutions on requests for transfer credit;

Information on why selected courses will not transfer or apply;

The right to appeal an institution's decision not to accept or apply transfer courses; and

The right to know what work-related experiences or prior learning opportunities are awarded postsecondary credit (per HB20-1002).

Cost transparency

Students have a right to transparency of the cost of postsecondary education programs, including information on fees, associated expenses, and financial aid in the form of scholarships, grants, and loans.

Seamless transfer of courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix

Students have the right to seamless transfer of courses in the guaranteed transfer pathway matrix, transparency in the process for transferring credits, a timely response on applications for transferring credits, and transparency in how and why a credit is accepted or rejected by an institution and how and why a credit is or is not applied toward degree requirements.

Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix

New statutory name for the statewide general education transfer framework known as GT Pathways (Guaranteed Transfer Pathways)

Eliminates statutory language referring to "common course numbering"

Expansion of GE Council

On or before December 31, 2024, the Department shall add additional representatives as necessary to the Council to ensure equal representation of institutions on the Council.

Each of the 31 public institutions (including the area technical colleges) will have a representative on the Council.

GE Council member duties and responsibilities (draft in progress)

GE Council members shall act as their respective institutions' liaisons to assist the Department in the creation, adoption, and revision of statewide transfer articulation agreements; review proposed GT Pathways courses; train academic advisors and other institutional staff on the requirements of this policy; and provide guidance to the Department in the resolution of transfer student disputes.

- Attend monthly GE Council meetings
- Share information with respective stakeholder groups
- Provide guidance to CDHE on issues related to general education and transfer policy
- Submit new GT Pathways courses
- Recruit institutional faculty and staff to participate in statewide meetings and events (e.g., Faculty-to-Faculty conferences, statewide transfer articulation agreement revision meetings, etc.)

Mandate to address sticky wickets in GT Pathways

On or before October 1, 2025, and every October 1 thereafter, the Council shall review the list of courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix and make recommendations to the Commission as necessary to make changes and maintain accuracy. As part of the review, the Council shall identify:

- The highest enrollment and transfer activity for courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix*
- Courses that students are less likely to receive full credit for that apply toward the student's chosen academic program upon transfer*
- How the number of credit hours differs among institutions and where misalignment occurs between courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix (e.g., mathematics, natural sciences, world languages)*

Provisions of the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix

- *All credits earned by a student in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix are automatically transferable and applicable to the student's declared major or program requirements. If the credits earned by the student cannot be applied to the student's declared major or program requirements, the credits must be used to fulfill any remaining general elective course requirements needed for the student's major or program. If a student changes major or declared program of study, the application of transfer credits to the student's new major or program requirements must be re-evaluated.*
- *All courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix system must qualify as the same course at the receiving institution, irrespective of the total credits assigned to the course.*
- *A receiving institution shall not require a transfer student to take the same or similar courses who has completed the required course in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix, regardless of whether the student earned an associate's degree prior to transfer.*

Data collection

*Beginning January 2026, the Department shall include as part of its “SMART Act” hearing a compiled report of information received from each higher education institution regarding courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix that includes the following (TBD which represent **new** data elements not already reported by IHEs to CDHE):*

- The number of undergraduate students transferring to the institution and each institution that a student is transferring from*
- The average time needed to complete a bachelor’s degree for a transfer student compared to a non-transfer student*
- The total number of credits accepted and applied related to guaranteed transfer pathways courses, general education courses, and other course equivalents*
- The number of credits that were accepted and not accepted, and the number of credits that were applied and were not applied to each student’s degree program course requirements, at the time the student initially transferred to and enrolled in the institution, disaggregated by degree program*

Data collection (cont.)

The Department shall also include the following information for each institution regarding the total amount of transfer credits earned and the total amount of credits applied toward degree requirements:

- The average number credits attempted, and the number of credits earned to obtain a bachelor's degree for a transfer student compared to a student who did not transfer to another institution before earning the bachelor's degree*
- The average number of academic terms needed to complete a bachelor's degree for a transfer student compared to a student who did not transfer to another institution before earning the bachelor's degree*

Timely response on applications for transferring credits

An institution shall provide a student with a determination regarding the acceptance or denial of the student's request within 30 days after the student is admitted to the institution and submitted all required documentation.

Appeal Process

Students have the right to appeal an institution's failure to accept the student's request for transfer credit

Transfer Student Complaints

A student enrolled at an institution may appeal an institution's decision regarding the denial of credit for courses in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix that the student seeks to transfer through an appeals process (to be) established by the Department.

The Department has the authority to overturn a course transfer decision made by an institution regarding a course in the Guaranteed Transfer Pathway Matrix that is in violation of this section.

Work-related Experiences

Students have the right to know what work-related experiences or prior learning opportunities are awarded postsecondary academic credit at the institution in which the student is enrolled (per HB20-1002).

A young man in a denim jacket, a young woman in a pink top, and another young woman in a blue top are sitting on a white blanket on a grassy lawn. They are all smiling and looking at laptops. The man is on the left, the woman in pink is in the middle, and the woman in blue is on the right. The background is a blurred green field with trees.

Discussion and Q&A

Contact Info

CDHE or CDHE Student Success & Academic Affairs

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Thank You!

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