CALL TO ACTION

As required in the [California Cradle-to-Career Data System Act](#), the partner entities have included tools designed to support practitioners and students, focusing on several types of operational supports, including electronic transcripts, eligibility to receive support services, college planning, college readiness/transfer monitoring, and data cleanup. In this brief, we will address the areas of college readiness/transfer monitoring and documentation of eligibility requirements as they relate to the objective of scaling practical tools to better serve educators, students, and families.

Due to challenges with articulating courses with California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC), coupled with the small number of counselors available to support education planning, California Community College (CCC) students may not have accurate information about whether the courses they are taking are eligible for transfer, or if they are enrolling in courses that will be accepted for their chosen major at their transfer destination. Additionally, dually enrolled students are often missing information about whether their college courses meet college preparatory coursework requirements (commonly known as a-g), affecting their eligibility status.

Overview of Related Tools

CaliforniaColleges.edu, managed by the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI), is California's official college and career planning platform. When backed by verified coursework data through high school transcript exchanges, CaliforniaColleges.edu supports educators and students in determining eligibility for UC and CSU admission and provides tools for high school students and their counselors to see their progress in real time. Counselors can run reports to show which students are on track to meet requirements and identify those who may need a course in a particular a-g subject area in order to attain baseline eligibility. They can then use this information to guide their advising and ensure students take the courses that maximize their postsecondary options. In addition, school districts can use available progress reports to see if there are problems with the data in their student information systems.

The CSU Transfer Planner was launched in 2023 to support eligible students to enroll and complete the Transfer Success Pathway dual admission program, which guarantees future CSU admission to high school graduates who enroll in a California community college and commit to transferring to CSU within three years. The tool creates a centralized resource for students to explore options and to track their CCC coursework, minimizing credit loss and maximizing time towards degree completion. Within the planner, students are able to determine their Transfer Success Pathway eligibility, research CSU campuses and degree programs, track transferable units and enter into a Transfer Success Pathway enrollment agreement with the campus of their choice.

ASSIST (assist.org) is the official statewide database and online resource that shows how CCC courses may be used to satisfy elective, general education, and major requirements at a CSU or UC campus. Used by a variety of users, ASSIST provides:

- Exploration tools for students, counselors, and others to explore CCC course transferability[1] and articulation information[2]
- Administrator tools for CCCs to submit courses and for CSU/UC to review them for transferability and articulation
- Administrator tools for CSU/UC to document agreements about whether specific courses will be recognized as meeting major, department, and general education requirements at each CSU or UC campus
- Course and articulation data exports for use in degree audit, student planning systems, and admissions applications

> **PROBLEM TO SOLVE: DUALLY ENROLLED STUDENTS LACK INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR COLLEGE COURSEWORK, PREVENTING EFFECTIVE USE OF ELIGIBILITY TOOLS IN CALIFORNIACOLLEGES.EDU.**

CaliforniaColleges.edu, when backed by verified coursework data through high school transcript exchanges, supports educators and students in determining eligibility for UC and CSU admission. However, students using CaliforniaColleges.edu to track college eligibility progress don't always have insight into how their dual enrollment college courses meet a-g requirements, as there is currently no systematic way for college courses to be coded for a-g, as there is for high school courses through the Course Management Portal (CMP). When they

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[1] Articulation agreements show how courses at a CCC may satisfy specific department or major requirements at a CSU or UC campus.
[2] Transferability indicates CCC courses that are transferable to CSU or UC, as well as which courses may be used to satisfy elective or general education requirements upon transfer.

have access to information about their students' dual enrollment coursework, the high school registrar may transcribe this credit on the high school transcript[3] with a-g designations, but this is not consistently done.

> **PROBLEM TO SOLVE: STUDENTS MUST SELF-REPORT THEIR COLLEGE COURSEWORK, PREVENTING EFFECTIVE USE OF TRANSFER ADVISING TOOLS LIKE THE CSU TRANSFER PLANNER, POTENTIALLY IMPACTING A STUDENT'S TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY.**

As part of the Transfer Success Pathway program, the CSU Transfer Planner allows community college students to explore and plan for a successful transfer to any CSU campus by helping students determine which of their courses are transferable and whether they can be applied toward specific majors at individual CSU campuses. Students log their community college coursework to track general education progress and compare their current GPA against transfer-admission requirements.

Currently, students using the Transfer Planner must manually add their coursework into the tool, individually selecting courses from menus populated by ASSIST course data. They are prompted at the end of each term to enter updates, such as grade earned. This manual process runs the risk of user error (e.g., missing courses taken or wrong courses selected). Inconsistencies between self-reported coursework (including earned grades) and the student's official transcript may cause a student to believe they are eligible for transfer when they are not.

> **PROBLEM TO SOLVE: STUDENTS MAY HAVE INCOMPLETE OR INACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR COLLEGE COURSEWORK'S TRANSFERABILITY, LEADING TO AMASSING EXCESS UNITS, INACCURATE ADVISING, AND REDUCING THE LIKELIHOOD THEY WILL TRANSFER.**

While there are elements available in eTranscript California and the existing transcript data standard for CCCs to include information about IGETC, CSU GE, and other transfer eligibility areas, colleges are not always able to include this detail on their transcripts, given limitations in their data systems (e.g., course information doesn't live in the same system that produces transcripts), or to provide it in a consistent format. Further, when this detail is presented on transcripts, there is no mechanism for ensuring that it is consistent with what is documented in ASSIST, the official source of truth used by CCC, CSU, and UC to evaluate student transcripts in order to determine appropriate credit and satisfaction of institution-specific requirements related to admission and course comparability.

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[3] CSU Guidance on Mapping College Credit/Dual enrollment coursework to a-g requirement areas

DESIGNING SOLUTIONS

Align a-g subject area requirements with Cal-GETC

One approach for ensuring faculty review of dual enrollment courses to determine a-g status would be to align a-g requirements with Cal-GETC, the new standard adopted by CSU and UC to identify general education requirements. Faculty leadership could review options that are based on existing documentation about CSU GE Breadth and UC IGETC alignment with a-g, such as:

a-g Designation	Cal-GETC Designation
Area a - History/Social Science	4 – Social and Behavioral Sciences
	6 – Ethnic Studies [note: this would move to Area H if created]
Area b - English	1A – English Composition
Area c - Mathematics	2 – Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
Area d - Science	5A – Physical Science
	5B – Biological Science
Area e - Languages other than English	3B – Humanities (only for courses in TOP codes associated with a language other than English, including 1101-1112, 1116, 1117, 1119, 1199)
Area f - Visual and Performing Arts	3A – Arts
Area g - Elective	All of the above
	1B – Critical Thinking and Composition
	1C – Oral Communication

Document and maintain data about college courses that meet a-g subject area requirements.

Once a-g status is determined for dual enrollment courses, a central repository will be needed to house and maintain this information in a consistent format. One possibility would be to use ASSIST as that repository.

- ASSIST houses transferable CCC courses and already includes the courses that contribute to a students' eligibility for admission to a four year college, whether the CCC courses are taken during high school or when a student has matriculated to a CCC after high school.
- ASSIST currently indicates which community college courses fulfill CSU GE Breadth areas, CSU American Institutions requirement areas, and UC IGETC areas. In the future, ASSIST will also document whether courses meet Cal-GETC requirements.
- ASSIST is developing an API that would allow for integration with other information sources, including CCGI's eligibility tools, the CSU Transfer Planner, and eTranscript California.
- Through this API, ASSIST could provide up-to-date information on a-g status of dual enrollment courses for the CCGI eligibility tools, and provide verified information on both a-g status and Cal-GETC status to eTranscript California.
- By leveraging ASSIST's exploration tools, students and counselors would have a single resource that clarifies whether dual enrollment courses fulfill a-g eligibility requirements, provide community college credit, can be transferred as an elective to CSU or UC, or would count toward a major at CSU and UC -- and thus allow students to choose the classes that best meet their goals (particularly given plans for all high school students to complete up to 12 units of dual enrollment credit as a way to streamline progress toward degree completion).

One challenge of using ASSIST is that it does not currently include CSU courses offered as dual enrollment. These classes would need to be included in ASSIST. CCC, CSU, and UC would need to agree that it is appropriate for ASSIST to address dual enrollment as well as traditional transfer agreements.

If ASSIST is not used for a-g status, other options include amending the Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory or to develop a custom solution.

Regardless of where the information is ultimately stored, by connecting eTranscript California to the repository solution to include information about a-g subject area requirements as part of the CCC transcript, critical information can be delivered to CaliforniaColleges.edu for use in its planning tools and in the unified high school transcript, and to support students in completing related information on their admissions applications.

Connect eTranscript California to the CSU Transfer Planner so students receive guidance based on their official coursework and grades.

As discussed in the February Task Force meeting, systems integrations, such as populating admissions applications with official transcript coursework, reduces the burden on students to manually enter information and the risk of introducing errors. This same type of enhancement would also be valuable in tools like the CSU Transfer Planner, minimizing conflicts between self-reported information and a student's official coursework record that may result in a student not meeting transfer requirements. Students would be able to opt-in to have their official transcript data automatically populate and periodically update the CSU Transfer Planner (e.g., at the end of each term).

Connect eTranscript California to ASSIST to ensure consistent documentation of transfer-specific data elements.

Whether or not ASSIST houses information on a-g status of dual enrollment courses, it could still play a vital role in establishing whether courses fulfill Cal-GETC requirements, are transferable as electives, or can be transferred to fulfill major requirements. Given that some colleges' data systems do not have the ability to store and deliver California-specific data elements, such as Cal-GETC designations, connecting eTranscript California to ASSIST to augment college data with the official articulation and transfer details for each course will support consistency, reduce administrative burden on receiving institutions, and ensure that all student records have the same essential information needed to equitably evaluate transfer decisions.