

# Transfer Pathways for Baccalaureate Completion

Academic and Student Affairs

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**Minnesota**  
STATE COLLEGES  
& UNIVERSITIES

## Introduction and Charge

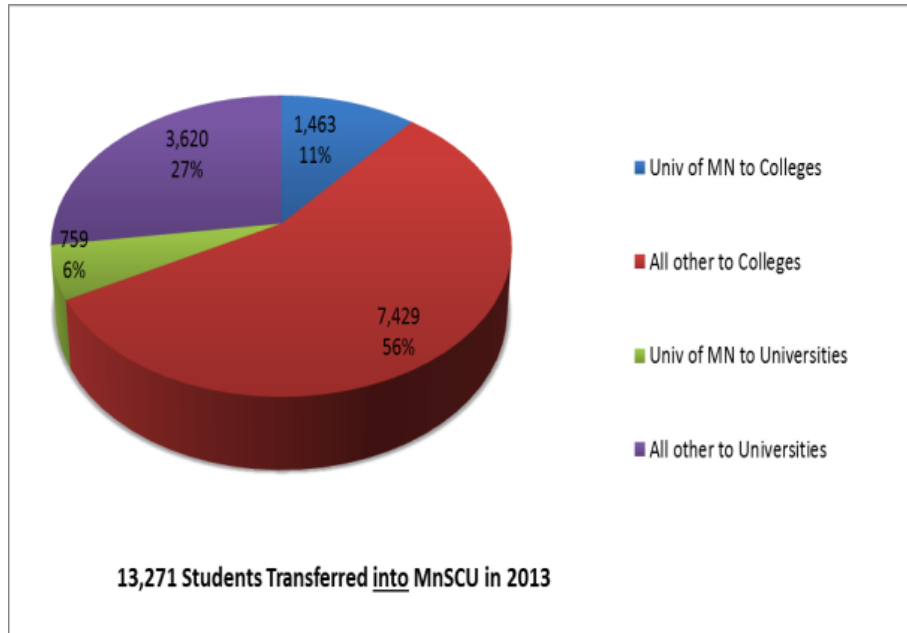
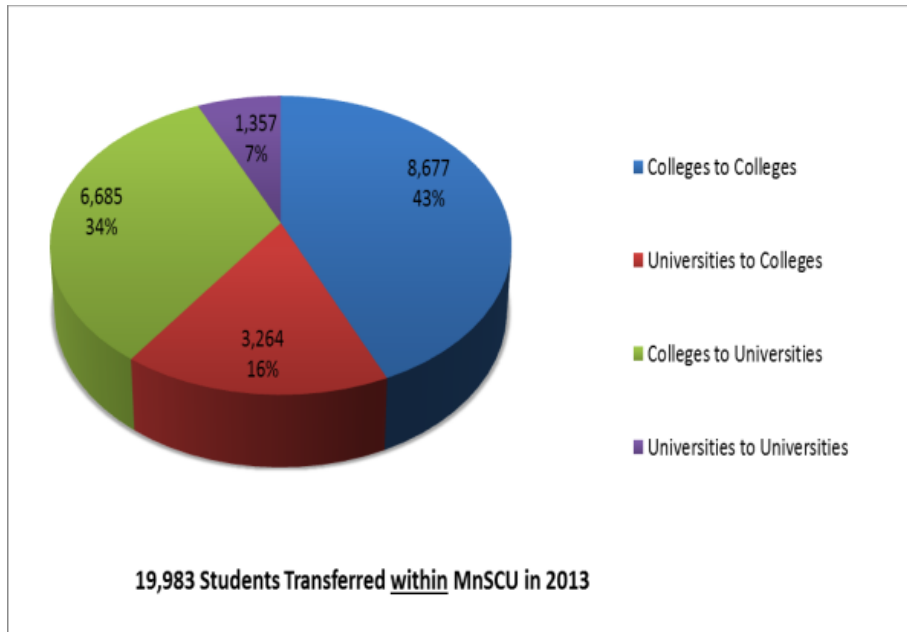
In 2014, more than 35,000 students transferred within and into Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). While traditional thinking about transfer involves a single sequence from a two-year college to a university, MnSCU regularly responds to the complex needs of students who often attend three or more institutions—some of them concurrently—as they complete degrees. Many MnSCU students attend part-time as working adults and struggle to balance their pursuit of higher education with very complex lives. During the 2014 Minnesota legislative session, transfer legislation was passed that focused on the costs, in excess credits and time, whenever transfer is inefficient for students who transfer to the state universities from the state colleges. The Minnesota Legislature required that the system report in March 2015 on a plan to implement multi-campus articulation agreements that permit students who transfer with associate degrees (associate in arts (AA), associate in science (AS), and associate in fine arts (AFA)) to complete a baccalaureate degree minus 60 credits at a system university. This report describes MnSCU’s plan to create guaranteed pathways for baccalaureate completion and to expand upon current pathways.

[2014 Session Laws H.F. 3172, Chapter 312, Sec. 12](#)

The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities shall develop a plan to implement multi-campus articulation agreements that lead to baccalaureate degree completion upon earning the number of credits required for the degree minus 60 credits at a system university after transfer to the system university by a student with an associate in arts degree, associate of science degree, or an associate of fine arts (AFA) degree from a system college. The board shall assign the task of developing the plan to the appropriate committee formed under the board's "Charting the Future" initiative. The board shall report on this plan to the legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over higher education finance and policy by March 15, 2015.

The legislative plan for these transfer pathways, it should be noted, will serve one segment of MnSCU students: those who transfer with completed AA, AS, and AFA degrees within MnSCU and meet defined academic requirements. In 2013, students who transferred from the system’s two-year colleges to the universities represented about one-third of all *within-MnSCU* transfers. They made up about one-fifth of *all* transfer students.

## Transfer Pathways for Baccalaureate Completion



MnSCU is committed to providing students an extraordinary education and the highest-value, most affordable options. Transferability of courses is a key element in that value proposition.

### **Problem Statement:**

Students transfer from the two-year colleges to the universities on a regular basis. Under the current structure of associate degrees<sup>1</sup> developed for transfer<sup>2</sup>, most students achieve successful baccalaureate outcomes, but some may run into obstacles. If they have, for instance, completed a general Associate of Arts degree, without advising input, they may end up being behind because they were unaware of pre-requisite courses they needed to take as part of the major they wanted

to pursue. They may also have completed all of the lower-division general education courses in their first two years, while direct-entry students might be advised to take a couple of those courses in the upper-division.

The system currently relies upon a network of articulation agreements stipulating how courses in a given program at one college or university transfer to a related program at another college or university. The current agreements are bilateral, and may mean that after a student has completed an AA with emphasis, AS or an AFA degree, she or he may be limited to only a few, or even a single, university with which their two-year college has executed an articulation agreement.

Because articulation agreements are contracts prepared by faculty and administrators, students are often not aware of the agreements, even when they are expected to inform the university they are transferring under the agreement. The system's Transferology system does provide students with a great deal of good information about how courses transfer to the state universities and to specific major programs, but too often students discover that there is considerable variation among the universities about which courses are accepted as equivalent, even within the "same" programs. In addition to Transferology, the system maintains a database of articulation agreements of which students may be unaware of where either of these is located and how to use them.

If, after completing an AA with emphasis, AS, or AFA degree, a student chooses to attend a university with which there is no articulation agreement, courses are evaluated individually and may result in the student taking additional lower-division coursework to finish the baccalaureate degree. In some degree pathways, the major courses may not be available for the two-year college students to take during their sophomore year, which puts them behind the university's direct-entry students. Students are not, therefore, consistently prepared to transfer to their major.

With hundreds of active articulation agreements available throughout the MnSCU system, the complexities of advising students are considerable. Added to those complexities are the low rates at which students seek guidance, a scarcity of degree maps<sup>3</sup>, and a lack of multiple-semester class schedules, again meaning students can end up with extra requirements to complete their degrees.

This Transfer Pathways for Baccalaureate Completion plan is intended to result in a simpler set of pathways leading from associate degree programs at the two-year colleges to parallel baccalaureates at all MnSCU universities, eliminating the need for each institution to create and maintain multiple articulation agreements for each degree program. In any particular associate degree field (e.g., psychology or business), one defined pathway will suffice as accepted

preparation for each baccalaureate degree in that field offered within the system. Information will be made available (through websites, transfer guides, degree pathway charts, degree maps, etc.) that is concise and easy to follow for both full-time and part-time students, and students will enter equally as prepared as the universities' direct-entry students are for their major. The pathways for these three associate degrees will not address all of students' challenges in transfer. The team has discussed, and may consider, additional areas for improvement, such as transfer between two-year colleges, transfer between four-year universities, and baccalaureate pathways for graduates with the Associate in Applied Science degree.

### **Limitations**

The system currently awards an additional associate degree that was not included in this legislative mandate, and which is not a part of this report's recommendations. The associate of applied science (AAS) is a degree not intended for transfer, but for preparing students for immediate employment in an occupation or range of occupations. Consideration of the subsequent transfer and baccalaureate needs of AAS graduates will be taken on as future work of this team.

### **Methodology**

The team started by compiling data about MnSCU transfer and engaging in a background literature review, and then transitioned into examining multiple state systems with complex transfer systems. Quickly it became evident that there is great complexity and variability in regards to how a student could potentially move between multiple institutions within the MnSCU system. While this report addresses the legislation and outlines a plan for transfer pathways for baccalaureate completion, the team anticipates there are more components to improving transfer effectiveness, and those will necessitate further exploration and engagement as the work continues.

Common themes that were found in the team's research on effective practices were the development of specific "transfer degrees"; clear and concise communication (e.g. websites, degree guides, etc.) so that students can understand how to plan for transfer; well-documented pathways through major programs to graduation; and strong advising as central to the success of pathways. The team identified states that appeared to have most effectively designed *and* implemented complex transfer plans. Representatives from California and Pennsylvania met with the team, and other first-hand accounts were provided about guaranteed-transfer programs in Kentucky, Washington, and Arizona.

## Elements of the Implementation Plan

Under this plan the two-year college and university faculty will come together to create transfer pathways. The process will facilitate communication and collaboration among faculty in the same discipline at different institutions to ensure that the transfer pathways align lower-division and upper-division curricula and enhance students' ability to prepare for and complete baccalaureate degrees. This implementation plan offers the opportunity to streamline transfer for all students who intend to prepare for the bachelor's degree by completing an associate degree at a two-year college.

The initiative will generate savings on many levels, including but not limited to cost to students, time to degree completion, and administrative overhead to maintain articulation agreements.

While this plan offers the potential for savings, there will be costs to develop and implement the plan. Based upon research of other statewide transfer improvement plans, the estimated cost to implement these recommendations is a minimum of \$500,000. This estimate does not include training for advisors and degree audit report system (DARS) encoders, or for the possible need for additional advisors. The cost does include the implementation and an internal communication plan. Marketing and promotion of the pathways to external audiences, including potential students and their families, would require additional budget.

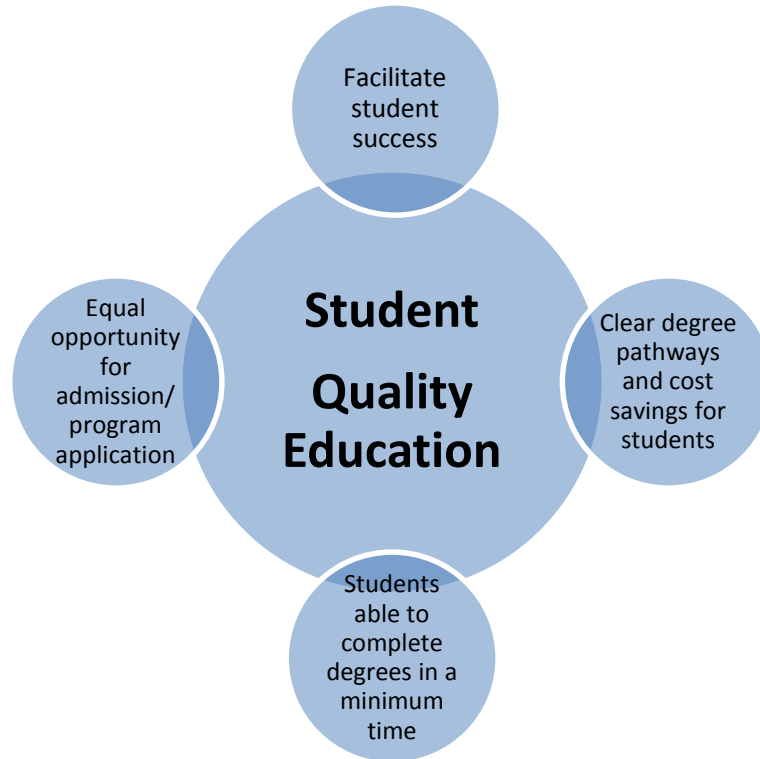
The anticipated benefits are an increased number of students completing associate degrees, which better prepare them for success as university students and result in higher rates of completion at the universities; improved transfer facilitation for students; and increased diversity and complexity in the lower-division curriculum, in partnership with faculty teaching the upper-division curriculum.

The specific elements of the Transfer Pathways to Baccalaureate Completion Plan are enumerated and discussed below.

### 1. Goals

- 1.1. Students are the primary and fundamental focus of the planning process (see figure below).
- 1.2. Maintaining a quality education for students is the core of the transfer pathways.
- 1.3. Student success will be facilitated by the transfer pathways.
- 1.4. Pathways to baccalaureate degrees are clear and easy for students to follow.
- 1.5. Students can save money and reduce debt by eliminating the number of repeat classes required when they transfer and having a clear path to reach the baccalaureate degree.
- 1.6. Students can complete degrees in a minimum timeframe (Two years for an associate degree and four years for a baccalaureate degree) but with the understanding part time completion is available.

- 1.7. Student will be able to enter the workforce sooner and with less debt.
- 1.8. Transfer students who meet admission/program application requirements will be given the same opportunities/same consideration as direct entry students.
- 1.9. The transfer process will be streamlined for the institutions and create clarity for students.
- 1.10. The potential to positively impact enrollment and retention is strong.



## 2. Discipline-based Transfer Pathways Teams (TPT)

The transfer pathways will be created by faculty, working within their discipline (or program cluster) and in consultation with staff and students on Transfer Pathways Teams (TPTs). Each transfer pathway will have a representative TPT. Membership selection will utilize current processes with appointments from the bargaining unit and student associations. A Transfer Pathway Coordination Team, described in Section 5.2 will provide oversight and organization for the TPTs.

### 2.1 TPT Membership Composition

The suggested membership is 14-20 members with one-third being university faculty, one-third being college faculty, and one-third being college and university staff who are integral in the transfer process (e.g. advisors, transfer specialists, registrars, financial aid staff); plus two students: one university and one college.

## 2.2 TPT Authority

The TPTs will create the pathways. It is recommended they will begin their work with a review of all of the current articulation agreements in the related fields of study and the individual university degree requirements for the degrees.

- TPTs will have full autonomy to consider the full range of strategies/ideas to achieve the goals.
- Once the membership has been determined, the TPTs will be self-governed to meet the designated timelines agreed upon by the Transfer Pathways Coordination Team.
- TPTs will seek college program advisory committee input where appropriate.
- TPT's will report their work to the system's Academic Programs division.
- Once the pathways are determined, the faculty at the colleges will consider how their current curriculum will fit into the new pathways. Campuses will utilize current curriculum review and approval processes to implement the new pathways.

## 3. Transfer Pathway Framework

The transfer pathways for baccalaureate completion plan should be designed to permit students to complete associate degrees as provided for in current board policy, but using a basic common structure that permits students to transfer from any college using the pathway to any university offering a parallel baccalaureate degree.

3.1 Current degree structures per MnSCU Board policy 3.36 are as follows. (MnTC refers to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum<sup>1</sup>).

### 3.1.1. Associate of Arts

Types of Courses	Credits
MnTC General Education 10 Goal Areas	40
Electives and other degree requirements	20

### 3.1.2. Associate of Science

Types of Courses	Credits
MnTC General Education 6 Goal Areas	30
Electives and other degree requirements	30



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### 3.1.3. Associate of Fine Arts

Types of Courses	Credits
MnTC General Education 6 Goal Areas	Minimum of 24*
Electives and other degree requirements	Remaining credits to 60

\* Music has a minimum of 30; Theatre has the full MnTC at 40 credits.

### 3.1.4. Baccalaureate Degrees

Types of Courses	Credits
MnTC General Education 10 Goal Areas	Minimum of 40
Electives and other degree requirements including 40 upper division credits	Remaining credits to 120

3.2 Proposed degree structure for associate degree transfer pathways is as follows. The plan suggests a recommended common general education framework of multiple tiers of lower-division curriculum for the transfer pathways. This structure is consistent with current board policy; it can ensure the completion of the MnTC with a common core across sub-fields within a discipline or multiple disciplines; common disciplinary specialization; and specific preparation for an upper-division major.

Proposed Model	Credit Range
<b>Common set of general education/MnTC Goal Areas across the discipline</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Broad Elective Courses/Additional MnTC Goals</b>	<b>9-12</b>
<b>Discipline Specific Courses/Major Courses</b>	<b>9-12</b>
<b>Remaining Credits*</b>	<b>6-12</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>60</b>

\*The remaining 6-12 credits gives room for flexibility in course credits (lab credits, variances, in courses between campuses, or other campus requirements).

3.3 TPT Responsibilities and Pathway Guarantees: The TPTs will determine what can be ensured for the students after the completion of the transfer pathways for the transfer of the full AA, AS, or AFA degree to the parallel baccalaureate degree. The TPTs will create options for students to better plan and better prepare for transfer to the university majors. The TPTs will ensure accessibility to programs for all qualified students. In addition, dual-admission options and strong 2+2 programs should be strongly considered for these degrees; studies show that these assist students in planning and preparing to enter the major. The team's research found a number of common components in other state systems' transfer degrees. These pathway features should be strongly considered by the TPT groups:

- 3.3.1. Ensure that a student has fully met all the lower-division general education requirements for a MnSCU university. (This may not be possible for all degree pathways, but should be accomplished where it is possible).
- 3.3.2. Guarantee that a student has full junior status upon successful completion of the associate degree pathway.
- 3.3.3. Ensure that a student who has followed a transfer pathway and received its associate degree can complete the baccalaureate degree upon earning the number of credits required for the degree minus 60 credits.
- 3.3.4. Provide the opportunity for two-year college students to apply to program the same point in their academic progress as direct-entry students (assuming that pre-requisites have been completed). Students and advisors should be clearly informed about the difference between open and restricted-admission programs.
- 3.3.5. Guarantee, where capacity permits, that students who meet or exceed specific program requirements will be admitted to that program.
- 3.3.6. Ensure that the pathway will specify required experiential, clinical or applied learning experiences (e.g., undergraduate research), where applicable, as part of the degree pathway.

#### 4. Scope

##### 4.1. Institutional Participation

All MnSCU universities and eligible colleges (those who offer the AA, AS, or AFA degrees) will participate. Institutions will need to appeal to the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for an exemption. Possible reasons for an exemption would be that the pathways are out of the current scope of degree offerings or that another degree pathway already exists for all two-year college students.

##### 4.2. Program Participation

The plan will create transfer pathways for about 25 to 30 of the most frequently enrolled baccalaureate programs. Currently, MnSCU universities grant about two-thirds of their collective bachelor's degrees in 30 programs.

4.3 Project implementation will begin with a review of the most popular program of studies at the two year colleges; the most popular university degree programs and the most popular transfer programs (identified as those in which the content and competencies transfer to the junior level).

4.4. During the implementation phases of the project, the chief academic officer (CAO) or designee at each college and university will identify current degree programs that would align with the transfer pathways for baccalaureate completion degrees created or drafted by the TPTs.

**5. Implementation**

After a series of project launch meetings for planning purposes, implementation of the plan will occur in six phases: Phase 1 will be a pilot project, to be followed by Phase 2, a first round of transfer pathway development in 10-12 target programs; and Phase 3, a second round of transfer pathway development in the remaining 11-13 target programs. Phases 4 through 6 will see the newly designed transfer pathways fully implemented, through review and approval by campus curriculum committees, inclusion in college and university catalogs, publication of transfer guides and degree maps, and promotion to students.

5.1 Phase 1 should begin with major programs of four distinct types: one major that reflects sequential (pre-requisite) courses; a major that has program-specific accreditation requirements; a major that is in the performing arts; and one that draws very high enrollment among both transfer and direct-entry university students. The pilot should also include each degree type: AA, AS, AFA. The team suggests the degrees in the grid below be looked at first for testing the feasibility of the processes.

Degree	Discipline	Reason for Selection
AA	Psychology	Popular Major for both direct entry and transfer students
AS	Biology	Sequential Courses/Pre-requisites
AS	Business	Program accreditation requirements
AFA	Theatre	Performing art and has the complete MnTC

5.2 After the pilot, two cycles of transfer pathway development will result in twenty-five to thirty specific new multi campus transfer pathways designated by:

- 5.2.1. AA (Associate of Arts – Discipline Name)
- 5.2.2. AS (Associate of Science – Discipline Name)
- 5.2.3. AFA (Associate of Fine Arts – Discipline Name)

### 5.3 Transfer Pathway Coordination Team

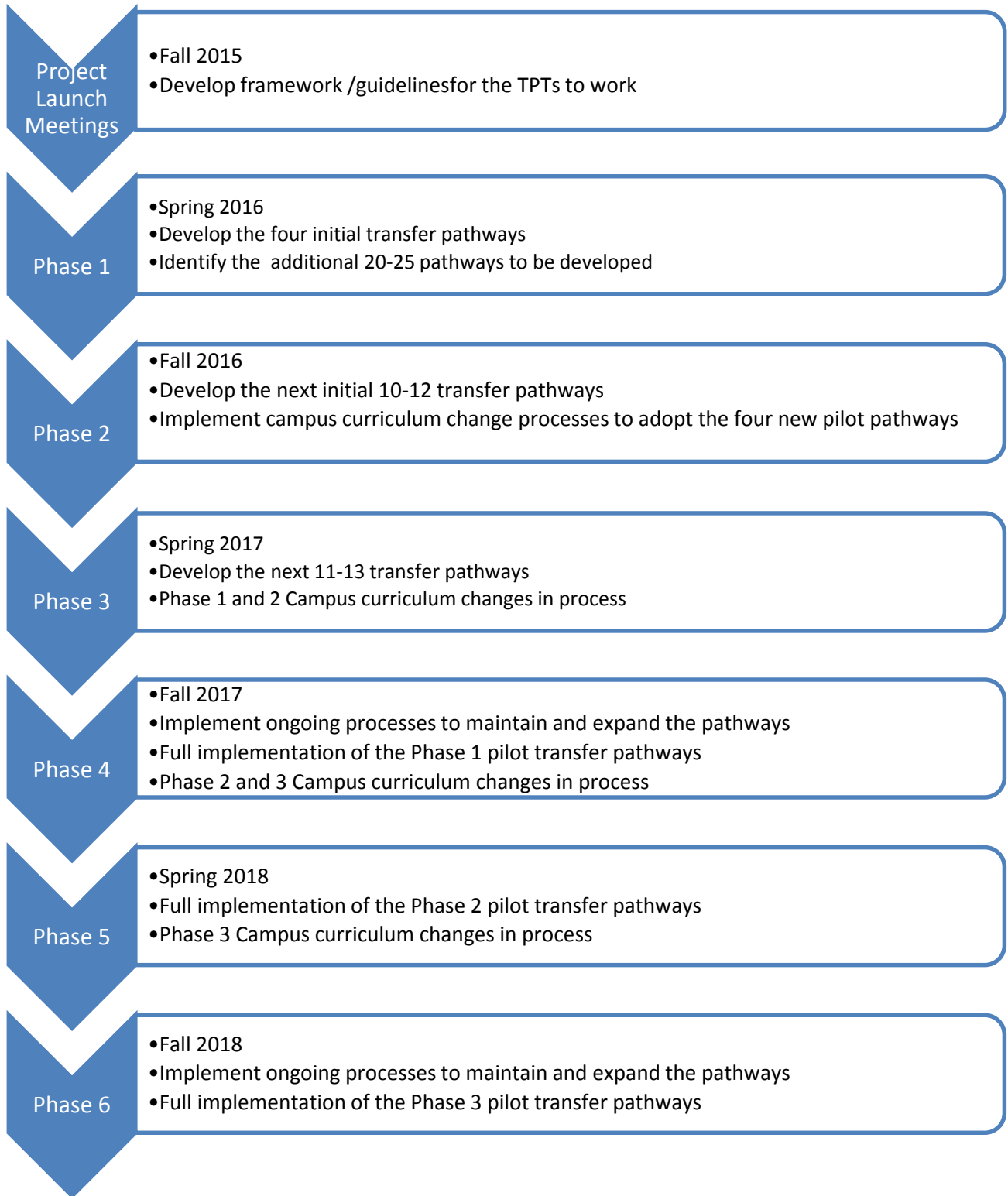
The chancellor or a designee will be responsible for the formation of this team. The team will be charged to plan ways to familiarize the TPTs with the transfer degree goals, to determine common principles by which each TPT will work, to develop a common consultation and communication plan for the work of TPTs, and to finalize expectations about group process (conflict resolution, consensus, etc.), detailed timelines, assessment, and other administrative guidance for the pathways' development. The team will hold its meetings the semester before the TPTs begin their work.

- 5.3.1. Representation on the Transfer Pathway Coordination Team will include faculty co-chairs, individuals who work closely with transfer students, academic officers, deans from phase 1 disciplines, students, and additional faculty representatives from each phase 1 discipline.

### 5.4 Timeline

The timeline for development and full implementation of the transfer pathways is depicted in two charts on pages 12 and 13 describing the work that is expected to last from fall 2015 to fall 2018.

5.5 Implementation Overview: Phases 1 -6



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5.6 Implementation Gantt chart: Phases 1 -6

Phase	2015		2016		2017		2018	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	
Plan	Develop framework and guidelines necessary for Pathways							
1		Develop four Initial Transfer Pathways						
		Identify next 20 -25 Pathways to be developed						
2			Develop next 10 - 12 Transfer Pathways					
			Phase 1 campus curriculum changes in progress.					
3				Develop next 11- 13 Transfer Pathways				
				Phase 1 and 2 campus curriculum changes in progress.				
4					Implement ongoing processes to maintain and expand the Pathways			
					Phase 2 and 3 Campus Curriculum Changes in Process			
5						Full implementation of the Phase 2 pilot Transfer Pathways		
						Phase 3 Campus Curriculum Changes in Process		
6							Full implementation of the Phase 3 pilot Transfer Pathways	

## 6. Operational and Procedural Issues

- 6.1. Operational and procedural issues need to be identified and addressed by the Coordination Team and the TPTs to ensure that the receiving universities have the knowledge the student is transferring under these pathways.
- 6.2. Evaluation tools and processes should be developed so that the pathways may be reviewed regularly to maintain or enhance quality and student success outcomes.
- 6.3. Budget for ongoing TPTs meetings, travel expenses is not included in this plan.
- 6.4. The course system will be regularly updated.
- 6.5. To most effectively and efficiently optimize faculty and staff.
  - 6.5.1. College and university curriculum procedures will be followed.
  - 6.5.2. Updating of catalogs, websites, Transferology/DARS, transfer sheets, etc. will use normal timeframes.
  - 6.5.3. TPTs must publish their work and notify all stakeholders.
  - 6.5.4. Standard training tools will be developed for use for all campuses for advising staff and other constituents who may need training.
- 6.6. The coordination team will review the current dispute resolution process/appeal process for students, colleges, and universities and adjust as needed.
  - 6.6.1. Regular MnSCU governance bodies are responsible to ensure conflicts are resolved.
- 6.7. The Degree Audit Reports (DARS) system will be updated to support the inclusion of Pathways.
- 6.8. Transfer Pathways will be incorporated into an easy to use and prominent website including Transferology.
- 6.9. Standing committees and technology groups will be responsible for coordination to ensure the sustainability of transfer pathways.
  - 6.10. Annually, the enrollment and graduation numbers for pathway degree transfers and cohort degree completion will be reviewed and reported to the campuses, student associations, and other system stakeholders.
  - 6.11. TPTs are encouraged to identify additional ways to streamline transfer process.

## 7. Communications Plan

A fully-integrated public relations, marketing, and internal communications plan will help ensure that our stakeholders receive, understand and realize benefit from the transfer pathways.

7.1 Audiences – Audience Segments include: existing MnSCU students, lapsed or stopped-out students; prospective students currently outside of MnSCU; our faculty and staff; and the greater Minnesota citizenry whom we serve.

7.2 Goals – Respective stakeholders should be informed of this student-centric improvement through an integrated Communications Plan which would:

7.2.1 Create awareness of transfer pathways in the greatest number of students in our own system, both upper division and lower division, active and lapsed, so they ask and learn about them,

7.2.2 Create awareness of and interest in transfer pathways among the greater number of Minnesota prospective students who hadn't previously considered our system as a solution they would invest in for their higher education, so they act to get more information about it,

7.2.3 Motivate our own employees to become aware of the transfer pathways so they embrace and enthusiastically support them,

7.2.4 Shift the public's perception so they see our system is collaboratively working to improve its efficiency and convenience while maintaining its quality and rigor.

7.3 Tactics – A fully integrated public relations, marketing and internal communications plan will help ensure our stakeholders receive, understand and act on our messages. Each of our stakeholders needs to receive messages in the most salient ways. Internal audiences, including existing students, may well be served by email, SharePoint, webinars, and live events. External audiences may well be best be served by landing pages that explain the benefit to them and provide access to the next step of more information or connection to a recruiter. Implied in this is the need for marketing tactics that drive traffic to those landing pages.

## Summary

Now more than ever, completion of baccalaureate degrees is the key to economic well-being and social contribution. A recent Pew Research Center report (2014) illustrates the widening gap in economic prosperity between high school graduates and college graduates. The MnSCU system has the unique opportunity and responsibility to develop effective transfer pathways from community colleges to universities in order to increase the number of students who earn baccalaureate degrees. This will serve one-third of those transferring within MnSCU and open the door to more initiatives serving all students who transfer. Although the work involved in this project will be challenging and require an investment of time and resources, the outcomes anticipated are worthwhile. Benefits from the transfer pathways detailed in this



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plan include an increase in retention and completion rates for both associate and baccalaureate degrees, financial and time savings for students, and graduates who are better equipped for the future.

Our students' investment in their education is also an investment in the greater good of our state. As a system, we need to continue to invest in creating the most effective and efficient transfer system possible.

## APPENDIX

<sup>1</sup> **Associate of Arts (AA) Definition:** The associate of arts degree fulfills the lower division general education courses required for a liberal arts baccalaureate degree. The student takes a broad spectrum of courses covering all ten Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) Goal areas (40 credits) and has elective credits available. The ten MnTC goal areas include:

**Goal Area 1: Communication:** To develop writers and speakers who use the English language effectively and who read, write, speak and listen critically. As a base, all students should complete introductory communication requirements early in their collegiate studies. Writing competency is an ongoing process reinforced through writing-intensive courses and writing across the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are reinforced through multiple opportunities for interpersonal communication, public speaking and discussion.

**Goal Area 2: Critical Thinking:** To develop thinkers who are able to unify factual, creative, rational and value-sensitive modes of thought. Critical thinking will be taught and used throughout the general education curriculum to develop students' awareness of their own thinking and problem-solving procedures. To integrate new skills into their customary ways of thinking, students must be actively engaged in practicing thinking skills and applying them to open-ended problems.

**Goal Area 3: Natural Sciences:** To improve students' understanding of natural science principles and of the methods of scientific inquiry, i.e., the ways in which scientists investigate natural science phenomena. As a basis for lifelong learning, students need to know the vocabulary of science and to realize that while a set of principles has been developed through the work of previous scientists, ongoing scientific inquiry and new knowledge will bring changes in some of the ways scientists view the world. By studying the problems that engage today's scientists, students learn to appreciate the importance of science in their lives and to understand the value of a scientific perspective. Students are encouraged to study both the biological and physical sciences.

**Goal Area 4: Mathematical/Logical Reasoning:** To increase students' knowledge about mathematical and logical modes of thinking. This will enable students to appreciate the breadth of applications of mathematics, evaluate arguments and detect fallacious reasoning. Students will learn to apply mathematics, logic and/or statistics to help them make decisions in their lives and careers. Minnesota's public higher education systems have agreed that developmental mathematics includes the first three years of a high school mathematics sequence through intermediate algebra.

**Goal Area 5: History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences:** To increase students' knowledge of how historians and social and behavioral scientists discover, describe and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events and ideas. Such

knowledge will better equip students to understand themselves and the roles they play in addressing the issues facing humanity.

**Goal Area 6: Humanities and Fine Arts:** To expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behavior, ideas and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature, philosophy and the fine arts, students will engage in critical analysis, form aesthetic judgments and develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society. Students should have experiences in both the arts and humanities.

**Goal Area 7: Human Diversity:** To increase students' understanding of individual and group differences (e.g. race, gender, class) and their knowledge of the traditions and values of various groups in the United States. Students should be able to evaluate the United States' historical and contemporary responses to group differences.

**Goal Area 8: Global Perspective:** To increase students' understanding of the growing interdependence of nations and peoples and develop their ability to apply a comparative perspective to cross-cultural social, economic and political experiences.

**Goal Area 9: Ethical and Civic Responsibility:** To develop students' capacity to identify, discuss and reflect upon the ethical dimensions of political, social and personal life and to understand the ways in which they can exercise responsible and productive citizenship. While there are diverse views of social justice or the common good in a pluralistic society, students should learn that responsible citizenship requires them to develop skills to understand their own and others' positions, be part of the free exchange of ideas and function as public-minded citizens.

**Goal Area 10: People and the Environment:** To improve students' understanding of today's complex environmental challenges. Students will examine the interrelatedness of human society and the natural environment. Knowledge of both biophysical principles and socio-cultural systems is the foundation for integrative and critical thinking about environmental issues.

**Associate of Science (AS) Degrees:** The associate of science degree is discipline specific, more aligned with the traditional first two years of the baccalaureate degree in the scientific, technological, or other professional fields and requires an articulation agreement in place for transfer. The AS degree has a general education core of a minimum of 30 credits in six of the ten MnTC goal areas.

**Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) Degrees:** The associate of fine arts degree is discipline specific, more aligned with the traditional first two years of the baccalaureate degree and requires an articulation agreement in place for transfer. The AFA degree has a general education core of a minimum of 24 credits in six of the ten MnTC goal areas. Specific general education requirements have been adopted for art, music, and theatre arts.

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<sup>2</sup>The associate of applied science degree (AAS) was not included in the legislation so is not directly addressed in this plan. The AAS degree prepares students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations. It may be accepted in transfer to a related baccalaureate degree. The AAS degree has a general education core of a minimum of 15 credits selected from three of the ten MnTC goal areas. At least 30 of the credits must be in the academic program's occupational or technical field. It is suggested that (a) different pathway(s) be investigated to support students for the transfer of this type of degree.

<sup>3</sup>Degree maps are developed by the colleges and universities that provide a suggested course sequence so students can complete their degree in a timely manner. It represents when pre-requisite and sequential courses should be taken so the student can stay on track for degree completion. These are usually available on the college or university website if they exist.

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<sup>l</sup>Middle Management Association

<sup>m</sup>American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

<sup>n</sup>Transfer Oversight Committee

<sup>o</sup>Student Subject Matter Expert, MSUSA

<sup>p</sup>Student Subject Matter Expert, MSCSA

\*Withdrew from the team

The following individuals provide administrative assistance to the team members: Jacqueline Carroll, Bonnie Windschitl, Susan Platt, Kelli Lyng, Kim Krueger, Margie Takash, Nancy Traen.