

The logo features a blue graduation cap with a yellow and red arch underneath, and a red triangle pointing upwards.

**Oregon
Transfer Compass**

SENATE BILL 233 (2021)

TRANSFER COUNCIL REPORT TO THE HIGHER
EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

JANUARY 15, 2022

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SB 233 REPORT TO THE COMMISSION

Senate Bill 233 (2021) directs 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 directs 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 is tasked with developing recommendations on a common course numbering system, Major Transfer Maps, and other credit transfer-related concerns. Included in the legislation is a requirement that the Transfer Council submits 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; 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.

This report contains a brief summary of the work leading up to the development of Senate Bill 233 and the progress the Transfer Council has made, including on the aforementioned mandated elements of the report. Finally, the report concludes with next steps on the Common Course Numbering System work.

INTRODUCTION

The Transfer Council was established under Senate Bill 233 (2021) with a focus on transfer and articulation across the public institutions in Oregon. Building upon the transfer work previously completed under HB 2998 (2017), the Council is charged to develop recommendations on a common course numbering (CCN) system, Major Transfer Map (MTM) work, and other credit transfer-related concerns. Senate Bill 233 requires the HECC to establish, by rule, a common course numbering system and system of transfer and articulation, based on recommendations from the Transfer Council.

Efforts to streamline transfer in Oregon—including efforts to establish a Common Course Numbering System – can be traced back to 1987 when House Bill 2913 mandated a Common Course Numbering system, but resulted in a commonly numbered course list instead. Common Course Numbering was again addressed by the legislature with the passage of House Bill 2979, which tasked the Higher Education Coordinating Commission with convening a workgroup to study strategies for establishing and implementing a Common Course Numbering System between public colleges and universities. This resulted in a report to the legislature.¹

Aside from efforts to establish Common Course Numbering, Oregon has also focused on streamlining transfer through a focus on transfer pathways. For example, Oregon has instituted several transfer degrees and tools over the last 20 years, including the 90-credit Associate of Arts 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 helped pave the way for House Bill 2998 (2017), which focused on uniform, statewide credit transfer pathways in a major.

House Bill 2998 (HB 2998), which passed in 2017, directed the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and Oregon’s community colleges and public universities listed in ORS 352.002 to improve transfer pathways between two-year public colleges to four-year public universities. Specifically, HB 2998 required the HECC to convene community colleges and universities to develop common foundational curriculum and to develop unified statewide transfer agreements (USTAs) for each major course of study (3 USTAs per year).

Since the passage of HB 2998 in 2017, progress has been made on the development of foundational curriculum (FC) and unified statewide transfer agreements (USTAs):

- Foundational Curriculum and USTAs were rebranded to have more student-friendly names. Foundational Curriculum are now referred to as “Core Transfer Maps” and USTAs are now referred to as “Major Transfer Maps”;
- An advisory body was created, called the Oregon Transfer and Articulation Committee (OTAC), which was comprised of representatives from key institutional roles from community colleges and universities;
- Five MTMs have been approved by OTAC, and new degrees for these MTMs have been approved by the Commission (Biology, English Literature, Elementary Education, Business, and Computer Science); and

¹ Higher Education Coordinating Commission. 2013. *Common Course Numbering House Bill 2979 Report: A Report to the Oregon Legislature*. Report to the Oregon Legislature.

https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Reports/CCN_Report2013.pdf

- Three MTMs are in progress: Sociology, Psychology, and Human Development and Family Studies.

While progress has been made, work on HB 2998 (2017) revealed some significant gaps in the legislation. In addition, it was recognized that furthering progress on transfer and implementation of new pathways required an update to the framework under which institutions do this difficult work. For example, HB 2998 (2017) work has surfaced the need for clear expectations for alignment, greater accountability mechanisms, and monitoring, reporting and adjusting. Fortunately, Senate Bill 233 addresses many of the challenges faced with HB 2998 (2017) work.

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 in order address alignment of highly enrolled lower-division courses.
- SB 233 reduces the number of MTMs required annually from 3 to 1.
- SB 233 requires greater accountability (audit process, reporting, and a student appeals process).

The Transfer Council (TC) makes recommendations to the Commission where administrative rules can be adopted as needed or mandated. This helps clarify lines of authority and creates a structure where decisions are binding on institutions. The requirement of SB 233 that the TC create a Common Course Numbering system helps address some of the alignment challenges faced in the MTM work, and it will make credit transfer more transparent for students. The inclusion of a reduction of MTMs allows the MTM momentum to continue without overwhelming the faculty and other stakeholders involved in both CCN and MTM work. 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.

This report addresses the first key reporting deadline. Specifically, the Transfer Council is required to 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 the 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; 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.

The remainder of this report addresses progress on these reporting requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

THE TRANSFER COUNCIL

Senate Bill 233 (2021) establishes a Transfer Council composed of 15 voting members and one non-voting ex-officio member from across public education sectors in Oregon. The Transfer Council can designate advisory subcommittees as needed in order to fulfill the mandate to make recommendations on a common course numbering system, Major Transfer Maps, and other credit transfer concerns.

In order to recruit members for the Transfer Council (TC), HECC staff contacted key stakeholder groups who represent the legislatively mandated positions listed in SB 233. Each group was asked to nominate one person and at least one alternate and to write a short description of their qualifications. Groups were encouraged to consider both a nominee's expertise in credit transfer issues and the HECC's equity lens. HECC staff also notified each group that attention to diversity by region, institution size, and by institution will be considered when the HECC finalizes the list. The final list was presented to the Commission for approval.

Recruitment for the TC began in late July of 2021, the list of members was finalized in late September, and the TC had its first meeting on October 21, 2021. To date, the TC has met three times.

COURSE LIST CREATION

In anticipation of the passage and fast approaching deadlines of [Senate Bill 233](#), a cross sector group that included administrators, faculty, and registrars from public universities and community colleges, as well as HECC staff, convened to identify areas of work that could begin in advance of the passage of SB 233 to better ensure the successful implementation of the bill. One area of work was the creation of a draft course list. The list was created by registrars and 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 of the Transfer Council, the 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)
- Not ask discipline faculty to work on MTMs and CCN at same time (e.g. Psychology MTM and courses at same time)
- Select courses from “Transfer Council CCN List of Courses” that are commonly pre-requisite 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 for further work (including communication from registrars, faculty, MTMs, curriculum managers and students)

The Transfer Council also voted in favor of focusing on at least 9 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, registrar course list, and the proposed course list. Faculty were asked to comment on course clustering, if any courses are not included that should be, which courses are largely aligned, and they had an opportunity to provide open-ended feedback. The survey had 70 responses in total, which included responses from all 7 public universities and all 17 CCs. There were also 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 LIST

The following courses have been identified for each legislatively mandated deadline by the Transfer Council:

2023-2024

Math:

Math 105 (Contemporary Math)

Math 243 (Stats I)

Math 244 (Stats II)

Math 111 (College Algebra)

Math 112 (Elementary Functions)

Writing:

Writing 121 (Composition)

Writing 122 (Argumentative/Comp)

Writing 227 (Technical Writing)

Communication/Public Speaking:

Communications public speaking

Interpersonal Communications

Communications 100

2025-2026

Math Cluster: Math 251, 252, 253 and 254 (Calc. 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: Writing 115 (Intro to writing)

Economics Cluster: Microeconomics 201, Microeconomics 202

History Cluster: History of the U.S. 201, 202, 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 convene group to discuss sequence

Business Cluster: Business 101 (Intro to Business), Business 211 Business 213 (Principles of Accounting series)

BEYOND 2025-2026

The TC 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 most commonly taken courses at CC's
- Convene subcommittee to discuss approach to CTE courses

SUBCOMMITTEES

The Transfer Council voted to establish disciplinary subcommittees for each of the relevant course clusters and a Common Course Numbering System subcommittee tasked with establishing a numbering system for the courses that are aligned. The Transfer Council also voted to establish the MTM groups and OTAC as subcommittees. The MTM subcommittees are:

- Biology
- English Literature
- Elementary Education
- Business
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Computer Science
- Human Development and Family Studies
- Criminal Justice

The Disciplinary Subcommittees for 2023-2024 are:

- Math
- Statistics
- Writing
- Communication/Public Speaking

SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

The Council has been working hard on a short timeline to meet the legislatively mandated deadlines and has made significant progress. The Council has successfully established a course list, a process for selecting future courses, and subcommittees necessary for the success of beginning the CCN work. However, significant work remains. In 2022, the Council plans to take on the following work:

- Vote to approve charges for the subcommittees;
- Review and approve the Sociology MTM;
- Advise over future MTMs;
- Create a student appeals process;
- Annual report;
- Establish a system to house CCN; and
- Establish a system to maintain CCN.

The next meeting of the Council takes place in January where the Council will review subcommittee charges, review the first report, and the Council will review and vote on a subcommittee nomination process.

APPENDIX A. ACRONYMS

- AAOT Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer: a 90 credit statewide transfer degree
- AAT Associate of Arts Transfer: a new 90 credit statewide transfer degree created for Major Transfer Maps that aligns with lower division degree requirements for a Bachelor of Arts.
- AST Associate of Science Transfer: a new 90 credit statewide transfer degree created for Major Transfer Maps that aligns with lower division degree requirements for a Bachelor of Science.
- CAO Chief Academic Officer
- CIA Oregon Council of Instructional Administrators/Chief Academic Officers The group of community college instructional deans and vice presidents from the transfer and technical programs. It is concerned with planning and exchanging information.
- CTM Core Transfer Map (referred to in HB 2998 as Foundational Curricula): groups of eight general education courses, equivalent to at least 30 credits that transfer to any public university in Oregon and apply to the university's degree requirements.
- HB House Bill. A law or proposed law introduced by a member or committee of the House of Representatives. In implementation contexts, typically referred to legislation that has passed and been signed into law by the Governor
- MTM Major Transfer Map (referred to in HB 2998 as Unified Statewide Transfer Agreement): a 90 credit, major specific statewide transfer tool which has been rebranded and is now referred to as a Major Transfer Map
- OTAC Oregon Transfer and Articulation Committee
- OTM Oregon Transfer Module: a 45 credit suggested first year curriculum for community college students who plan to transfer to a public university
- SB Senate Bill. A law or proposed law introduced by a member or committee of the Senate. In implementation contexts, typically referred to legislation that has passed and been signed into law by the Governor.
- SPC Statewide Provosts' Council
- USTA Unified Statewide Transfer Agreements were the original name of Major Transfer Maps under HB 2998 (2017) before it was rebranded to MTMs in order to promote recognition and understanding.