

TOPIC: Approval of Proposed Changes to CCHE Policy I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways (Notification of Transfer Credit)

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I. SUMMARY

This item presents for consent changes to the Commission’s Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways policy to codify changes as required by Senate Bill 24-164, concerning the notification of transfer credit within 30 calendar days. Students who apply for admission and are accepted into an institution of higher education or who have an approved major, or program of study, change have the right to a timely response regarding the acceptance or denial of transfer credit.

II. BACKGROUND

In 2024, the Colorado General Assembly passed Senate Bill 24-164 – Institution of Higher Education Transparency Requirements – which modified the Student Bill of Rights in §23-1-125 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) and created new expectations for the timing of institutional responses to requests for transfer credit through the addition of §23-5-150. This agenda item presents revised language reflecting changes to policy as required by Senate Bill 24-164.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

With the modification to the Student Bill of Rights in C.R.S. §23-1-125, students are now guaranteed the right to “...a timely response on applications for transferring credits, and transparency in how and why a credit is accepted or rejected by an institution and how and

why a credit is or not applied toward degree requirements....” Also included in Senate Bill 24-164, C.R.S. §23-1-125 (1.5) states that by April 1, 2025, the Commission shall adopt policies for how state institutions of higher education should implement these rights. Furthermore, Senate Bill 24-164 modified C.R.S. §23-1-108.5(5)(a) to include students who change their major or program of study must have their transfer credits re-evaluated by the institution. While it may be best practice for institutions to re-evaluate a student’s transfer credits when a change of major or program of study is requested, the Department has found that this may not always be the case. The modification to statute codifies this practice, relieving students of the burden to ensure their transfer credits have been re-evaluated.

Beginning in November 2024, Department staff convened a cross-functional working group of volunteer academic administrators, institutional researchers, registrars, and admission officers to help define and operationalize key components of the new institutional expectations as created in C.R.S. §23-5-150. This was done to ensure consistent interpretation across institutions. Through these discussions, Department staff learned institutions will require additional time to implement the mandates of the proposed policy. With Commission approval of the change, it is the recommendation of Department staff that institutions will have until September 1, 2025 to implement these practices and to post their updated policies on their respective websites regarding the process.

The cross-functional working group assisted the Department in drafting updated language to the Commission’s Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways policy under Section 9.00 Notification of Transfer Credit.

Guidance from the statutes listed below under “Statutory Authority” was used in developing proposed revisions to the policy. The following changes are proposed:

1. Section 2.00 Statutory Authority

- a. New sub-section 2.07, add text “§23-5-150, C.R.S. Transfer credit review process and nontransferable credit – notice – definition.”

2. Section 9.00 Notification of Transfer Credit

- a. New section 9.00, add text indicating that “[s]tudents (undergraduate and graduate) who apply for admission and are accepted into an institution of higher education have the right to a timely response regarding the acceptance or denial of transfer credit. Institutions of higher education shall provide students with a determination of the acceptance or denial of transfer credit within 30 calendar days after the student has met the following criteria (if the last day of the 30-day period is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday):
 - The student is admitted; and
 - The institution receives official college transcripts and/or official documents for course credit (including official transcripts and documents received after admission); or
 - An admitted and enrolled student who had an approved major, or program of study change, is equally entitled to the right to a timely response regarding how their transfer credits will be re-evaluated and applied toward their new major or program of study. Institutions of higher education must conduct a re-evaluation of a student’s transfer credits within 30 calendar days of a student’s approved request to change a major or program of study.”
- b. Add text indicating that, per statute, “an institution shall publish the institution’s process and timeline for reviewing and making a decision regarding transfer credit requests on the institution’s website. The institution shall update its website within thirty days after making a change to its process and timeline for reviewing and issuing decisions regarding transfer credit requests.”

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of the proposed revisions to CCHE Policy Section I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways, with a recommendation that institutions of higher education have until September 1, 2025 to implement these practices and to post their updated policies on their respective websites regarding the process.

V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. § 23-1-108.5

Duties and powers of the commission with regard to common course numbering system – council of higher education representatives – rules – legislative declaration – definitions – repeal.

...

(5)(a) All credits earned by a student in the guaranteed transfer pathways matrix are automatically transferable and applicable to the student's declared major or program requirements. If the credits earned by a student cannot be applied to the student's declared major or program requirements, the credits must be used to fulfill any remaining general elective course requirements needed for the student's major or program. If a student changes the student's major or declared program of student, the application of transfer credits to the student's new major or program requirements must be re-evaluated. This requirement applies to all higher education institutions upon transfer and acceptance of the student. All higher education institutions shall participate in the guaranteed transfer pathways matrix. The commission shall adopt policies and guidelines as necessary for the implementation of this section. Each institution's governing board shall modify its existing policies as necessary to accept the transfer of these credits.

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C.R.S. § 23-1-125

Commission directive - student bill of rights - degree requirements - implementation of core courses - competency test - prior learning - prior work-related experience - policies - definitions - repeal.

(1) **Student bill of rights.** The general assembly hereby finds that students enrolled in public institutions of higher education shall have the following rights:

...

(i) Students have the right to seamless transfer of courses in the guaranteed transfer pathways matrix, transparency in the process for transferring credits, a timely response on applications for transferring credits, and transparency in how and why a credit is accepted or rejected by an institution and how and why a credit is or is not applied toward degree requirements.

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C.R.S. § 23-5-150

Transfer credit review process and nontransferable credit – notice – definition.

- (1) An institution shall provide a student with a determination regarding the acceptance or denial of the student’s request and required documentation for transfer credit within thirty days after the student is admitted to the institution.
- (2) An institution shall publish the institution’s process and timeline for reviewing and making a decision regarding transfer credit requests on the institution’s website. The institution shall update its website within thirty days after making a change to its process and timeline for reviewing and issuing decisions regarding transfer credit requests.

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ATTACHMENT(S):

Attachment A: Proposed Revisions to CCHE Policy I, Part L: Statewide Transfer and GT Pathways Policy