

# Transfer Redesign (Foundations of Excellence®- Transfer)

## Foundational Principles (Foundational Dimensions®)

### Two-Year College Version

Foundational Principles statements provide two-year institutions a model to evaluate and improve the experience of students preparing to transfer. As an evaluation tool, the model enables institutions to confirm their strengths and to recognize the need for improvement. As an aspirational model, the Principles provide general guidelines for an intentional design of the experience of transfer students. The Principles rest on four assumptions:

- The academic mission of an institution is preeminent.
- The successful preparation of transfer students is central to mission attainment.
- The role of two-year institutions in facilitating student transfer is critical to the achievement of national educational attainment goals.
- The Principles guide improvement of the transfer student transition as part of the broader undergraduate experience.

**Foundational Institutions develop intentional student transfer policies and practices based on a clear philosophy/rationale.** The philosophy/rationale is explicit, clear and easily understood, consistent with the institutional mission, widely disseminated, and, as appropriate, reflects a consensus of campus constituencies. The philosophy/rationale is the basis for transfer policies, practices, structures, leadership, department/unit philosophies, and resource allocation. This philosophy recognizes the institution's role in serving and supporting transfer students.  
**(Philosophy-Transfer)**

**Foundational Institutions create organizational structures that provide oversight and coordination of student transfer.** Institutions realize coherent oversight of the transfer process through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student services, and other administrative units and through appropriate budgetary allocations. Foundations Institutions are organized to prepare students for transfer through a wide range of essential services. They assure communication and collaboration with receiving institutions at multiple levels including senior administration, academic departments, academic advising, and other administrative units.  
**(Organization)**

**Foundational Institutions assure the seamless development of transfer-bound students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution's philosophy and mission.** They coordinate with receiving institutions to determine common course goals, learning outcomes, and pathways to degree completion. They encourage the participation of transfer-bound students in engaging learning experiences both in and out of the classroom. **(Learning)**

**Foundational Institutions make student transfer a high priority for faculty and staff.** A culture of responsibility for the preparation of transfer students characterizes these institutions. This culture is articulated by campus leaders and realized through high-quality instruction, services, and support as well as substantial interaction with students both inside and outside the classroom. Institutional leaders nurture this culture and support it by appropriate institutional recognition and rewards. **(Institution Culture)**

**Foundational Institutions facilitate appropriate transfer student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with the institutional mission.**

Chief among these practices is a competent and caring approach to advising for transfer students. Beginning with the admission of students preparing to transfer, institutions and academic departments/units communicate clear curricular and co-curricular expectations and provide appropriate support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to transfer-bound students as well as students' responsibilities to themselves and the institution. They create and maintain curricular alignments and linkages with receiving institutions, assist students in learning about the culture of receiving institutions, and provide accurate and timely information to assure successful transfer.

**(Transitions)**

**Foundational Institutions serve all transfer-bound students according to their varied needs.** The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is continuous and is subject to routine assessment and adjustment. Institutions provide services with respect for the students' abilities, prior academic experiences, academic goals, and current needs and interests. Institutions also ensure a campus environment in which all transfer-bound students are encouraged to develop and pursue their goals for higher education. **(All Students)**

**Foundational Institutions ensure that all students experience a variety of ideas as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of global communities.** Whatever their demographic composition, institutions introduce transfer-bound students to the standards of behavior expected in the open and civil environments that characterize higher education. **(Global Awareness)**

**Foundational Institutions promote student understanding of the purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society.** These purposes include knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning to become engaged citizens, and learning to serve the public good. Institutions encourage transfer-bound students to deepen and strengthen their understanding of the value of general education and to examine or reexamine their motivation and monitor their progression toward personal educational goals. **(Educational Purposes)**

**Foundational Institutions review student data, conduct assessments and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations to achieve ongoing improvement in the transfer process.** Institutions regularly develop and distribute data on transfer-bound and transfer student enrollment and academic success patterns. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision-making, and ongoing program and policy improvement that affect transfer students. To achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as research and scholarship on transfer students and the transfer process. **(Improvement)**

*The Foundational Dimensions were adapted for the transfer transition by John N. Gardner, Betsy O. Barefoot, Betsy Q. Griffin, and Julie S. Alexander-Hamilton of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education in collaboration with Dennis E. Brown of El Paso Community College, Amy Baldwin of Pulaski Technical College, Kurt Ewen of Valencia Community College, Chad Brown of Zane State College, Shawn Anderson of Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Janice Mettauier and Shawna Carter of Madison Area Technical College, Steady Moono of Montgomery County Community College, Dee Ludwig of Eastern Wyoming College, Trudy Bers of Oakton Community College, and Ali O'Brien of College of Lake County. The Foundational Principles were revised in 2024 by Betsy Q. Griffin, Sara Stein Koch, Jill Robinson Kramer, and Robert Rodier of the Gardner Institute.*

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