Support Service Review

Review Year: 2012

Date: June 1, 2012

Unit Name: Office of Articulation & Transfer Resources

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Five Fundamental Questions

1. What are the primary services or outcomes provided by the support service area and what is the impact of those services and outcomes on students and other key stakeholders?

The primary services or outcomes of the Office of Articulation & Transfer Resources (ATR) are listed below.

- ➢ Develop and maintain articulation agreements
- ➢ Collect and analyze transfer data and provide this information to key stakeholders to support data-informed decisions
- ➢ Contribute to an increase in the degree completion rate by developing a reverse transfer process
- ➢ Promote and conduct transfer events/activities to inform and support students in the transition from ACC to a university

The impact of these services and outcomes on students and other key stakeholders are listed below.

- ➢ Support efforts to increase transfer and graduation/completion rates
- ➢ Contribute to student success by providing accurate and timely articulation and transfer information to key stakeholders (ACC and university partners)
- ➢ Create and/or coordinate development of transfer data reports for key stakeholders
- ➢ Provide accurate and timely information to transfer students to enable them to move to a university seamlessly

2. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats present that enhance or hinder the unit's ability to provide those services and meet expected outcomes during the next five years?

ATR conducted two SWOT analysis sessions (February 22 and 24, 2012); participants included internal and external stakeholders. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified that enhance or hinder the ATR's ability to provide those services and meet expected outcomes during the next five years are listed below.

<u>Strengths</u>

- ➢ Staff is knowledgeable, helpful and communicates well
- ➢ Transfer events are organized and scheduled at different locations available to students
- ➢ Articulation agreements are updated and maintained
- ➢ Resources (website, transfer guides, etc.) are improving and helpful
- ➢ Outreach on- and off-campus, including campus visits and individual staff/advisor communication with university counterparts

➤Customer service, as demonstrated by being accountable with a willingness to work with all areas/workforce
➤Good relationships with ACC colleagues and university counterparts have fostered strong internal/external partnerships

Weaknesses

➤Student communication
➤Low student attendance at some events
➤Articulation agreements' deficiencies and/or lack of planning for articulation
➤Participation by ACC students is inconsistent (low number of attendees)
➤Too much focus on UT Austin and Texas State
➤Unclear roles

Opportunities

➤Market events to students in a more creative, aggressive and expansive way
➤Diversify and expand articulation efforts - agreements need to be more comprehensive and specific to degree programs/majors
➤Improve communication between students and transfer schools, and between ACC and transfer schools
➤Improve web interface and update working linkages consistently
➤Increase communication internally and externally about transfer and articulation outcomes

Threats

➤Funding and budget
➤Regulation and policy changes at universities, state and federal levels
➤External support varies, e.g. requested data not consistently received
➤Internal concerns – "big role and tiny office"
➤Lack of cooperation by universities in some contexts
➤Difference in schools' organization, missions and priorities can be a stumbling block in communication and collaboration; all university partners are not always able to participate in events or exchange communication
➤Retention in jeopardy due to early transfer and students not completing associate degree

3. Using the answers to the first two questions, what improvements to primary services and/or intended outcomes will occur during the next five years?

The improvements to primary services and/or intended outcomes that will occur in the next five years are listed below.

Articulation Agreement Process
The articulation agreement process is not well understood and it is not utilized effectively by ACC stakeholders. An articulation agreement is the formalization of the ACC and university partnership and it aligns the community college and university courses and degree programs. The purpose of this partnership is straightforward: provide a seamless transition from the community college to the university and enable the student to earn their degree in an efficient manner. We will implement three improvements to this primary service.

First, we will raise awareness of the articulation agreement process and educate the ACC stakeholders of the importance of this process by making informational presentations to a variety of ACC audiences (e.g. academic Deans' Meetings, Advising Updates, Advising Forum Meetings, etc.).

Second, ATR will create a complete and standard process for agreement development so that stakeholders better understand the process and how to use it. This improvement will include a revised articulation agreement request form and a timeline/due date for completion of the steps in the process.

Third, the ATR website will be redesigned and expanded to include web pages that accurately and completely explain the articulation agreement process. The request form and timeline/due date information will appear on the web pages. This will educate internal and external users and clearly outline responsibilities and expectations of all parties in the process.

Transfer Data
ATR will consistently request admissions and academic progress data from our largest transfer partners. We will develop a process for making the request, follow up when data has not been received and analyze and report on the transfer data. Data informed decisions require accurate and timely access to this information. This improvement will enable ACC to develop or revise services and resources to best serve transfer students.

Degree Completion
We will participate in the development of a reverse transfer process which will contribute to an increase of the ACC graduation/completion rate. Often ACC students transfer to a university prior to completing on associate degree. Reverse transfer allows current and former students working toward a baccalaureate degree to earn their associate degree by transferring applicable university coursework back to ACC. ACC audits the university transcript to determine whether the credits completed meet the associate degree requirements.

This improvement will bring ACC in compliance with House Bill 3025, which requires Texas universities and community colleges to develop a reverse transfer process so that more Texans can obtain a college credential while on the path to completing the bachelor degree.

Articulation and Transfer Support
ATR will create an ACC Articulation and Transfer Support Committee to guide and support all articulation and transfer-related initiatives. The committee will provide insight on needed articulation agreements, plan and participate in transfer fairs and events and support or enhance current university relationships. This committee will include representation from all areas of the College: academic/instruction divisions, student services departments and the transfer student population. College-wide participation is essential to ACC's shared governance principles, and all stakeholders will share the role of improving student success.

Access and/or Awareness of Transfer Events/Activities
The number of ACC students who participate in ATR-sponsored transfer events is low and inconsistent. We will improve the access and/or awareness of transfer events by expanding the publicity and marketing efforts that are directed to transfer students. We will consistently communicate to faculty and staff about transfer events so that they can inform students and publicize events at their campuses. Students attend these events to gather information about the general transfer process, and specific admissions and degree requirements for the university of their choice.

4. How will the unit measure the extent to which planned improvements have resulted in better service or intended outcomes for students or other key stakeholders?

Primary Service Issue	Improvement	Measure	Baseline	Target	Current
Articulation Agreement Process	Raise awareness of articulation process	Number of presentations made	1 presentation per year	2 presentations per year	1 presentation per year
	Create process for developing agreements	Number of requests to create articulation agreement	2 requests per year	6 requests per year	4 requests per year
	Website expansion and enhancement	Number of articulation process web pages	1 articulation process web page	4 new web pages	None
Transfer Data	Increase collected transfer data	Number of data reports received	5 reports	10 reports	4 reports
Degree Completion	Develop reverse transfer process	Number of schools for which a reverse transfer process is in place	2 schools	Increase over previous year	2 schools
Articulation and Transfer Support	Create college-wide Transfer Support Committee	1 committee	1 committee	1 committee (to include academic, student services and transfer student representatives)	None
Access and/or Awareness of Transfer Events/Activities	Increase student participation in ATR-sponsored transfer events	Attendance at events	100 students per year	10% increase over previous year	100 students per year

5. How will the planned improvements align with and contribute to the Mission and Intended Outcomes of Austin Community College?

The planned improvements align with and contribute to the College's Mission and Intended Outcomes by promoting student success. The planned improvements align with the College's values of Communication, Access, Responsiveness, Excellence and Stewardship (CARES) and the Student Success Initiative Goal 4: Increase Degree/Certificate Graduates and Transfer Rate.