

Common Course Numbering Handbook

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

Preface

The Common Course Numbering Handbook was created to assist with Common Course Numbering Subcommittee work for the State of Oregon. HECC staff would like to recognize the members of the first CCN Subcommittees, whose dedication, time, and expertise helped pave the way for improving the transfer experience for students in the State of Oregon. Compiled by Jane Denison-Furness.



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History of CCN in Oregon

Oregon Transfer

The following information represents a compilation of documents tracing the history of improving the transfer experience for college students within the State of Oregon. All documents are noted and linked within this section for reference. Please refer to the original documents for a comprehensive timeline.

The following information has been derived from the [Common Course Numbering House Bill 2979 Report: A Report to the Oregon Legislature](#) (12/1/2013).

Statewide Collaborations on Transfer & Common Course Numbering: An Oregon Timeline

The following timeline provides a high-level overview of the statewide collaborative efforts regarding student transfer and success from 1987 to 2013.

1987	House Bill 2913 was passed by the Oregon Legislative Assembly. The bill called for a committee to study common course numbering. During this time, “outcomes” were not part of the accreditation language.
1988	House Bill 2913 Committee completed the first AAOT Degree Standards.
1992	House Bill 2913 Committee completed the Common Course Numbering list. The Joint Board Articulation Commission (JBAC) replaced the House Bill 2913 Committee and the University System/Community College Coordinating Committee.
1999	JBAC submitted a Course and Credit Transfer Plan to the Oregon Legislative Assembly (House Bill 2387). Recommendations for continued activity included K-16 alignment, communication and access to student information, automated course equivalency and electronic degree audit system, ongoing data collection and research and a commitment to regional partnerships, co-enrollment and dual admissions programs.
2001	The Catalog of Lower Division Collegiate Courses (LDCC) was completed by Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD). The document differentiated “college level” from “lower division collegiate course” and called for the alignment of community college courses with those offered at the state’s universities. JBAC adopted a Credit for Prior Learning and Transfer Credit Limitation Policy. (The LDCC was later built into the process of adding/revising/deleting courses and programs in a program called the Oregon Community College Program Submission System also known as “Webforms”.)
2003	The Oregon State Board of Education endorsed Career Pathways initiative.
2004-05	JBAC Implemented the Oregon Transfer Module (OTM). SB 342 called for the implementation of a statewide course applicability system, which resulted in adoption of a software program, Articulation Transfer Linked Audit System (ATLAS), and alignment of AP, IB and Dual credit. JBAC also agreed to a shared set of Outcomes and Criteria for Transferable General Education Course in Oregon.

2007	Oregon became a Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) state. AAOT was aligned to the learning outcomes and all 17 community colleges offer the same AAOT.
2009	House Bill 3093 was passed and directed the Oregon Joint Board of Education to develop a plan for applied baccalaureate degrees in Oregon. SB 442 was passed and directed the Oregon University System (OUS) on behalf of the Joint Boards of Education, to conduct a study of approaches to increase student enrollment and success for rural Oregon students in institutions of higher education.
2010	Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) Interstate Passport initiative conceived. The initiative was created by WICHE states to advance policies that support seamless transfer of students in the region. Oregon began to apply for Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) state, Common Core State Standards, Win-Win and Reverse Transfer grants, each support the goals of CCN. CCWD launched the Oregon Community College Program Submission System also known as “Webforms” for course/degree submission.
2011	Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities (House Bill 3521) was passed by the Oregon Legislative Assembly. The measure directed the Joint Boards to articulate uniform protocols for transferring credits. The measure also provided for the development of Reverse Transfer programs.
2012	Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) Grant to the State of Oregon supported the exploration of five broad learning outcomes from Associate to Master degrees.
2013	The Oregon Legislative Assembly adopted House Bill 2979. The measure established a workgroup to study how to implement common-course numbering for lower-division undergraduate courses. House Bill 2970 continued the Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities and called for the development of new transfer degrees in areas such as engineering.
2017	House Bill 2988 was passed by the Oregon legislative assembly. The bill attempted to mitigate credit loss by requiring community colleges and public universities to establish foundational curricula and statewide transfer agreements to align pathways for community college students in Oregon as they transfer to an in-state, public university.
2021	SB 233 directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and community colleges and universities to improve academic credit transfer and transfer pathways between Oregon’s public community colleges and universities. The bill established the 15-member Transfer Council and tasked them with developing recommendations on a common course numbering system, Major Transfer Maps, and other credit transfer-related concerns.

The History of Transfer and Degree Completion Work in Oregon

From a [Background Brief on Student Transfer \(2020\)](#)

Rates of baccalaureate degree completion and time to completion vary between community college transfer students and students who began post-secondary education at a four-year public university. In Oregon, 62.4 percent of transfer students who transferred to a public university with at least 24-36 transferred credits complete a bachelor’s degree within four years of transfer. For the most similar population of first-time university students – those who successfully completed two years of university – the six-year graduation rate is 82.4 percent.

Furthermore, 63 percent of Oregon transfer students enter universities with fewer credits than they had earned at community colleges and 35 percent lose more than one term of coursework.¹

Oregon has instituted several transfer degrees and modules during recent decades, including the 90-credit [Associate of Art Oregon Transfer](#) (AAOT), 45-credit [Oregon Transfer Module](#) (OTM), and [Associate of Science Oregon Transfer](#) (ASOT). In addition, many institutions have developed articulated agreements to facilitate successful credit transfer. The Legislature passed a [“Transfer Student Bill of Rights”](#) in 2011, establishing methods to resolve credit transfer issues, which induces the development of uniform, statewide credit transfer pathways. Transfer students often find that while their transfer degree helps them meet the admission standard of the receiving university, their general education and major course of study credits are accepted only on a course-by-course, institution-by-institution basis.

[House Bill 2998](#) attempts to mitigate credit loss by requiring community colleges and public universities to establish foundational curricula and statewide transfer agreements to align pathways for community college students in Oregon as they transfer to an in-state, public university. To build toward a seamless transfer system, House Bill 2998 required the HECC to convene community colleges and universities to advance three legislative requirements:

1. Develop one or more foundational curricula of at least 30 college-level credits, common across Oregon public colleges and universities, that allow community college students who complete such curricula to count each academic credit from such curricula toward their degree requirements at any public university.
2. Provide input to HECC staff on policy and data questions for a report to the Legislative Assembly, including defining “lost academic credit,” recommending the number of foundational curricula and how they will transfer within and across sectors, and determining the criteria for identifying the prioritized majors for unified state transfer agreements (USTAs)² to be developed.
3. Generate a USTA for each major course of study that provides a path for community college students to transfer to any public university with the optimal number of academic credits to complete the degree on-time, without loss of academic credit or requirement to retake a course.

Many community college students face numerous personal and structural barriers to transfer, including financial concerns, limited information, and the lack of coordination between 2-year and 4-year institutions. Through the work of the HECC, we will be focusing the bulk of our analysis on improving coordination between Oregon’s 2-and-4-year institutions. A coordinated credit transfer system is an essential part of creating a more affordable, efficient, and equitable higher education system for our transfer students—students who tend to be first generation, rural, students of color, and/or working parents.³

While House Bill 2998 demands specific deliverables, it does not grant new authority to HECC, remove faculty control of curriculum, or mandate statewide curricula. Instead, it directs the HECC to convene workgroups with a guiding principle of faculty autonomy over faculty work, building upon 30 years of a coordinated effort to streamline transfer processes in Oregon.

The National Landscape

Clear and consistent transfer policies are necessary to ease the process for students and create partnerships between post-secondary institutions. Studies have shown that many students lose credits or must retake courses after they complete the transfer process.⁴ In an effort to decrease credit loss, statewide transfer degrees provide consistency across public institutions and systems in the state. Transfer policies across the nation reflect a spectrum of diverse ideas and policy tools used to facilitate these pathways, including [common course numbering](#), [reverse](#)

¹ Higher Education Coordinating Commission. 2017. *Improving Transfer Pathways in Oregon*. Slides 9-11.

² Unified State Transfer Agreements (USTAs) are now called Major Transfer Maps (MTMs).

³ Pazich, Loni Bordoloi and Estela Bensimon. 2010. *Wisconsin Transfer Equity Study: Final Report*. Center for Urban Education, Rossier School of Education, University of Southern California. Los Angeles: Research Report.

⁴ Monaghan, David B. and Paul Attewell. 2014. “The Community College Route to the Bachelor’s Degree.” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 37(1), 70-91.

[transfer](#), core curriculum, [guaranteed transfer](#), statewide transfer and other avenues to create unified transitions for students in Oregon. According to the Education Commission of the States, 38 states have a transferable core of lower-division courses, 31 states have a statewide common course numbering system, 35 states have statewide guaranteed transfer of an associate’s degree, and 26 states have enacted statewide reverse transfer legislation.⁵ 4As states work toward higher-education attainment goals, Oregon can assess national trends—including transfer policies—to ensure we provide the most successful tools to assist students along their journey from matriculation to degree completion.

Senate Bill 233

Content derived from the [Transfer Council Report to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, January 15, 2022](#)

[Senate Bill 233](#) (2021) directed the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and community colleges and universities listed in [ORS 352.002](#) to improve academic credit transfer and transfer pathways between Oregon’s public community colleges and universities. The bill directed the HECC to establish a 15-member Transfer Council with representation from Oregon’s public universities, community colleges, and from secondary education. The Transfer Council was tasked with developing recommendations on a common course numbering system, Major Transfer Maps, and other credit transfer-related concerns. Included in the legislation was a requirement that the Transfer Council submit a report to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, no later than January 15, 2022, that:

- Describes any subcommittees the Council intends to establish for the purpose of assisting the council in the development of common course numbering;
- Establishes a list of initial courses for the common course numbering system that will first apply during the 2023-2024 academic year;
- Lists the courses or subject areas the council has identified as likely to be included when the common course numbering system first applies to public post-secondary institutions of education during the 2025-2026 academic year;
- Lists the courses or subject areas, which may include career and technical education studies, that the council anticipates adding to the common course numbering system after the 2025- 2026 academic year.

Mandates of Senate Bill 233

SB 233 establishes the following:

- SB 233 requires the establishment of a 15-member Transfer Council.
- SB 233 clarifies authority for CCN and MTM work.
- SB 233 requires common course numbering (CCN) and common learning outcomes to address alignment of highly enrolled lower-division courses.
- SB 233 reduces the number of MTMs required annually from 3 to 1 until 2024 while CCN work is most intensive
- SB 233 requires greater accountability (audit process, reporting, and a student appeals process).

SB 233 requires that the TC recommend a Common Course Numbering system that aligns highly enrolled lower division courses across the state enabling students to graduate in less time and save money.

⁵ “Transfer and Articulation – All State Profiles,” (July 2022). Educational Commission of the States (ECS). Retrieved from <https://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-transfer-and-articulation/>

Finally, because SB 233 requires an audit process, regular reporting, and a student appeals process, there are multiple aspects of accountability that will help ensure the successful implementation and maintenance of the work. Yearly legislative reports should address the following:

- Describe any subcommittees the council intends to establish for the purpose of assisting the council in the development of commonly numbered courses;
- Detail the list of subjects, courses, and subcommittees established for the year;
- List the courses or subject areas the council has identified for the coming year; and
- Lists the courses or subject areas, which may include career and technical education studies, that the council anticipates adding to the common course numbering system after the 2025- 2026 academic year.

CCN Course List Creation

Content derived from the [Transfer Council Report to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, January 15, 2022](#)

The course list created by Registrars from community colleges and OPUs reflects the top transfer courses and the number of times that a course transferred into public universities from an Oregon community college over a period of three years. The Transfer Council voted to use this list as a starting point to identify courses for a common course numbering system.

In the November 2021 meeting, Transfer Council voted on a process/methodology to establish a course list to meet the state mandated deadlines. The process is as follows:

- Use the “Transfer Council CCN List of Courses”
- Attend to sequencing and start with appropriately sequenced courses (ask faculty to review course groupings to see if sequencing/grouping makes sense)
- Look at low hanging fruit (ask faculty if some courses are already aligned and/or common course numbered)
- Refrain from requesting discipline faculty to work on MTMs and CCN at same time (e.g., Psychology MTM and aligning Psychology courses at same time)
- Select courses from “Transfer Council CCN List of Courses” that are commonly prerequisite courses for major or upper-division requirements
- The first round of courses for the 2023-2024 academic year should not be from only one discipline
- The Transfer Council will revisit the methodology annually to strengthen further work, including communication from registrars, faculty, MTMs, curriculum managers and students

The Transfer Council also voted in favor of focusing on at least nine courses for 2023-2024, and then up to at least half of the top 80 transfer course list by the 2025-2026 academic year. Using the “Transfer Council CCN List of Courses,” and the process identified by the TC, HECC staff created a draft list of courses for each deadline. This list, along with a faculty feedback form, was sent to Provosts, Chief Academic Officers, and Dual Credit Coordinators for distribution to relevant faculty. The Faculty Feedback Form contained background information, the registrar course list, and the proposed course list. Faculty were asked to comment on course clustering. They were also asked to assess whether any courses should be added to the list, and which courses are (largely) already aligned. Finally, they had an opportunity to provide open-ended feedback. The survey received 70 responses in total, which included responses from all 7 public universities and all 17 community colleges in addition to responses from faculty involved in dual credit programs. Based on this feedback a more finalized list was created for review and vote by the Transfer Council.

Course lists

The following course lists have been identified for each legislatively mandated deadline by the Transfer Council.

2023-2024 (aligned 2022, sent by Transfer Council to HECC Commission for approval February 2023)

Math

- MTH or MATH 105Z⁶ Math in Society
- MTH or MATH 111Z Precalculus I: Functions
- MTH or MATH 112Z Precalculus II: Trigonometry

Statistics

- ST or STAT 243Z Elementary Statistics I

Writing

- WR 12ZZ Composition I
- WR 122Z Composition II
- WR 227Z Technical Writing

Communication/Public Speaking

- COMM 100Z Introduction to Communication
- COMM 111Z Public Speaking
- COMM 218Z Interpersonal Communication

2025-2026

The following list has been selected by the Transfer Council and will become the work of CCN Subcommittees starting in 2023.

Math Cluster

- Math 251, 252, 253 and 254 (Calculus series)

Spanish Cluster

- Spanish 101, Spanish 102, Spanish 103 (First year Spanish series)

English Cluster

- English 104
- English 105
- English 106 (Intro to literature series: fiction, drama, poetry)

Health and Fitness Cluster

- Convene subcommittee to determine courses

Writing Cluster

- Writing 115 (Intro to Writing)

⁶ “Z” is a designator that identifies a course as being part of the Common Course Numbering System. For more on this, see CCN Reports and Memos on the webpage [Resources for Common Course Numbering](#).

Economics Cluster

- Microeconomics 201
- Microeconomics 202

History Cluster

- History of the US 201
- History of the US 202
- History of the US 203

Chemistry Cluster

- Chemistry 104
- Chemistry 105
- Chemistry 106 (Intro to Chemistry series)

Sociology Cluster

- Sociology 204
- Sociology 205 (General Sociology)

Psychology Cluster

- Psychology 101
- Psychology 201
- Psychology 202 (General Psychology)

Biology Cluster

- Convene group to discuss 211, 212, 213, 221, 222, 223

Business Cluster

- Convene group to discuss sequence
- Business Cluster: Business 101 (Intro to Business)
- Business 211
- Business 213 (Principles of Accounting series)

Beyond 2025-2026

The transfer council also voted on the following approach to selecting courses after the 2025-2026 deadline.

- Revisit highly transferred course list & prioritize completion of courses on the new course list such as Biology, Art, Sociology, Anthropology, etc.
- Prioritize the courses most taken at community colleges
- Convene subcommittee to discuss approach to CTE courses.
- Convene subcommittee to discuss approach to CTE courses

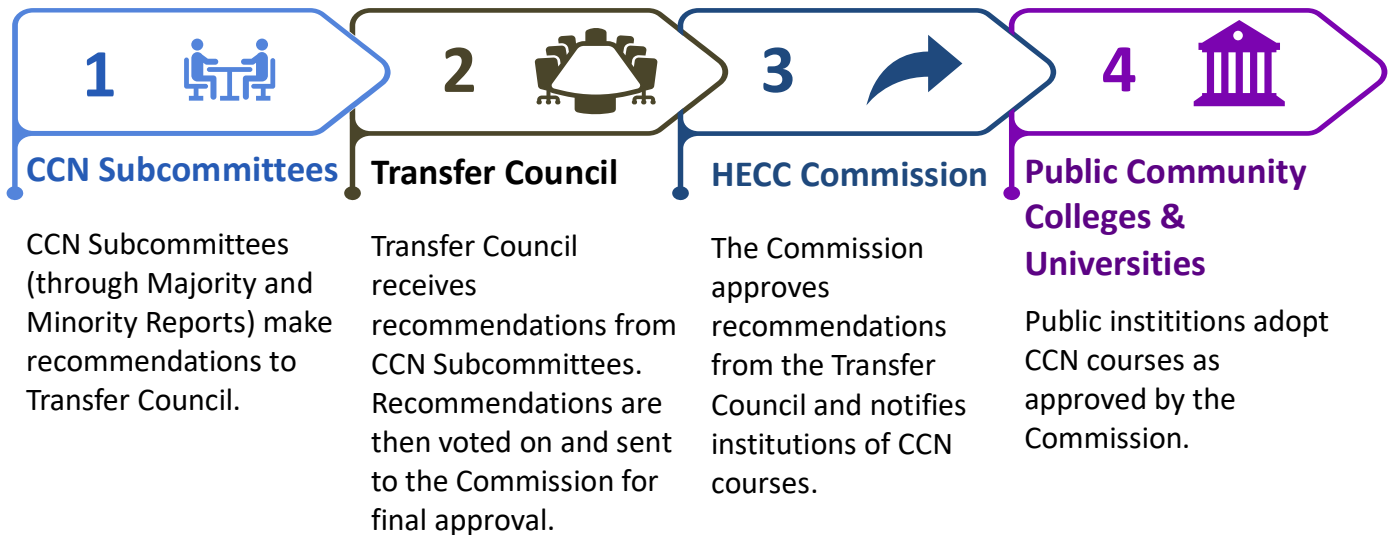
Common Course Numbering Approval Process

Recommendations on course alignment are submitted to Transfer Council in Recommendation Reports or in Minority Reports. Under Senate Bill 233 Section 6 (7)(B)(c):

“Two or more members of a subcommittee who disagree with recommendations that are submitted to the council on a subject that will be submitted by the council to the commission under section 8 (1)(d)(A) to (D) of this 2021 Act may jointly submit a minority report to the council that contains alternate recommendations. A minority report created under this paragraph shall be submitted to the council with the majority recommendations.”

The following graphic communicates this process, from CCN Subcommittees to adoption by Oregon public community colleges and universities.

Common Course Numbering Approval Process



CCN Subcommittees

Content for CCN Subcommittees has been derived from the [Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee Charge](#) and [Common Course Number System Subcommittee Charge](#), unless otherwise noted.

Appointment to a Subcommittee and Terms of Service

From SB 233 Section 6(5)(B): Transfer Council “may appoint any individual employed by a public university...or a community college operated under ORS chapter 341, including faculty, registrars, academic advisors and academic administrators...Appointment to a subcommittee established under this subsection does not entitle an individual to vote as a member of the council.”

Members of the Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee serve for two years.

All members are expected to maintain an active level of engagement on the subcommittee.

Groups will propose a calendar of maintenance to ensure the continued alignment of the courses.

Nomination to a Subcommittee

At the end of each calendar year, Transfer Council Co-Chairs will send out a request for nominations. CAOs, Provosts, faculty associations, and relevant unions will be notified.

Bios (including self-nominations) are reviewed by CAOs/Provosts, sent to HECC Staff for further review, then forwarded to Transfer Council. Transfer Council will consider nominations and appoint subcommittee members by vote.

Individuals nominated to serve on a subcommittee may be asked to serve as a “bench” for replacements, to fill vacancies that occur during the year.

FAQ and Bio-sketch documents will be included with the email asking for nominations. Interested individuals, CAOs, Provosts, and union/labor folks are asked to complete the one-page bio-sketch document before sending to either the Chief Information Officer (CIA) Chair or the Chair of Provosts’ Council.

All nominations to CCN subcommittees will then be sent to the HECC, who will nominate individuals to the Transfer Council for a vote. For more on nominations to CCN Subcommittees, see the Nomination Process: CCN Subcommittees on the [Resources for CCN](#) webpage.

CCN Subcommittee Member Recruitment & Nomination Process



NOTIFICATION

send a request for nominations. CAOs, Provosts, faculty associations, and relevant unions will be notified.



NOMINATIONS

Bios (including self-nominations) are reviewed by CAOs/Provosts, sent to HECC Staff for further review, then forwarded to Transfer Council.



VOTE

Transfer Council considers nominations and appoints subcommittee members by vote.

Note: In order to recruit members for CCN Subcommittees, Transfer Council and HECC staff encourage those making nominations to consider both a nominee’s expertise in credit transfer issues and the [HECCs equity lens](#).

Transfer Council will consider expertise by discipline, diversity by region, and institution size when voting on members.

Please contact TC Co-chairs Teresa Rivenes or Susan Jeffords if you have questions at

TransferCouncil@hecc.oregon.gov

Governance and Policies

Representation (from Senate Bill 233)

The CCN Faculty Subcommittee must have equal representation from universities and community colleges [from SB 233]:

- Transfer Council determined this will be 8 representatives from Oregon universities and 8 from Oregon's community colleges.

Voting

The following rules will govern voting in subcommittees:

- If members vote on something that is not a recommendation to the council, a simple majority can be employed.
- A majority of the members of a subcommittee established under subsection (5) of this section constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business of the subcommittee.
- Official action by a subcommittee on recommendations to be made to the council on a subject that will be submitted by the council to the commission under section 8 (1)(d)(A) to (D) of this 2021 Act requires the approval of three-fifths of the members of the subcommittee. (10 out of 16 members).

Reports

The following guidelines will be used for generating reports to TC:

- Two or more members of a subcommittee who disagree with recommendations that are submitted to the council on a subject that will be submitted by the council to the commission under section 8 (1)(d)(A) to (D) of this 2021 Act may jointly submit a minority report to the council that contains alternate recommendations. A minority report created under this paragraph shall be submitted to the council with the majority recommendations.

If faculty cannot reach agreement on tasks, proposed solutions shall be brought to the Transfer Council in a summary document that contains the issue and each subcommittee member's position on the issue.

Faculty CCN Subcommittee Charge

[A] Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee oversees the alignment of course learning outcomes and credits. The subcommittee is also tasked with creating a course description for each course the group aligns. Finally, the subcommittee is tasked with making a recommendation on a course number, title, and prefix to the Transfer Council that [is] in alignment with the recommendations of the Common Course Number System Subcommittee (see the Common Course Number System Subcommittee charge). The group is required to meet as many times as is necessary to align the designated number of courses by the legislatively mandated deadlines. For example, for the 2023-2024 deadline, each relevant group will need to align approximately three courses so that students may be able to take them by 2023-2024.

Faculty nominated for Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittees are tasked with the following:

- Aligning designated course learning outcomes. All courses must be 100% aligned to these outcomes; however, a faculty can add outcomes if the added outcomes do not change the agreed upon statewide course learning outcomes and associated credits awarded.
- Members of the Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee must align the number of credits for which a course is offered.

- Members of the Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee must make recommendations on a single course number, prefix, and title, to the Transfer Council that are in alignment with the recommendations of the Common Course Number System Subcommittee (see the Common Course Number System Subcommittee charge).
- Members of the Faculty Course Alignment Subcommittee shall create a course description for each course the group aligns.

Systems and Operations CCN Subcommittee Charge

The Common Course Numbering System (CCNS) Subcommittee is charged with the development and implementation of a CCNS. The framework for the CCNS shall include course numbers, titles, prefixes, and accommodate descriptions and core common outcomes as identified for the course by the Faculty Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee will make recommendations to the Transfer Council to address any identified recommendation or needs. The Subcommittee is encouraged to reach out to various resources and stakeholders during the development and implementation of the CCNS. The Subcommittee will be convened and supported by HECC staff.

On behalf of the Transfer Council, the CCNS Subcommittee oversees the development and implementation of the CCNS. The group shall consider a system that creates a framework for course numbers, titles, and prefixes whenever possible. The framework should accommodate the course descriptions and common course outcomes as identified by the Faculty Subcommittee. This recommendation for the framework shall be recommended to the Transfer Council prior to the start of implementation.

The Subcommittee shall use the following principles to guide its development and implementation of a Statewide CCNS:

- The full participation of institutional and other key stakeholders in the review process is vital to achieving sound, equitable, student-focused policy.
- Recommendations are informed by clearly defined and currently available research and data.
- The CCNS applies to all institutions with an emphasis on underrepresented populations.
- The CCNS focuses on improving the needs of underserved populations.

Reports

All CCN Subcommittee recommendations will be communicated to the Transfer Council (TC) through one of two reports: a Recommendation Report or a Minority Report. To submit a report, the Chair/Co-chairs for a CCN Subcommittee must ask to be added to the TC agenda, and Subcommittee Chair/Co-chairs must attend the scheduled TC meeting to present all reports.

Recommendation Reports

After reaching consensus and voting on the required components for alignment in the TC charge for subcommittees, CCN Subcommittees will submit a report to TC with their final recommendations, including a vote tally for each component. This will be called a CCN Subcommittee Recommendation Report and will use the CCN Subcommittee Recommendation Report Template shared in the group Google drive.

Minority Reports

According to SB233: “Two or more members of a subcommittee who disagree with recommendations that are submitted to the council on a subject that will be submitted by the Council to the commission under section 8 (1)(d)(A) to (D) of this 2021 Act may jointly submit a minority report to the Council that contains alternate recommendations. A minority report created under this paragraph shall be submitted to the Council along with the majority recommendations.”

Minority reports should be authored by parties who do not vote to support a majority recommendation and will use the CCN Subcommittee Minority Report Template shared in the group Google drive to generate a report.

Framework for Common Course Numbering

The Systems and Operations Subcommittee established the following guiding principles:

- Do the most good for the most students.
- Make the most meaningful changes and create the fewest negative impacts.
- Courses in the Common Course Number Numbering (CCN) framework are clearly identifiable.
- Meet minimum requirements of the legislation.
- The framework should be sustainable.

The following framework was created by the Systems and Operations Subcommittee and adopted by the Transfer Council on August 18, 2022. These guidelines, authorized by SB233 and the Common Course Number Subcommittee Charge, establish the structure for Faculty CCN Subcommittees regarding the creation of a common course designator, course subject code (prefix), course number, course description, and course title.

Summary of the Framework

The following chart provides a summary of information on the selection of an alpha character to signify a common course numbered (CCN) course. The Systems & Operations Subcommittee calls this character a course “designator.”

The Systems & Operations Subcommittee conducted research to determine the designator that met the following criteria:

1. used infrequently,
2. would cause the least disruption for institutions currently using the selected designator, and
3. is feasible, considering the four student information systems used by all 24 public institutions.

Research revealed that “Z” is the optimal choice, given these parameters (e.g., MTH 111Z).

Recommendation	Vote
Course Designator: Z	Approved 15 yes votes, 0 no votes

Chart approved by CCN Systems & Operations Co-chairs Julia Pomerenk and Chris Sweet, 10/18/2022

The following chart provides a summary of the framework for course numbers, titles, prefixes, and course descriptions for CCN.

Recommendation		Vote
Course Designator	There must be a course designator in the framework.	Approved 13 yes votes, 3 no votes
Subject Code (Prefix)	Schools are encouraged to align subject codes where feasible. If the subject matches, schools may retain their existing subject codes even if they are abbreviated differently (i.e., HIST and HST are both allowable). <i>*See the August 11, 2022 Memo for additional information.</i>	Approved 13 yes votes, 3 no votes

<p>Course Number</p>	<p>Include a uniform designator in the course number suffix as part of all CCN course numbers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g., Math 111A <p>Change course numbers when necessary to align across all Oregon community colleges and universities.</p>	<p>Approved 13 yes votes, 3 no votes</p>
<p>Course Description</p>	<p>Individual institutional catalog course descriptions must match the baseline course description as approved by faculty subcommittees.</p> <p>Additions to course descriptions may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stylistic nuances that do not change the meaning of the description, based on institutional guidelines • Course requisites • Other housekeeping items • Substantive (less than 25% of the course) additional statements that summarize any local course outcomes 	<p>Approved 13 yes votes, 3 no votes</p>
<p>Course Title</p>	<p>Course titles should match among institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing for some institutional stylistic nuances (e.g., FUNDAMENTALS OF ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS I, FUNDAMENTALS OF ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS 1, FUNDAMENTALS OF ELEMENTARY MATH I) <p>The course title will not be the required primary designator for the common course numbering system courses. Once the titles match, then institutions would be able to include institutional stylistic nuances, such as using Arabic or Roman numerals; abbreviating or not abbreviating words; adding or not adding additional elements, such as special characters or letters that designate university requirements.</p> <p><i>*See the August 11, 2022 Memo for additional information.</i></p>	<p>Approved 13 yes votes, 3 no votes</p>

More information on how the framework was created can be found in the [Summary of CCN Systems & Operations Recommendation Report and Memo](#) submitted to the Transfer Council on August 18, 2022.

Student Information Systems (SIS)

The following chart contains information about Student Information Systems (SIS) used by public community colleges and universities in Oregon, as communicated by SIS representatives (August 2022).

Student Information System (SIS)	Use of special characters (Designator)	Prefix Field (Subject Code)	Course Title Field
Banner	Do not use the following symbols; # / + - & @ \$! , * % Do not add a space before or after designator	4	30 (short title) 100 (long title)
Ellucian Colleague	No response	7	30 (short title) Nearly unlimited for long title
Anthology	Special characters can be used	Including prefix & course number = 12	75 characters
Jenzabar	Only alphanumeric	30	35 (short title) 35 (long title)
Homegrown/ Conclusive	Do not use the following symbols; % , ' ^	N/A	50

Writing Learning Outcomes

Used with permission (2022) from Seattle University's ["A Guide to Learning Outcomes"](#) from the Center for Faculty Development.

What are Learning Outcomes?

Learning outcomes tell us what all successful students will achieve by the end of a program or course. In other words, they are the specific intentions of a program or course, written in specific terms. "Successful" here means that the student has passed the program or course. Learning outcomes are therefore written at the *threshold level of a bare pass* [emphasis added], not at the level of a top grade. In that way, we can be confident that all students who leave us with a degree qualification – even if only by the skin of their teeth – have met the outcomes we have identified for our programs.

Learning Outcomes at the Course Level

Unlike program outcomes, there is greater flexibility over course learning outcomes. It's still worth bearing in mind that all learning outcomes for a course need to be graded, so having fewer, more focused outcomes helps keep a course workload more manageable both for students and for faculty. Our general CETL recommendation is to write between four and six outcomes for courses on the quarter system, and between four and eight for those on semesters. If in doubt, write fewer learning outcomes for your course, not more. (See "Whittling down the curriculum" below.)

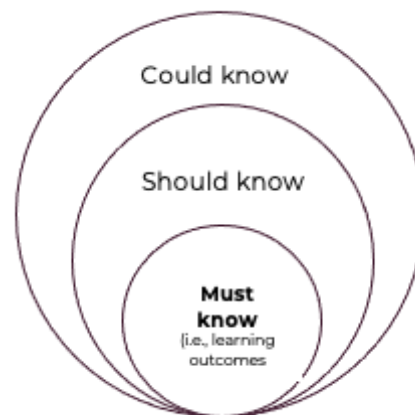
The idea is then that your graded assignments (and subsequently grading criteria) are directly aligned with the learning outcomes so that students can demonstrate meeting the outcomes through graded work. Once you have worked out the learning outcomes and graded assignments for a course, you're then ready to decide what learning and teaching activities to use in your classes; these activities are then specifically intended to help students practice the intellectual and practical skills they need in order to complete the assignments successfully and thereby attain the learning outcomes for the course.

Again, the outcomes process ideally helps us focus on student learning, rather than on our teaching. This alignment between learning outcome, learning and teaching activities, assessment tasks and assessment criteria makes the whole process transparent to students, and helps you ensure that there is coherence in your course. The process is called "constructive alignment" or "backward design" in the literature.

Whittling Down the Curriculum

Your learning outcomes will need to specify the minimum acceptable standard for a student to be able to pass a course or program (threshold level). This means that it is important to express learning outcomes in terms of the essential learning for a program or course, so it's best to have a small number of learning outcomes that are of central importance, not a large number of peripheral outcomes.

Most of us find we have more items that we would like to include than would be manageable as outcomes. To whittle that list down, it helps to categorize them as topics or skills that students must know to pass the course, should know, or could know, as shown in the graphic. In all likelihood, only items in the "must know" category will become learning outcomes. The other items may be ones that would help differentiate student work at the level of a pass from that at a higher level.



Prioritizing course content.
Adapted from Thomas, Davies, Openshaw,
& Bird, 1963/2007, p. 42.

Writing Learning Outcomes

Sentence stem

Start *program learning outcomes* with the sentence stem:

“On successful completion of this program, you will be able to ...”

Start *course learning outcomes* with the sentence stem:

“On successful completion of this course (i.e., by passing this course), you will be able to ...”

Note that the learning outcomes address students directly using the second person “you.” This makes them more immediate to learners and suits a learning-centered approach. [Note: The sentence stem can easily be **eliminated so that learning outcomes follow a similar format at an institution.**]

Action verbs

The sentence stems also lead you to use action verbs that show what students can demonstrate that they have learned or achieved the outcome.

To help you write your outcomes, you can use the revised version of Bloom’s Taxonomy on page [X]. The idea behind the taxonomy is that tasks become increasingly intellectually demanding as you move to the right (hence the representation as a staircase), with “create” being the most demanding category.

(Bloom’s Taxonomy is simply an organizing structure and examples of verbs that save you the trouble of finding your thesaurus. It’s helpful not only for writing outcomes, but also for designing assignments.)

Selecting Action Verbs That Will Help You and Your Students

All six levels of the taxonomy can be used at ALL educational stages. As students progress through their programs, the issues they address in assignments steadily become more complex. (Imagine increasingly deep stairs on the Bloom’s Taxonomy “staircase.”)

Be aware that the bottom two levels (remember, understand) are undemanding and often tedious – both as a learner and as a professor with a pile of grading. Assignments at the lower levels of the taxonomy are also more likely to be viewed by students as “busy-work,” which can in turn demotivate learners.

If you ask students to fulfill the four higher levels (apply, analyze, evaluate, create), then they will necessarily have attained the lower levels. In other words, writing outcomes at those four higher levels means that the lower two are automatically incorporated. (For instance: An acting student will necessarily need to know her lines in a play [to] create a credible performance. Students must have understood Keynesian economic theory [to] apply it appropriately to a given scenario. In a graded assignment, you can also require students to explain something in their own words before they move onto the applying, analyzing, evaluating, or creating, but the relevant outcome need only refer to the highest level.)

Not all verbs on the taxonomy will work as outcomes. Verbs about basic cognition (e.g., know, understand, comprehend, appreciate, recognize) cannot easily be assessed through assignments. Studies have found that students are quite capable of giving the impression they understand or know something, but without being required to demonstrate it beyond memorizing or paraphrasing, we can’t be sure that they are able to apply the knowledge to new situations. Again, writing outcomes at higher levels of the taxonomy enables you to verify that students genuinely do understand the material.

Verbs about processes (e.g., develop, acquire, improve, enhance, grow) are also problematic because learning outcomes represent a snapshot of attainment, not the distance traveled to reach that point. Focus on the minimum endpoint you want all your students to reach.

Keeping it Manageable

Try to use only **one verb per outcome** [emphasis added] to keep the grading and assessment process straightforward and focused. The more components you add to an outcome, the more difficult it becomes to show

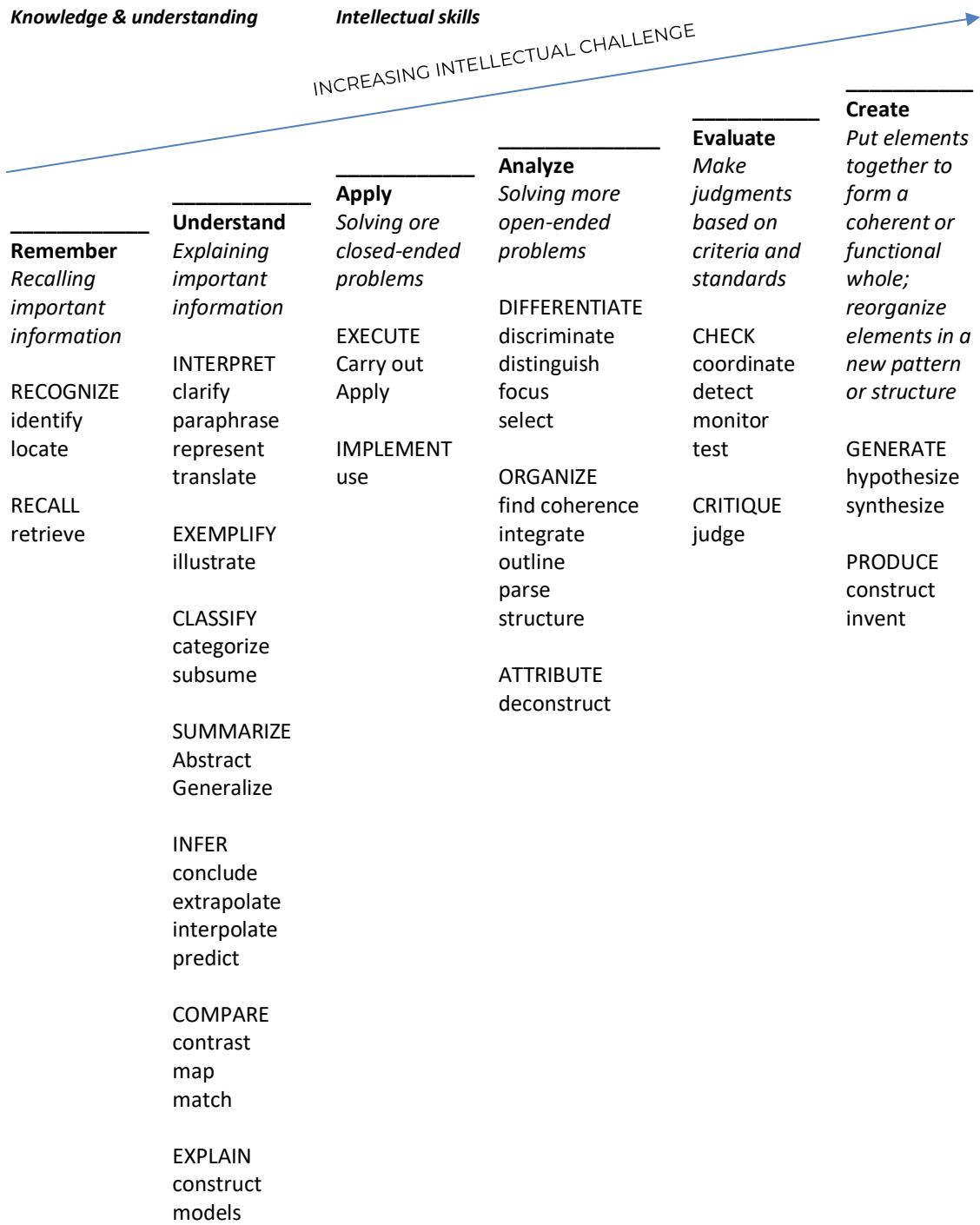
whether students have attained the entire outcome. This is one of the typical technical errors that make learning outcomes and their assessment feel unhelpful, time-consuming, and like a box-checking exercise.

Common Errors and Suggested Remedies

- ⇒ **Common error #1:** Writing learning outcomes at the aspirational level of an A grade. *Instead: Write them at the level of the lowest passing grade.*
- ⇒ **Common error #2:** Writing learning outcomes at the bottom of Bloom's Taxonomy for introductory courses. *Instead: Aim as high up Bloom's Taxonomy as possible for the course, bearing in mind that the issues under discussion are less complex or nuanced than in more advanced courses.*
- ⇒ **Common error #3:** Writing learning outcomes using verbs about cognition, like "know" and "understand." *Instead: Focus instead on how students will demonstrate that understanding in assignments.*
- ⇒ **Common error #4:** Writing learning outcomes using verbs about process, like "develop" and "improve." *Instead: Focus instead on the end point all students need to reach, not the route they take to get there.*
- ⇒ **Common error #5:** Writing learning outcomes so broad as to be ungradable. *Instead: Try to use just one verb per outcome and to be relatively specific about the topic it relates to.*
- ⇒ **Common error #6:** Writing learning outcomes so specific as to be inflexible. *Instead: Allow yourself some wiggle-room so that you can, for instance, change the nature of an assignment that will demonstrate students' learning (e.g., changing from a presentation to a paper, from theory X to theory Y).*

2001 Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain (1956)

Comments in italics are our own brief explanations of the differences between the six levels of the taxonomy. The list of verbs here is not exhaustive, and some appear under more than one heading.



Source: Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R., Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. Abridged Version. New York: Longman.

Examples of Learning Outcomes from Various Disciplines

If you see an outcome here that feels pitched at the right level of intellectual challenge, try swapping the content details with details from your own subject; the outcome will likely work for you. These examples are organized under (a) knowledge and understanding (i.e., rather boring for students and for faculty), (b) intellectual skills, (c) discipline-specific skills, and (d) transferable skills.

Intentionally inadequate examples have been included, so that you can see what problematic outcomes might look like.

Outcome/domain	Discipline
Knowledge and understanding (<i>Not recommended; These are generally tedious for students and for you</i>)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify the theories of learning that are implicit in your current approach to higher education 	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss Romantic poetry in relation to the major themes of Romanticism 	Literature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the underlying principles governing gene transmission and expression 	Health Sciences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain the evolution of a landscape from its pre-to-post-industrialized state 	Built Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate example: comprehend the fundamental concepts of structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering. [too broad, un-assessable verb] 	Engineering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate example: state the six categories in Bloom's Taxonomy. [too narrow, dull] 	Education
Intellectual skills (<i>apply, analyze, evaluate, create</i>)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organize your information to demonstrate philosophical affinities and variances between Kabbalah and Sufism 	Religious Studies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use Labeling Theory to explain a mental health case study 	Psychology/Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appraise the key drivers in market segmentation in a case study 	Marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create criteria to assess Homeland Security implementation of immigration law 	Law/Political Science
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply Kolb's model of learning to the design of a teaching program. 	Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> apply statistical and numerical principles to solve a thermodynamic problem 	Engineering
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess the suitability of a range of painting techniques for a specific environment 	Fine Art
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compare Hofstede's approach to culture with that of the GLOBE study 	Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrate, using phonetics, the problem of sigmatism in children 	Speech Therapy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyze the theme of Vergangenheitsbewältigung in post-WW2 German novels 	Literature
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate different performers' approaches to Baroque ornamentation 	Music
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> design a piece of software that conforms to specified criteria 	Computer Science

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- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| ● plan an experiment to test the adhesive properties of given chemical compounds | <i>Chemistry</i> |
| ● justify your allocation of scarce resources in treating patients in an ER setting | <i>Nursing</i> |
| ● appraise the usability and functionality of selected web design packages | <i>Graphic Design</i> |
| ● devise a management plan for a client with aphasia to achieve a state goal | <i>Health Sciences</i> |
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Subject-specific skills

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| ● employ appropriate CAD Skills to prepare a contour drawing of a site | <i>Engineering</i> |
| ● use web-creation tools to produce an interactive educational website for use by young children | <i>Computer Science</i> |
| ● assess the validity of alternative market research techniques to support a proposed new product launch | <i>Marketing</i> |
| ● perform atonal and/or syncopated music accurately at sight | <i>Music</i> |
| ● present, in a law court setting a submission on an ethical issue using a cogent argument | <i>Law</i> |
| ● undertake a standard medical examination, including taking a blood sample | <i>Nursing</i> |
| ● apply key methods and concepts in historical and historiographic analysis | <i>History</i> |
| ● demonstrate appropriate health and safety procedures when dealing with toxic substances | <i>Natural Sciences/Fine Arts</i> |
| ● make evaluative judgments based on radiographical images | <i>Diagnostic Ultrasound</i> |
| ● use laboratory and workshop equipment to generate data in a given setting | <i>Lab-based courses</i> |
| ● prepare full engineering plans for a self-designed energy conversation structure | <i>Mechanical Engineering</i> |
| ● justify informed decisions on wards of court with respect to accepted social protocols and the needs of the individual | <i>Social Work</i> |
| ● record the geomorphological features of a given setting | <i>Earth Sciences</i> |
| ● Inadequate Example: write, read, speak, and orally understand one Scandinavian language at high or near-native levels of proficiency [too many components] | <i>Modern Languages</i> |
-

Key transferable skills

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| ● express yourself in writing for different professional and academic audiences | <i>Any discipline</i> |
| ● communicate effectively in writing and orally | |
| ● work effectively as part of a team | |
| ● conduct yourself appropriately and effectively in a professional setting | |
| ● demonstrate cultural sensitivity towards others' perspectives and beliefs | |
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- evaluate reflectively your own learning and personal planning processes
 - demonstrate cultural sensitivity towards others' perspectives and beliefs
 - evaluate reflectively your own learning and personal planning processes
 - demonstrate initiative through independent work
 - manage your resources and time
 - assess your own levels of performance and commitment to learning
 - apply relevant mathematical and statistical skills
 - appraise data you have located from a range of paper-based and online sources
 - use a spreadsheet application at an advanced level
 - reference all sources consistently and accurately using the standard system for this field of study
-

Further references:

Gosling, D. & Moon J. (2001) *How to use learning outcomes using assessment criteria*. London: SEEC.

Moon, J. (2002). *How to use level descriptors*. London: SEEC.

Quality Assurance Agency (2001). *Credit and HE qualifications*. Gloucester, UK: QAA.

Walsh, A., & Webb, M. (2002). *A guide to writing learning outcomes*. London: Learning & Teaching Development Unit, Kingston University.

For more information on selecting verbs and domains of learning, see [Purdue University's IMPACT Resources for Teaching and Learning](#).

Student Appeals Process

In progress

Guiding legislation:

From SB 233 Section 8(1)(C): Make recommendations to the commission on the adoption of rules necessary to:

“Establish a process that enables a student to appeal a decision by a public postsecondary institution of education to refuse the transfer of academic credit.”

Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) for CCN

In progress

Oregon law defines "rule" as "any agency directive, standard, regulation or statement of general applicability that implements, interprets or prescribes law or policy, or policy, or describes the procedure or practice requirements of any agency." ORS 183.310(9). Agencies may adopt, amend, repeal or renumber rules, permanently or temporarily (up to 180 days), using the procedures outlined in the [Oregon Attorney General's Administrative Law Manual](#).

From Senate Bill 233 (2021), Section 2 (3)(b): The commission shall "(b) Adopt rules necessary to establish an initial common course numbering system consisting of the courses described in subsection (2)(b) of this section in a manner that ensures the system will first apply to the 2023-2024 academic year."

And from Section 2(4): "Each public post-secondary institution of education in this state shall be in compliance with rules adopted by the commission under this section by the beginning of the 2023-2024 academic year."

CCN Maintenance & Assessment

In progress

Guiding Legislation

- (d)(A) Establish and maintain the common course numbering system described in section 1 of this 2021 Act;
- (B) Establish an **auditing process** to determine how well public post-secondary institutions of education are complying with the common course numbering system;
- (C) Establish a process that enables a student to **appeal a decision** by a public postsecondary institution of education to refuse the transfer of academic credit;
- (D) Ensure the **cooperation and successful implementation** of the common course numbering system by all public post-secondary institutions of education;
- (E) Ensure the coordination, establishment, alignment, effectiveness and maintenance of foundational curricula described in ORS 350.400 and unified statewide transfer agreements described in ORS 350.404; and
- (F) Ensure that each community college and each public university listed in ORS 352.002 submits an annual report to the commission that includes all information necessary for the commission to determine the effect of common course numbering, foundational curricula, and unified statewide transfer agreements on a demographically and institutionally disaggregated basis.

Acronym List

Acronym	Term
AAOT	Associate of Art Transfer
ASOT	Associate of Science Transfer
ATLAS	statewide course applicability system
BA	Bachelor's degree
CC	Community College
CCN	Common Course Numbering
CCNS	Common Course Numbering System
CCWD	Community Colleges and Workforce Development
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DQP	Degree Qualifications Profile
HB	House Bill
HECC	Higher Education Coordinating Commission
JBAC	Joint Boards Articulation Commission
LDCC	Lower Division Collegiate Courses
LEAP	Liberal Education and America's Promise
OPU	Oregon Public University
ORS	Oregon Revised Statute
OTM	Oregon Transfer Module
SB	Senate Bill
SIS	Student Information Systems
TC	Transfer Council
USTA	Unified State Transfer Agreements
WICHE	Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education