NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE(S) ON TRANSFER

TRANSFER CONVENING

SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Context on Document Purpose and Use

This document was prepared for presentation at the Transfer Convening, organized by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and held in Columbia on April 3, 2023.

Specifically, what follows below was compiled and prepared by John N. Gardner, co-founder of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. This organization served as an external advisor for the CHE-authorized 2022-23 process and task force, which produced the South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan, February 2023.

This document is intended to be a catalyst for considering options to improve collegiate transfer. The intent is that audience members at the Transfer Convening will be stimulated and informed by some context for national efforts underway to achieve similar aspirations to those held by South Carolina higher educators, policy makers, and concerned citizens.

It should be understood that it is not suggested that South Carolina undertake all of these recommended actions in order to achieve excellence in its state-wide system of transfer involving all sectors of South Carolina higher education.

As the creator of this document, I am indebted for these recommendations to the 53 scholars, researchers and practitioners who contributed to the 2021 work published by Stylus Publishing, *The Transfer Experience: A Handbook for Creating a More Equitable and Successful Postsecondary System*, John N. Gardner, Michael J. Rosenberg, and Andrew K Koch.

The document first will suggest some basic guiding assumptions for its use. Then it will delineate my priority recommendations for improving transfer especially at the institutional and unit levels, but also at the state level, and then provide other suggestions and examples for transfer improvement.

Guiding Assumptions

1. Underperformance in the transfer function manifested by unacceptably low levels of completion of bachelor's degrees for ALL students and especially when disaggregated by student characteristics such as income, race, ethnicity, first generation and financial aid eligibility status, is NOT just a South Carolina problem and challenge. This situation is a descriptor of the entire American higher education system.
2. That system was never originally designed to have a transfer function, and hence all efforts to create one are relatively recent, since World War II and especially since the adoption of the Higher Education Act of 1965.
3. There are practices and policies that do improve transfer student outcomes.
4. The inadequacies of the transfer system affect the overall productivity of the state's higher education system and hence influence the state's economy, economic development status, and

capacity to provide enough sufficiently educated employees for the state's developing economy. The overall extent of opportunities for citizens and their quality of life is affected by this category of higher education functioning.

5. To understand this problem, you must understand that the nation's higher education system produces two types of students: non-transfer students and transfer students, and the experiences for these two types of students are significantly different and unequal.

6. The transfer student experience must be comprehended and addressed as fundamentally an ACADEMIC process at both sending and receiving institutions.

7. Unfortunately, the transfer experience is too often viewed as a limited experience in time, a phase of student development, a student transition, and primarily a transactional process for application for admission and evaluation of previously earned credits and determination of those credits applicable to the credentials students aspire to. While such a process is an important part of transfer and represents a barrier for many students, making it the primary focus often neglects the most important component of the transfer experience: what students do and how they perform academically.

8. Fundamentally, there are not enough BA degree transfer completers because there are not enough transfer students making it through the pipeline from sending two-year colleges into a receiving institution for the bachelor's degree. And many students who do make it to the receiving level encounter barriers and difficulties that prevent their subsequent degree completion.

9. This means that to improve transfer outcomes you must approach this as more than a problem to be addressed and rectified exclusively by enrollment management staff and policies.

Recommendations for Corrective Actions, Practices, Initiatives to Improve Transfer

Recommended Corrective Actions

1. **Define Transfer at Your Institution:** For the purposes of your own institution's work to improve transfer, create your own working definition of transfer. Towards this end I posit that transfer:

   • Is the sum of everything students experiences at both their sending and receiving institutions in pursuit of their desired educational credentials.
   • Is the totality of educationally purposeful experiences which you intentionally provide our students throughout their educational journey, enabling them to pursue their desired academic and life goals, whatever they may be, as they enroll in successive, occasionally simultaneous, different, post-secondary institutions.
   • Is the sum of everything the student experiences at both his/her sending and receiving institutions in pursuit of their desired educational credentials.
   • Is an academic experience where, in order to "transfer," a student must have accumulated academic credits and be in satisfactory academic standing
   • Begins with the eventual transfer student's very first experience(s) at the sending institution.
   • And continues with what transfer students do AFTER registration and on-boarding at the receiving institution, and…
   • Continues until the eventual award of the credential the student transferred to attain.

2. **Make transfer student success a high priority! There will be no progress by maintaining the status quo:** Examples of what can be done to accomplish this are:

   • Give service to transfer students a high priority in the institutional mission statement
   • Get this same high level of commitment into your institutional strategic plans.

- Make sure that this priority is reflected in the regular talking points that institutional leaders make in their many public appearances. Words matter.
- Deeds matter too. In these public statements about the importance of transfer students, share some recent action(s) taken to shore up support for this population.
- Include transfer outcomes as among the most important metrics that institutional leaders are aware of, focused on, talk about, and, most importantly, held accountable for.
- Work with governing boards to ensure their actions also reflect this priority and assure that it carries over from one CEO's administrative era to the succeeding one.
- Vest responsibility for transfer student success in particular offices and individuals. Make sure the rest of the campus knows where these responsibility centers are. This will require rethinking where responsibility is vested—especially the respective roles of Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs.

3. **Start with the End in Mind: Provide experiences and support for beginning students that the likelihood that they will thrive and transfer if they desire to do so.** This can be done as follows:

Two-year institutions should focus on the following:

- Orientation: Needs to be targeted to the realities of transfer students' lives and made mandatory.
- Career Services: Need to be delivered early to clarify purpose and educational decision making
- Academic advising: Transfer student advisors need special expertise in transfer options and requirements
- Guided Pathways for Student Success: Transfer students need to make better choices about selecting from the vast array of academic offerings. Specific academic "pathways" need to be created for transfer students that will yield the maximum number of transferable credits. These pathway courses also need to be redesigned so as not to perpetuate high failure rates.
- Faculty: Pay more attention to faculty for the huge impact they can have on transfer students, including more attention to faculty development around transfer.
- Adjuncts: Pay more attention to role of adjuncts.
- College success courses: These courses should be required for all potential and actual transfer-bound students.
- To produce more transfer students, start at the beginning by providing students an empowering "first-year experience" meaning the totality of everything you do for new students
- Create a transfer center on each campus.

Four-year institutions should focus on the following:

- Require orientation for transfer students at both the institutional level and within the department from which the transfer student wishes to graduate. Transfers should begin immediately to meet faculty, staff and administrators in their desired college, school, or department
- Find alternatives for transfer students who have sufficient GPA for collegiate admission, but lack qualifications for certain high-demand majors
- Pay more attention to who provides academic advising to incoming transfer students, and ensure that advisors have appropriate expertise, knowledge, and availability. Ideally, each transfer student should be provided a faculty advisor in his/her intended major in addition to a professional staff advisor.
- Design and offer specific versions of college success courses adapted to the unique needs of transfer students. Preferably, make these required and credit-bearing, even if only one credit. Ideally such a course needs two-to-three credits.

- Ensure that there are some consistent standards of attention to the needs of transfer students – such as academic advising and support, career planning, social integration -- across the units that become the students' administrative and degree homes
- Target for redesign gateway courses with high percentages of enrolled transfer students that have correspondingly high rates of D,W,F,I grades.
- More authority and ownership over transfer should be exercised by the institution's chief academic officer. Only that individual has the authority and power to effect these changes together with academic deans, department chairs, and, ultimately, with mainline faculty.
- Take advantage of your SACSCOC QEP options for undertaking a "quality initiative" for purposes of reaffirming your institution's reaccreditation—and focusing that initiative on the improvement of educational outcomes for transfer students.

3. **Use Data to Understand Your Students and For Decision Making to Improve Student Learning and Success**

- Utilize disaggregated data on the transfer student cohort by race, ethnicity, gender, first generation status, full-time/part-time status, veteran's status, and if applicable, residency status (on/off campus, in/out-of-state) and sending institution.
- To/from which institutions do the students transfer?
- How many credit hours do the students take/bring with them?
- What are the outcomes for these students with respect to degree attainment?
- How do they perform in your courses in terms of grades received, again, disaggregated and compared to non-transfers?
- How do degree attainment rates vary across different sending institutions?
- What can be determined about predicted and attained levels of academic success and degree attainment of transfer vs non-transfer students?

4. **Conduct a Voluntary Self Study of the Transfer Experience to Produce and Execute a Comprehensive Plan to Improve Transfer Student Success**

*Use the gratis Foundations of Excellence® Transfer Foundational Dimensions® used to date by approximately 70 institutions (jngi.org/foundations-of-excellence). These are aspirational standards for excellence in transfer with respect to institutional practices, policies, and outcomes. The major outcome of this self-study process should be a comprehensive plan for improving transfer student outcomes—and hence higher attention and priority for transfers.

Also, use standards for state excellence in transfer: Apply the "Foundational Dimensions for Statewide Excellence in Equitable Transfer" (distributed at this meeting) to YOUR campus to determine how you are measuring up to the standards advocated therein. Discuss what you would like to contribute to and see emerge from the state-wide application of these standards.

5. **Involve Faculty in the Discussions Around Transfer Student Success**

- Make sure that faculty are included. In my experience, since transfer is typically considered an administrative function, faculty are often left out of the conversation. Remember: the transfer experience is academic!
- Build and maintain faculty relationships on a peer-to-peer discipline affinity basis between those who teach at primary sending and primary receiving institutions.
- Teach, advise, evaluate transfer students without prejudice or bias and any assumption that their performance will be different from non-transfer students.

- Exercise opportunities to understand and shape the process associated with the awarding of transfer credit.
- Make consistent and evidence-based judgments about what are/are not corresponding general education requirements and/or equivalent courses between sending and receiving campuses; and,
- Study transfer student outcomes in gateway courses normally taken earlier in the college experience but for many transfer students are also taken at the transfer-receiving institutions; and use that data to help refine both preparation of students at the sending institution as well as placement and credit awarding at the receiving institution.

6. **Identify Institutional Barriers to Transfer Student Success**

- Barriers are found in offices, units, people, and policies
- Which of these barriers operate on your campus?
- How would you and your students rate these barriers in terms of their relative significance?
- How well recognized, understood, and accepted do you believe these barriers are?
- Do you have the institutional will (and power) to address these barriers?
- Do you have the knowledge needed to provide corrective actions?
- What are the policies in place that may constitute these barriers?
- What are some of the organizational structures in place that may function as barriers?
- Are there certain offices that have come to represent barriers?
- Are there certain individuals who constitute individual barriers?

7. **Undertake a Policy Audit to Determine the Extent of Prejudice Against Transfer Students by Comparing the Treatment of Transfer vs Non-Transfer Students at your Institution in Terms of the Following Policies:**

- Admissions (deadlines for application, costs for application, deadlines for notice of acceptance, award for financial aid, recognition of prior credit and learning experiences)
- Financial Aid (deadlines for application and notification; criteria for eligibility; amounts and types of aid; designations specifically for transfer vs non-transfer students; criteria for renewal and maintaining eligibility)
- Eligibility for on-campus housing
- Eligibility for childcare
- Priority for class registration
- Availability of required vs. elective programs, opportunities, courses, to support student success (e.g., orientation, academic advising, college success courses, etc.)
- Provision of academic advising—is it optional or mandatory and for which populations?
- Eligibility for internships, co-op.
- Eligibility for study abroad, National Student Exchange
- Eligibility for on-campus employment –supported by College Work Study or regular institution funds
- Eligibility for academic awards, prizes
- Existence of specific offices/centers/programs dedicated to support of transfers

8. **Conduct an Audit of the Institutional Artifacts that Suggest Transfer Students Are or Are Not Valued**

- Your website?
- Do you confer any awards to faculty, staff, students for the exemplary support they provide transfer students?
- At what kind of ceremonial venue/occasion do you present such awards?

- Do your internally and externally focused public relations' communications report on accomplishments and distinctions of transfer students? And how frequently and in what communications media?
- Do you have any displays in your public spaces to call attention to the accomplishments of transfer students?
- Do your official publications have specific sections that are clearly and conspicuously devoted to transfer students? Examples would be in addition to your website, published—either in print or on-line information regarding:

  - admissions
  - financial aid
  - registration
  - academic advising
  - orientation
  - on-campus employment
  - career services
  - counseling
  - housing
  - athletics
  - student activities
  - parking/transportation
  - childcare
  - health services and insurance
  - opportunities for family involvement

9. **Showcase the History of Transfer Students at Your Institution and Those Who Have Supported and Championed Them**

- Identify those who have come before and who took a stand to support transfers.
- Know how long have you been admitting transfer students?
- How have your policies regarding them evolved?
- What is your history with respect to their numbers and types?
- How has your institutional culture towards this subpopulation evolved?
- Are transfers cited in your official institutional history?
- If you have a campus museum, or perhaps an appropriate space in your library or an atrium common space, do you have any exhibits that reflect aspects of their history?
- Do you have campus displays or websites which call attention to this cohort and its contributions? Do you have noteworthy alumni who came to you as transfers?

10. **Establish a Stakeholder Institution-Spanning Advocacy Group**

Unlike traditional first-year students and other non-transfer students, transfer students generally lack advocates. An excellent mechanism is an institution-spanning advocacy stakeholder group.

Ideally, this group should consist of representatives of key units including academic programs, academic administration, faculty, student affairs/student success professionals, enrollment management, key staff-driven functional areas, and, most importantly, transfer students themselves.

The group should be vested with both formal and informal power to identify issues, problems, and needs affecting transfers.

Such a group should be an institutionalized, standing entity, not an ad hoc body, with regular open meetings, with subjects and actions communicated publicly across the institution.

This group should have reporting lines to institutional cabinet-level officers and be empowered to make official recommendations for forwarding through official policy review and approval channels.

11. Proactively Develop Peer to Peer Relationships Between Sending and Receiving Institutions

Much of what seems to make real institutional differences in transfer student success comes down to the informal relationships between peers.

The most important peer-to-peer structure is that of CEO's for geographically contiguous institutions.

Encourage this type of partnership in developing peer-to-peer relationships across these critical roles, especially the senior officer for……:

- academic affairs
- student success
- student affairs
- enrollment management
- admissions
- registration
- financial aid
- business and finance
- libraries
- athletics
- distinct academic disciplines, majors
- academic support/learning assistance
- academic advising
- guided pathways
- counseling
- developmental education
- veteran's affairs

12. Conduct Qualitative Assessment

- Ask your transfer students how "transfer friendly" they think your institution is based on their experiences.
- You could do this by using focus groups and surveying current and former transfer students.
- Readminister the transfer student surveys used in the SC state transfer study for this project in 2022.

13. Involve Your Institution in the Major Annual Professional Development Conferences to Support Transfer Student Success.

- Most notably, the new professional development opportunities forthcoming for 2023-24, organized and hosted by the South Carolina Commission for Higher Education upon the specific recommendations of the South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Plan, February 2023.
- Annual February Conference of National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students (NISTS).

- Annual October Conference on Students in Transition Hosted by The University of South Carolina's National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition
- Workshops and conferences offered by state and regional professional organizations with transfer-related missions such as advising, admissions, and orientation.

- Some regions have their own transfer-related groups, and conferences such as:

  - The Annual Alabama Transfer Student Success Conference

  - The Annual AZ Transfer Summit, organized by the Arizona Board of Regents.

  - NETA, the New England Transfer Association and Annual Conference

  - The New York State Transfer and Articulation Association and Annual Conference

14. **Visit Some Other Institutions Engaging in Partnerships to Increase Transfer Student Success**

    The task force for this SC transfer project learned of a number of such partnerships actively working in our state! You are encouraged to learn from and be inspired by them.

15. **Create a culture of urgency around the transfer issue. Students are overwhelmed and suffering due to the complexity and frustrations inherent in this system!**

    In conclusion, with respect to the above recommendations, these represent what the presenter(s) of this session for the CHE April 3, 2023, Transfer Convening believe are most important for immediate action in keeping with the recommendations of the <u>South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan of February 2023.</u> Many of these can be implemented at the institutional level and without any additional funding.

    Because transfer is such a long-standing problem and issue, I am, of course, aware of a plethora of additional options for consideration by S.C. higher educators if they wish. Many of these could be considered by the various stakeholder groups of institutional representatives that CHE will be convening to implement the formal recommendations called for in the <u>South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan.</u> These that I will enumerate below would definitely need study by appropriate subgroups to determine if they would be a good fit for South Carolina. So, what I present below are not intended to be specific recommendations for adoption by SC, but instead for consideration. One thing I am sure of is that even though the primary focus of transfer has been on credit evaluation and articulation, it is going to take far more than progress on course-by-course articulation. That can never address, for example, the insufficient number of students even in the pipeline for such evaluation of credits. So, it is going to take many more and different approaches to improve transfer student success because most fundamentally, this is an academic problem and not solely one of credit evaluation transactions. It is a good thing that there is such a wide range of experience, practices, and admittedly experiments underway to improve transfer student performance. There is no magic bullet, and it is going to take a combination of many discrete actions at the state and institutional levels. The State is now poised to move in a number of exciting new directions in company with CHE which is making improving transfer a topic agency priority. Here then are additional options for considerations to translate from national illustrations of transfer improvement practices to appropriate actions for South Carolina:

    1. **Cross state border arrangements for awarding transfer students in-state tuition rates.** As CHE reports on its website, the General Assembly is currently considering H3325 for "In-State

College Tuition Rates to Out-of-State Students." This would allow specific institutions to offer in-state tuition to students who reside in states that border S.C. What would be the implications of this for your institution should this bill become law? If it is not adopted this session, should you encourage its adoption in a future year?

2. **Discretionary review**: if you would concur that there is greater potential of inconsistency, lack of clarity and understanding, greater difficulty in student planning, and even prejudice and discrimination negatively impacting transfer students, when the ultimate total of transferable credits is partially determined by discretionary review of course by course comparability, would you be willing to recommend ways to reduce extent of discretionary review? If so, what might those recommendations be?

3. **Increasing data availability to institutions to support outcomes assessment**: What kind of data would be helpful for your campus to have provided at the state and institutional levels that you currently do not have access to, that would help you better understand current levels of state and institutional transfer student success? And let's assume you would want disaggregated results of transfer student outcomes as a function of race, gender, ethnicity, Pell status, First-gen status for outcomes such as:

   - At what point in AD programs do students transfer in terms of completed hours and GPA at the sending institution?
   - Transfer before or after awarding of AA/AS?
   - Transfer standing granted by receiving institutions?
   - Proportion of transfers admitted directly into a major?
   - Number of transfer hours earned at sending institution and applied to the major at receiving institution?
   - Degree/credential attainment rates through a transfer process, disaggregated?
   - GPA at points of transfer?
   - GPA at point of bachelor's degree completion
   - Proportion of graduates who go into or remain in the workforce?
   - Starting salary data?
   - Proportion of graduates who go directly to post graduate study?
   - Proportion who enters the military?
   - Proportion already in the military?
   - Accumulated debt levels upon credential completion?
   - Number of total credits earned at time of credential award?
   - Excess hours accumulated beyond minimum required for the four-year degree?
   - Excess costs to state and the students for credits awarded above 120 hours?

4. **Consideration of Impact of New Program Proposal Review on Transfer Students:** What adjustments in criteria and process for new program review by CHE to assure more consideration for access and success of transfer students would you like to see adopted?

5. **Reverse Transfer**: What state-level actions, and at your institution, could be taken to facilitate and encourage the practice of reverse transfer awarding of associate degrees? Are state financial incentives needed for your institution to implement this opportunity? Note: Implementing Reverse Transfer is a recommendation of the South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Action Plan.

6. **Common Core Curriculum**: To what extent do you want to pursue development in similarity of requirements for a common core and measures of equivalency.

7. **Common course numbering**. Would this be a helpful direction for SC? What courses would you be willing/interested in incorporating?

8. **List of 86.** What specific course by course designations have you already accommodated that are not included in the most recent version of the publicly available "list of 86?"

9. **Consideration of D Grades**: What about a common state policy regarding the transferability/non transferability of courses for which the student has been awarded the grade of D, for unsatisfactory?

10. **Appeals Mechanisms**: What about establishment of appropriate appeals process/mechanisms for students to request further consideration of transfer credit denial, beginning at the institutional level with an ultimate appeal option to a statewide review body?

11. **State Financial Incentives to Support Transfer from Public Two-Year Colleges to Private Institutions:** Recognizing the significant savings to the state when state residents pursue higher education at private rather than public institutions, should you consider recommending state incentives for special tuition grants for SC residents pursuing transfer to SC private institutions?

12. **Extent of SC Private Institutions' Ability to Be Competitive with SC Public Two-Year Colleges in Enrolling Dual Credit Secondary School Students**: Recognizing that current state support for high school dual credit goes disproportionately to the public two-year sector, should you consider recommending some state incentives to support students who might wish to pursue dual credits in the private college sector?

13. **Encouragement of SC Public Institution CAOs to Give More Consideration to Status of Transfer Opportunities.** Are there some adjustments that could or should be made to the functioning of the review processes by chief academic officers participating in CHE advisory functions that would encourage and provide greater attention to transfer student needs and opportunities?

14. **Impact of State Level Transfer Policies on Institutional Practice**: How could you consider the impact of state policies on institutional policy making regarding transfer? Stated differently, what kinds of state policies might encourage the development of more transfer-student friendly policies at the institutional level?

15. **State Support for Becoming Engaged with National Institute for Study of Transfer Students (NISTS):** Given that there is only one national organization exclusively devoted to providing professional development, research on and demonstration of best practices in transfer, NISTS, should you request special state support for enabling participation of SC transfer educators in this national activity?

16. **Participation in the National Student Clearinghouse**: In like manner should state-level support be sought to allow all institutions to have memberships in the National Student Clearinghouse as a means to level the playing field due to differing levels of institutional affordability for this important information source to improve your understanding of the movement pattern of your students?

17. **Creation of SC Professional Development Opportunities to Enhance Transfer**: As a result of the recommendation of the South Carolina State Transfer and Articulation Action Plan, CHE has been charged with offering and facilitating special professional development convenings and other activities to enhance transfer student success? What would be the most needed areas for professional development attention and support for your institution?

18. **Joining the Interstate Passport Network**: Should you consider recommending exploration of SC joining the Interstate Passport Network? https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/09/ipn-site-badge.jpg

    Interstate Passport is a national program that enables seamless block transfer of lower-division general education attainment based on an agreed-upon set of learning outcomes rather than on specific courses and credits.

    Members of the Interstate Passport Network are institutionally accredited, nonprofit, public and private, two- and four-year institutions. Students who earn a Passport and transfer to another Network member institution will have met all or nearly all of the receiving institution's lower-division general education requirements. To join the Interstate Passport Network, an institution or system should declare its intent to become a member and define and submit a Passport Block

19. **Seeking Private Support for Transfer:** Should you recommend that the state authorize and encourage CHE to undertake efforts to seek private grant support from state, regional and national foundations; and support from the state and national business and industry community to increase transfer student success and opportunities?

20. **Partnership with SC Department of Education for Increased Attention to Transfer in SC High School Guidance Functions:** How could a partnership be enhanced with the SC K-12 system at both state and local levels to promote greater attention to the merits and opportunities of encouraging SC students to consider and plan better for transfer while they are still enrolled in this system?

21. **Academic Faculty Disciplinary Affinity Groups for Better Alignment of Courses Between Two and Four-Year Sectors:** How could you create, incentivize, and support the voluntary creation of structures and processes that would bring together faculty in the same discipline at two and four-year colleges (including public and private) to develop more seamless and integrated compatibility of content between sending and receiving institutions. This could ensure enhanced levels of preparation for successive courses in the discipline, thus reducing the necessity of having students repeat courses already taken at the sending intuitional level, with all the attendant extra time and costs to the students and the state. Such collaborative mechanisms are designated as "Transfer Affinity Groups," or "Disciplinary Faculty Affinity Groups," or "Transfer Communities of Practice." These would be recommended especially for these disciplines with high transfer activity such as):

    *Biology
    *Business
    *Accounting
    *Chemistry
    *Economics
    *History
    *Mathematics
    *Political Science

*Psychology
*Sociology

22. **A South Carolina Transfer Consortium**: Should you consider the establishment of a South Carolina Transfer Consortium to raise additional financial resources to foster additional cross-sector and cross-institutional collaboration, professional development, and dissemination of best practices in national and state transfer work. There are a number of such consortia in the US, especially in Texas, Ohio, and Oklahoma. The newest one in the country, which could be a model for South Carolina, is the Tulsa Higher Education Consortium just founded in 2021. See https://tulsahighered.com/

23. **South Carolina Regional Transfer Action Networks**: Should you request state support for the establishment of voluntary regional transfer networking structures of two and four-year, public and private institutions, to focus on the unique needs, opportunities, and problems in the unique regional areas of the state, to focus on these regions:

    *Upstate
    *Midlands
    *PeeDee and Coastal
    *Northwest and Upper Piedmont

24. **Prior Learning Assessment:** More proactive and non-traditional mechanisms are needed to enhance degree completion for adult learners with some prior college attendance and credit but who have not been able to complete degrees. This is one recourse for addressing this need. A case can be made that this is especially needed in states with significant proportions of active duty and retired military personnel.

25. **Competency Based Educational Degree Programs:** This is another mechanism for adapting traditional higher education transfer practices to non-traditional students' lives and previous career successes, again, such as are attained in military service.

26. **Increasing transfer by students from other countries to support the globalization of SC's economy and higher education system.** Hence, you would need to develop more expertise in the internationalization of transfer, especially the evaluation of credits not earned in the US.

27. **Making Financial Aid Work For Transfer Students**: What additional steps could you take to reduce the current inequities and disparities in financial aid available to non-transfer versus transfer students?

28. **Consideration of Adoption of Guided Pathways for Transfer Student Success**: This has become a widespread practice elsewhere in the US. What is its extent in SC and with what results? And what might be the merits attained from expanded utilization of guided pathways? Such an effort always needs to be combined with redesigning of high failure rate courses in the Pathways. Otherwise transfer bound students are placed in new pathways that contain the same high failure rate "gateway" courses.

29. **The Student Athlete Transfer Experience:** Consideration of how improved access and degree attainment outcomes could be achieved through greater attention to the mechanisms of transfer opportunities for aspiring and current student athletes.

30. **State Awards for Transfer Excellence:** What would you think of seeking support to establish state level awards to recognize attainment of transfer excellence? By:

    *Public two-year colleges
    *Public four-year institutions
    *Private colleges and universities
    *Specific academic degree programs
    *Individual sector specific transfer students themselves

31. **Establishment of a State Association for Support of Transfer Students:** A number of US states have state-based associations for individual educators and institutions, including the Alabama Transfer Association; AZ Transfer, the coordinating body of the Arizona Transfer System within the Arizona Board of Regents; the New York Association for Transfer and Articulation; and the New England Transfer Association. The latter includes all six New England states and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022. If they can do this, surely South Carolina can. These associations are typically driven by enrollment management officers. SC would be well advised, should it create such an organization, to have one that is more inclusive of academic leaders and faculty in addition to enrollment management, student affairs, student success professionals. Transfer student success needs to be owned by all.

In conclusion, the content of this presentation was designed to undergird the following session of the CHE April 3, 2023, Transfer Convening which will focus on:

Promising Practices in South Carolina

To include the sharing of such practices already underway and efforts to develop further promising practices.

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