



A Symposium on Transforming the Foundational  
Postsecondary Experience

# Transfer Focus Workshop

Transfer

# Agenda Transfer Track Day 1

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Welcome, Introductions, and  
Overview

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Activity: Why Focus on Transfer?

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Break

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Overview of the Transfer  
Landscape

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Activity: Institutional Data on  
Transfer



**Information  
Asymmetry:**  
Transfer Functioning  
Like An Unjust Used  
Car Marketplace



# The Intellectual Framing of the Issue



## The Transfer Student Experience: It's A Lot Like Buying a Used Car

Gregory L. Heileman<sup>a</sup> and Chaouki T. Abdallah<sup>b</sup> and Andrew K. Koch<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ; <sup>b</sup>Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA; <sup>c</sup>John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, Brevard, NC

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Compiled November 2, 2021

### ABSTRACT

The experience transfer students encounter as they navigate their journeys from community college to university is similar to that of buying a used car. We demonstrate this by showing how the information asymmetry in the market for used cars also occurs in the market for transfer students, producing inefficient markets in both cases, thereby increasing the chances of adverse selection. We diagnose the underlying conditions that produce transfer inefficiencies, identifying them as a structural inequity within the system of higher education. Finally, recommendations for alleviating information asymmetry in transfer processes, that would lead to better outcomes for transfer students, are provided.

### KEYWORDS

transfer articulation, transfer pathways, information asymmetry, structural inequity

## 1. Introduction

More than fifty years ago, economist George Akerlof (1970) published a paper that explored how the quality of goods exchanged in a market tends to degrade when information asymmetry exists between buyers and sellers.<sup>1</sup> Akerlof considered the market for used cars as an example, and he demonstrated that because buyers are generally not able to distinguish between “cream puffs” and “lemons,” they are only willing to pay a price that corresponds to the average value between these two extremes. This tends to drive away the sellers of high-quality cars who are unwilling to sell their cars below their true value, leaving more low-quality cars behind in the marketplace, which



# Transfer As an Asymmetric Marketplace

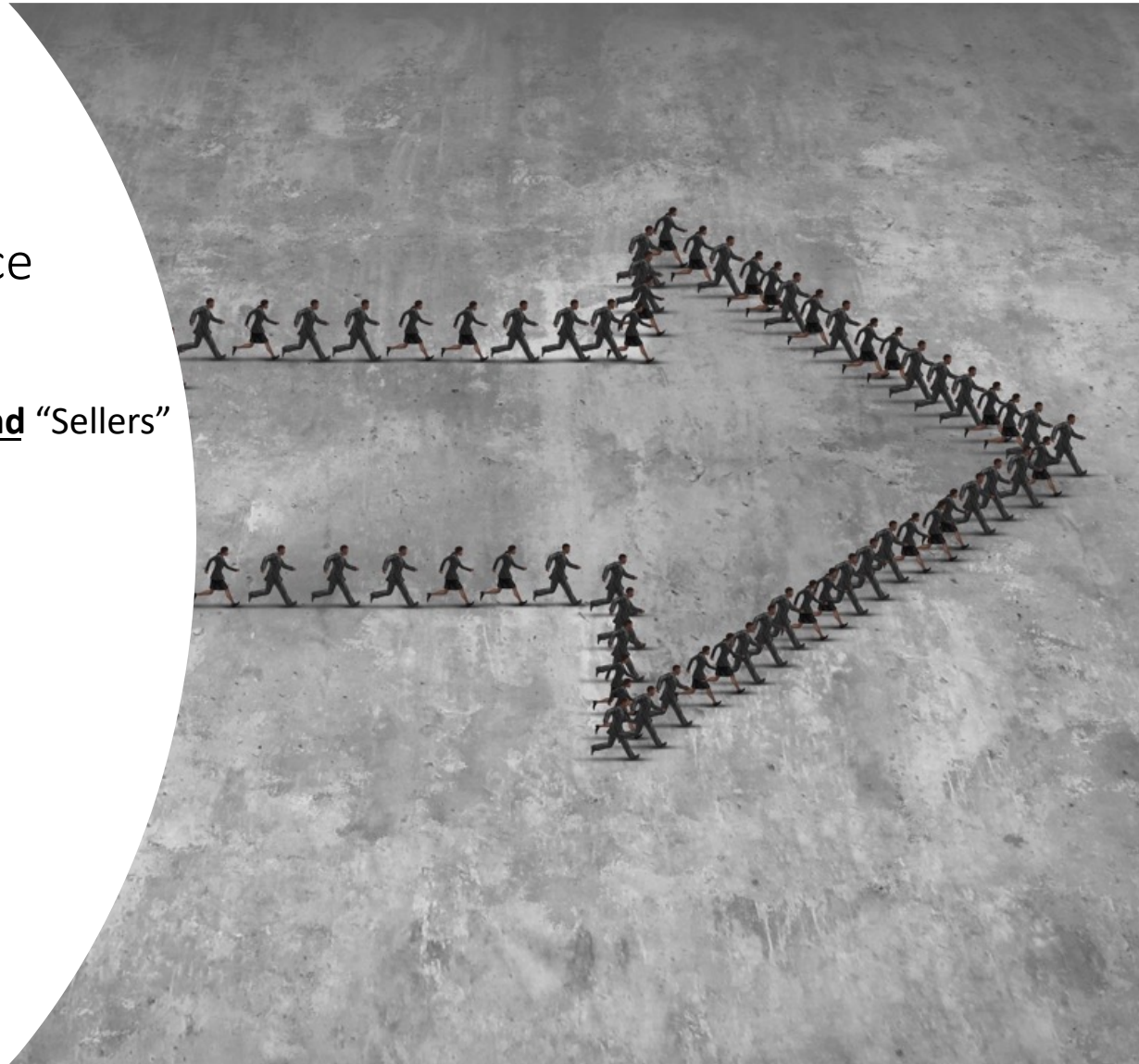
- Difference Between Perceived and Actual Value
  - Lemons vs. Peaches
- Transfer As an Asymmetric Marketplace
  - Difference Between Credit Articulation and Credit Application



ASYMMETRIC  
INFORMATION

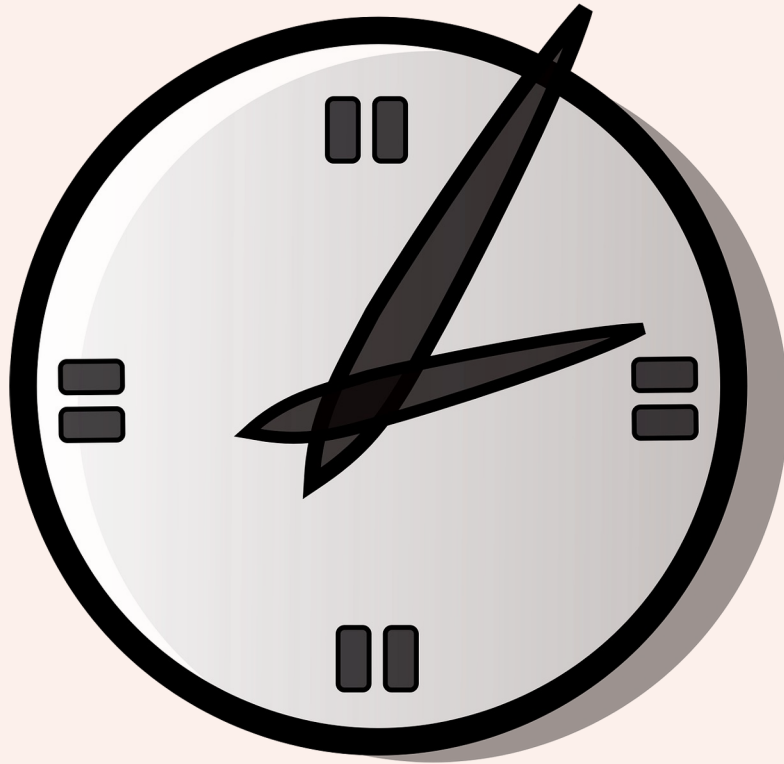
## Moving Towards A More Equitable Transfer Marketplace

- Lack of Transparency Harms “Buyers” **and** “Sellers”
  - Equity in the Marketplace
- Lack of Guarantees in the Marketplace
- Lack of Expert Verification
- Market Disruptions



## Activity: Why Transfer

- Why do you want to tackle transfer at your institution?
- What do you want to accomplish in transfer?



# Break

10 Minutes





# Overview of the Transfer Landscape

Dr. Jill Robinson Kramer

Transfer  
Progress  
Fall 2022  
National  
Student  
Clearinghouse  
Research  
Center

[gardnerinstitute.org](https://gardnerinstitute.org)

- ▶ Fall transfer enrollment continued to drop in 2022
- ▶ Two-to-four-year transfer fell, four-to two-year transfer and lateral transfer rose
- ▶ Transfer paths to selective and private institutions are dominated by students from wealthier families
- ▶ Transfer increased among stop out students for the first time since the COVID-19 Global Pandemic
- ▶ Transfer-in population is a diminishing share of four-year enrollment
- ▶ Women lagged in transfer overall

<https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/TransferProgressFall22.pdf>



## Overview – Student Plan vs. Reality

80%\*

Percent of community college students who indicate they plan to transfer and earn a bachelor's degree

31%\*\*

Percent of community college students who transfer to a four-year institution

14%\*\*

Percent of community college students who earn a four-year degree regardless of time frame

8%\*\*

Percent of community college students who earn a four-year degree in a true 2+2 model during a four-year time frame

\*Marcus, J. 2023. Bachelor's degree dreams of community college students get stymied by red tape – and it's getting worse. *The Hechinger Report*. Retrieved from: <https://hechingerreport.org/bachelors-degree-dreams-of-community-college-students-get-stymied-by-red-tape-and-its-getting-worse/>

\*\* Community College Research Center. July 2021. Policy Fact Sheet: Community College Transfer. Retrieved from: <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/ccrc-community-college-fact-sheets-policy-briefs-2021.pdf>

## Equity Issues – Who are the students?

- Black and Latino students disproportionately start higher education journeys at community colleges\*
- Enrollment among Black community college students fell 44% during the last ten years\*
- Enrollment declines for Black community college students fell 18% during the pandemic (Fall 2019-Fall 2021)\*
- Enrollment declines for Black male community college students fell 23.5% and 15% for women during the pandemic\*
- Hispanic enrollment in all postsecondary education dropped 5.4% during the pandemic years.
- 26.4 % fewer high school graduates from schools with large percentages of Black and Latino students went directly to college in 2020 compared to 2019



\*Weissman, S. 2022. Black Enrollment Declines, Gaps Increase. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/09/21/black-community-college-students-face-stark-disparities>

\*\*Douglas-Gabriel, D., Natanson, H., and Harden, J. 2021. A steady stream of Latino students was arriving on college campuses. Then the Pandemic hit. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/01/31/latino-college-enrollment-pandemic/>

## Common Transfer Barriers

- Curricular complexity
- Cafeteria style advising
- Weak/Nonexistent major-to-major articulation
- Limited access to transferrable credits at the sending institution
- Inconsistent transfer information
- Limited financial support for transfers
- Credit loss
- Transfer shock
- Transfer stigma
- Social Isolation

MAIN BARRIERS TRANSFER (-INTENDING) STUDENTS EXPERIENCE & OVERCOME (Xueli Wang, University of Wisconsin-Madison [https://b924c4d2-111c-4872-a1c1-35b4f5882b0d.usrfiles.com/ugd/b924c4\\_b7112cbbd9304342be08519fc3bd4171.pdf](https://b924c4d2-111c-4872-a1c1-35b4f5882b0d.usrfiles.com/ugd/b924c4_b7112cbbd9304342be08519fc3bd4171.pdf) )



## Equity Issues: Pitfalls of transfer

- ▶ **Two-Year Institution Struggles with milestones**
  - Passing college-level math
  - Passing college-level English
  - Completing 30 credit hours
  - Completing an associate degree prior to transfer

- ▶ **Credit Loss**
  - 43% of credits lost upon transfer from a Two- to Four-Year Institution

- ▶ **Work**
  - Students who work more than 15 hours a week have lower GPAs

- ▶ **Dependents**
  - 2/3 of mothers attending community colleges devote 30+ hours a week to caregiving



## Five Key Practices

## National Institute for the Study of Transfer

### Transfer and advising as one intervention

- **Five Key Practices (NISTS)**
  - Confront false assumptions and deficit thinking
  - Know who your transfer students are
  - Offer Relentless welcome
  - Build Connections across institutions
  - Work to improve systems and structure

# 1) Confront False Assumptions and Deficit Thinking

- Transfer students are not a problem to be fixed
- Help them build connections between their prior learning and their new community
- Adopt an equity mindset





## 2) Know Who Your Transfer Students Are

- Ask transfer students to share their stories
- Become familiar with institutional data about transfer students (where can you access that)?
- Educate yourself about common transfer barriers



### 3) Offer Relentless Welcome

- Show an interest in them as individuals
- Affirm their capacity to learn and succeed
- Normalize help-seeking



## 4) Build Connections Across the Institutions

How can advisors address the structure of the relationship between your primary sending /receiving partner institutions?

- Build peer-to-peer relations (classroom-classroom connections, peer advisors, clubs)
- Connect students to colleagues in Student Affairs and in other departments
- Involve transfer students in High Impact Practices as early as possible (consider developing shared HIP across sending/receiving institutions)



## 5) Work to Improve the Systems and Structures that Matter to Transfer Students

- Explore programmatic transfer data to see the transfer experience in context
  - (who came in as a Psych major/who graduates as a Psych major)
  - Reflect on and discuss the implications of these curricular pathways for your transfer students/advising
- Learn with Colleagues - meet/talk/share
  - Across institutions
  - Across departments
  - Professional Development
- Identify systems that can be improved and take action
  - Identify whether a clear pathway exists for students entering into the programs for which you advise.
  - What professional development is available for you as a transfer advisor? What feedback can you receive?
  - How is transfer advising recognized/rewarded?

## Activity: Transfer Data

- What data is available about students who intend to transfer, transfer out or transfer into your institution?
- What additional data would be valuable to your institution's understanding of equitable transfer student success?
- Who sees data regarding transfer students?
- Who else should have access to the data on students who transfer?

# • Concurrent Session Time

