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### **High-Performing Transfer Partnerships: Lessons Supporting Underserved Student Success**

Current Research, Orientation and Transition Programs

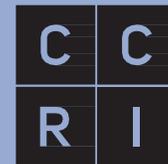
Building on data gathered through the Credit When It's Due (CWID) initiative, lessons learned about high-performing transfer partnerships in Colorado and Minnesota are discussed. In this session, the researchers will share information and strategies related to policies, practices, and culture that link community colleges and universities in ways that support higher than expected baccalaureate degree completion among underserved student populations.

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**National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students**

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# High-Performing Transfer Partnerships: Lessons Supporting Underserved Student Success



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## Why Transfer Partnerships Are Important For Underserved Students

- We lose many students in the transfer process, particularly those facing more barriers and with fewer resources
- Partnerships may help remove barriers and
  - facilitate bachelor's degree options for place bound students
  - provide more affordable bachelor's degree options
  - improve efficiency of the transfer process (e.g. reduce credit loss)

# Conceptualizing Partnerships with an Equity Frame

## IS NOT...

- Statewide articulation agreements
- Institution-focused transfer processes (e.g., advising)
- “All students”

## IS...

- Institutional pairs prioritizing and supporting underserved students in their educational journey
- Institutional pairs adapting to student realities
- Operationalized at the intersection of policy, culture, and practice



## Three Components of Strong Partnerships



## Policy

- Policies on curricular rigor & alignment between institutions
- Budgetary support for transfer practices
- Formalized credit arrangements (e.g., program maps linked to articulation agreements)
- Shared policies to help students navigate financial aid processes across institutions
- Transparent transfer credit policies
- Transfer targets and admissions preferences

## Practices

- Regular meetings between executive leaders
- Regular conversations between academic and student services administrators
- Frequent collaboration between faculty, advising, & financial aid
- Collaborative cross-campus recruitment and programming
- Faculty involvement in admissions, articulation, design and implementation
- Data sharing about transfer outcomes for assessment, planning, and improvement

## Culture

- Presidential/leadership support for partnership practices
- Trust built between institutional partners
- Presence on partner campus
- Transfer-affirming messaging by partners
- Strong, non-hierarchical, collaborative relationships between faculty & staff
- Shared responsibility & accountability for student success
- Shared commitment to continually assess and adapt to student needs

## Research Questions

1. What do high-performing partnerships look like, and how do they vary by institutional characteristics?
2. What are the catalysts and barriers to form partnerships?
3. What aspects of partnerships facilitate or hinder equitable outcomes for students?
4. What lessons about implementation and outcomes can be shared with other institutions?

## High-Performing Transfer Partnership Study

Multistate, mixed-methods study of partnerships between 2- and 4-year institutional pairs

- Quantitative: Students from higher-performing pairs have significantly higher than average odds of all transfer students graduating or still being enrolled
  - Students of color having a lesser “racial transfer gap”
- Qualitative: State policy context and site visits to 2 to 4 pairs of 2- and 4-year institutions per state

## Methods for One State Case

- Interviewed staff, faculty and students at each partner institution (N=88 in one state; 4 pairs; 6 institutions)
- Questions focused on culture, policy and practices
- Interviews transcribed and underwent coding and iterative analysis using Dedoose to identify themes
- State-level transfer policies compared to institutional policies and outcomes

## Preliminary Results: Factors Important To Underserved Students

- Geography & Mobility
  - *"Don't want to relocate because of family.. my family, my work and everything involved"*
- Cost
  - *"I wanted to go somewhere where it was affordable and also reputable"*
- Scheduling
  - *"I like it's really flexible with classes you take....I work fulltime"*

## Preliminary Results: Factors Important To Underserved Students

- Efficient and Easy Clear Path • *“I think this actually makes it feel more attainable, just knowing that they have the automatic entrance”*
- Sense of Belonging • *“So like I am a first generational to attend a college. So I have no experience, I have nobody to help me. So the support, the staff support they have over here, they understood, you know, they were open-minded, and they were more willing to help. Yeah. That's what I like about it.”*

## Preliminary Results: Factors Important To Underserved Students

- Sense of Belonging
- *“I think **State U** has done a lot of work in helping students of color, helping first generation students, and being open to different communities that are out there....That means a lot to us who are from those communities, because it shows that they care about if we have an education, the education matters to us. That's one thing that drew me to **State U**”*

## Preliminary Results: Motivations for Partnerships

- Facilitate transfer and baccalaureate completion-Institution & system focus

*“It was the lack of universities in our area. That was really it. We wanted to just meet the student where they're at, and by talking to so many students on our campus, a lot of people take the bus. A lot of people take public transportation. A lot of people have their families here. They work here. They don't want to leave our area.”*

-staff/admin 2-year institution



## Preliminary Results: Motivations for Partnerships

- *“To give the students a menu of options”*
  - faculty 2-year institution
- Necessity-student numbers and policy
- Proximity
- Department level relationships

## Preliminary Results: How Partnership Enacted

- Relationships created and maintained

*This is like a marriage, if you don't tend to it, it doesn't go well, so we did a lot of counseling and a lot of relationship building..*

-staff/admin 4-year

- Equal accountability

*I think it's two sister schools collaborating together, two can do more than one kind of thing, so they're collaborating together to create something that they couldn't do by themselves. It's a synergy*

-staff/admin 2-year

*Partnerships in my world have a balance of power...*

-staff/admin 4-year



## Preliminary Results: How Partnership Enacted

- Infrastructure-Shared Resources
  - Partnership positions at institutions
  - Co-advisor (joint appointment)
  - Co-located degrees
    - University centers-multiple degrees and partners
    - Student services
- Policies that incentivize partnering
  - System-wide focus on bachelor degree completion focus
  - Creating statewide credit transfer agreements in majors

## Shared Resources per Pair

**Pair 1 (Urban):** 1 Baccalaureate degrees on CC campus

**Pair 2 (Regional):** 4 Baccalaureate degrees on CC campus

- Welcome center which is shared space
- Co-advisor has joint position

**Pair 3 (Urban):** 6 Baccalaureate degrees on CC campus

- Physical space provided for a Partnership Center at CC
- Partnership positions at both institutions
- More degrees offered with other 4-year institutions

**Pair 4 (Urban):** 6 Baccalaureate degrees on CC campus

- Physical space for a University Center at CC
- “Premier” partner
- Partnership positions at both institutions
- More degrees offered with other 4-year institutions

## Preliminary Results: Potential Barriers To Creating Partnerships

- Administrator turnover
- Sharing of resources-details
- Departmental histories
- Resources stretched thin
- Prioritizing schools within the state system
- Data

## Preliminary Results: What Students Say About Opportunities That Partnerships Provide

*“I think they have the plan already being set up [was helpful]. Like most of this transition, City Community College took it upon themselves. Because we used to be their students. The paper that contains all our results, all our grades, is with City Community College. They transferred it to North Fork University by themselves....So the advantage we have is like we have [a] shared advisor....So she was able to get access about the information for both campus[es]. And she was able to compare and contrast between the classes and what [I] needed”*



## Applying what you just learned about partnerships

Described motivations, barriers, and how partnerships enacted and impacted students

Small group exercise, but first learn who is in the room and why?

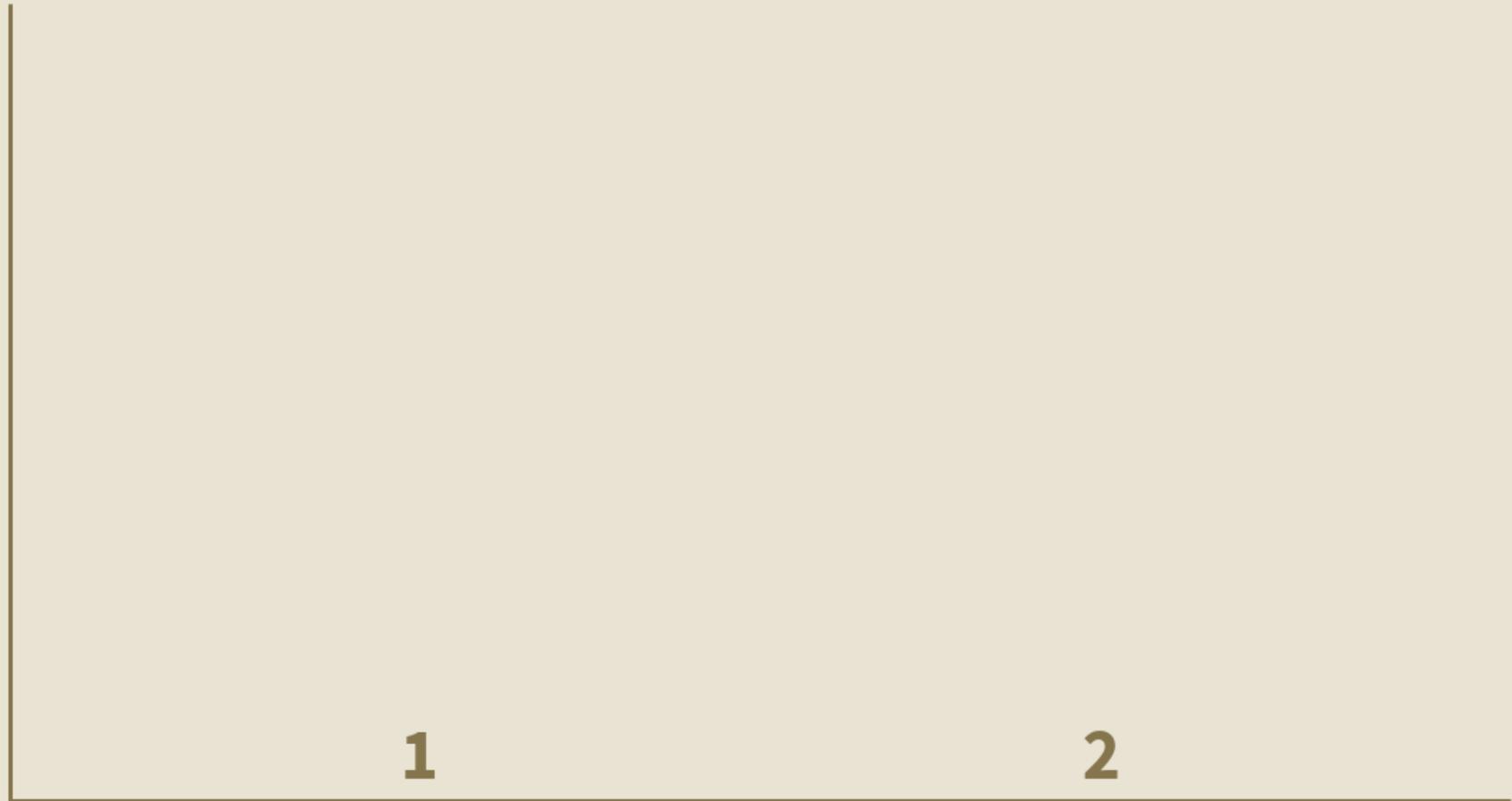
Start by going to [Pollev.com/partner800](https://Pollev.com/partner800)

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# Who is attending this talk?



1

2

I am from a 4-year  
institution

I am from a 2-year  
institution



# What best describes your job focus?

Student transfer

Transfer student completion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion

Partnerships

All of the above

None of the above

I am currently a transfer student

# What best describes your institutions current partnerships with other institutions for bachelor completion?

We have an active partnership with another institution

We have active partnership with multiple institutions

We are hoping to start partnering with other institutions

We do not have a partnership with another institution

**W** From your own experiences, what word is foundational for a partnership to happen and be successful?

## Small Group Work: How can you use what you just learned at your own institution?

1. Think about how this information might apply to your transfer work and institution? (4 min.)
  - How could you leverage your position to facilitate partnerships?
  - How could you see partnerships helping your students?

## Small Group Work: How can you use what you just learned at your own institution?

2. Now find a partner to discuss the quote below and answer how to keep/create partnerships with an equal power balance? (5 min.) Share out after

*Partnerships in my world have a balance of power and don't employ any level of exploitation or extortion and welcome ideas to the table with optimism and not frantic judgment.*

-4-year staff/admin



## Small Group Work: How can you use what you just learned at your own institution?

### 3. Share Out

- Share answer to question #2
  - Potential solutions for the exercise
  - Potential usefulness in your own work

# TRANSFER PARTNERSHIPS RESOURCES

## Contact

<http://ccri.uw.edu/DataNote1-IntroHPTP>

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