

ASSIST Transfer Channel



Issue: 2

February 14, 2005

We Get Feedback

With the literally thousands of times a day ASSIST is used, there are bound to be questions. ASSIST enables users to submit questions or comments to the ASSIST Coordination Site. Users can click on either *Courses Didn't Transfer?* or *General Comments* and use a simple form to send their question. There are two links because we were requested to provide a specific place where student could report times when they were unfairly denied transfer credit. In practice, users send the same kinds of questions with both forms.

We occasionally hear from a counselor or other staff or faculty member, but the vast majority of the feedback we receive comes from students. When the user provides us with an e-mail address we reply to questions as promptly as possible; usually the same day. Some questions are too specific for us to answer; they concern a student's specific academic record. Others are far too broad; looking for general academic advice or career guidance. We forward those questions to our contacts at the universities and colleges. We recognize that we are not academic advisors, and make a point of encouraging every student to see their community college counselor or an academic advisor at the university.

All of our university contacts (the ASSIST Managers) are very good about replying to students' questions. We've all heard anecdotal complaints that the universities are not responsive to students, but that has not been our experience. In most cases the student has misunderstood the requirements, and in cases where there's a different issue, every effort has been made to help the student. We keep track of all of the cases where a student reports that they did not receive credit properly, and report those cases to the ASSIST Board of Directors. We ask the universities to keep us up-to-date about those situations, and in every case where the student has correctly fulfilled the requirements, the university has been able to accommodate the student.

Few of the comments or questions we receive are about how to use ASSIST. Most students are trying to understand the information they've found and need some clarification or explanation about the information in the reports.

Some students ask about information for private colleges and universities. Some are interested in transfer to USC, for example, but more commonly the questions concern the transferability of courses from institutions like National University, University of Phoenix, or Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising. We also get many questions from students from out-of-state. In all of these cases we direct the student to an advisor at the university campus they plan to attend.

Recently, we've received a lot of questions related to UC Pathways, UC's online admissions application. On the application, students are asked to report the courses they've taken at community colleges. The application checks those courses against data in the ASSIST database. If the student entered a course with a small

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"Few of the comments or questions we receive are about how to use ASSIST. Most students are trying to understand the information they've found and need some clarification or explanation about the information in the reports."

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inaccuracy (BIO 101 instead of BIOL 101, for example), it didn't show as UC transferable on the application. While ASSIST doesn't really provide technical support for Pathways, we have been able to help a number of students who were having this problem. In this example:

I have taken [HP 9] at foothill college, which is a UC transferable course, yet, the uc pathways website doesnt show that the course is UC transferable.

The naming convention at Foothill College is H P, with a space. When the student entered the course with the space, it was shown as transferable.

(Note: I've kept the original spelling, punctuation and grammar in all of the examples.)

Many questions indicate that the user is missing some important basic knowledge about transfer in general. One common area of confusion is the difference between the terms transferable and articulated, and the difference between admissions criteria and lower division major preparation. Here are three typical examples:

I am currently enrolled in Business 20 Introduction to Business and Business 21 Marketing at San Joaquin Delta College. I am planning to transfer to San Jose State University but it didn't show that it was needed. Are these classes transferable or should I drop them?

the transfer requirement for Anthropology is a 103 Anthro class, my college does not provide an Anthro 103 introduction to Prehistory, but it does provide an Anthro 141 Introduction to Archaeology. Will Anthro 141 Transfer?

Hello, I took a course at Los Angeles Pierce College entitled Programming Logic; Cos 507. It is UC and CSU transferable, however it does not seem to exist when I see what classes transfer over to Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Does that mean it won't transfer over?

We reply to questions like this with some basic explanation, and we suggest that the student talk to their counselor at their community college, and to an advisor at the university. If appropriate, we forward the question to our contacts at the university and/or college.

We also get questions about basic admissibility. Since there are a variety of campus-specific issues related to impacted majors and competitive admission, we always refer those questions directly to the university. We also direct the student to the appropriate system-wide admissions web site. Here's an example:

What is the average GPA that students usually transfer with to a CSU? In other words, what is my GPA suppose to be to consider good standing?

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There's one type of question that we've given its own category: "Exactly." With all of the work to provide a variety of educational experiences that meet the needs of California's diverse population there are still a lot of students that want to know 'exactly' what they should take. For example:

What classes exactly will I have to take at Santa Barbara CC to transfer to UCSB?
Thank you for your time.

Of course, some of the questions are a little less precise:

what is exactly civil engineering about and how much is the annual pay? How long does it take to finish up a bachelors, and a masters?

And some, well, we can't quite figure out:

I want an award and I need to get in contact with the dean of students at the university.

And, for one last example, we do get some very nice comments:

I love this site so much. I am in the process of applying to several universities in California, and if it weren't for Assist, I would have been much more confused than I already am. This is an awesome site that has, time and again, answered questions no one else could. So, whoever's responsible for this work of genius, keep it up!