**TOPIC:** RECOMMENDATION OFPROPOSED REVISIONS TO CCHE POLICY I, PART F: TRANSFER ADMISSIONS STANDARDS POLICY

**PREPARED BY:** CARL EINHAUS, SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR STUDENT SUCCESS & P-20 ALIGNMENT

1. **SUMMARY**

This action item outlines proposed revisions to CCHE Policy I, Part F: Admissions Standards Policy. The proposed recommended changes focus on admission criteria for applicants who are considered under transfer admission standards. These proposed changes were initiated, written by and have complete consensus from the statewide Admission Council.

1. **BACKGROUND**

As directed by C.R.S. 23-1-113, the Admission Standards Policy establishes academic admission standards for Colorado’s four-year institutions of higher education (two-year institutions and area technical colleges are open enrollment and are exempt from academic admission standards). The standards are organized in two main categories:

* first-time freshmen applicants; and
* transfer applicants.

Transfer student admissions standard apply to all degree-seeking undergraduate applicants with 24 or more college-level semester credit hours completed at the point of application. Standalone developmental education coursework and college-level coursework completed before high school graduation (i.e. dual enrollment and Concurrent Enrollment) are excluded from determining transfer admission consideration (this allows institutions to consider recent high school graduates with 24 and over completed college-level credit hours as first-time students for scholarship consideration and housing assignments). First-time admissions standards apply to transfer students with fewer than 24 college-level semester credit hours.

Current policy directs institutions to utilize the following indicators for transfer admission standards:

* Cumulative grade point average (GPA) from all previous college-level coursework;
* 24 or more college-level semester credit hours completed; and Successful completion of basic skills courses.

Policy requires institutions to establish a recommended cumulative GPA as a guideline for transfer admission. The Commission approved the current [transfer admission GPAs](https://highered.colorado.gov/students/preparing-for-college/admissions-eligibility) as well as any changes IHEs wish to make to the GPA.

It is proposed to align transfer admission standards to better reflect the nuanced and mixed academic, work and life experiences many adult students possess. The current transfer admission GPA guideline is often misleading to applicants as a specific college GPA does not necessarily reflect a transfer student’s unique circumstances and potential to be successful at the institution. Some applicants may self-select not to apply to an institution if their college GPA is lower than the institution’s transfer GPA. Further, institutions can feel constrained in enforcing a transfer GPA that might not be in the student’s best interest. Removing the primary focus of college GPA and instead communicating a more holistic approach to transfer admission would especially benefit returning adults that may have had academic challenges years ago, but now can demonstrate how life and work experiences have matured and readied them for success. In short, the current policy can be a barrier in practice for adults wishing to return to higher education and earn a credential.

The proposed academic performance indicators for transfer admission are as follows and mirrors statutory language that GPA may be utilized as an indicator:

*If transfer students have 24 or more college-level semester credit hours completed at the point of application, then the transfer student admissions standard shall apply. Each institution shall establish and maintain transfer admissions standards which may include holistic performance measures such as cumulative grade point average (GPA), previous and transferrable coursework, grade trends, personal circumstances, etc.*

As a result, the sections of policy requiring institutions to submit to the Commission for approval any changes to their transfer GPA is proposed to be removed.

1. **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The Admission Council directed the changes to transfer admission standards to assist our state’s efforts to re-engage adult students and help increase both completion of credentials of value as well as economic mobility.

1. **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Staff recommends approval of the proposed changes to the admission policy.**

1. **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

C.R.S. §23-1-113. Commission directive - admission standards for baccalaureate and graduate institutions of higher education - policy – definitions

**(1)(a)** Except as provided in subsection (1)(b) of this section, the commission shall establish and the governing boards shall implement academic admission standards for first-time freshmen and transfer students at all state-supported baccalaureate and graduate institutions of higher education in the state. The commission shall establish and may subsequently review and amend the standards after consultation with the governing boards of institutions. The academic admission standards for students who do not have in-state status, as determined pursuant to section 23-7-103, shall equal or exceed those established for determining admission of in-state students.

*(1)(b) specific to first-time freshmen admission standards.*

**(c)** The standards established for transfer students must use college academic performance indicators as the eligibility criteria for admitted transfer students. The academic performance indicators **may** include but are not limited to grade point average, credit hours completed, and successful completion of developmental education courses, if required and as appropriate considering the role and mission of the receiving institution. In lieu of such criteria, additional criteria may be used for up to twenty percent of the admitted transfer students. The academic admission standards and policies established for transfer students must be consistent with the student transfer agreements established by the commission pursuant to section 23-1-108 (7)(f). Students who meet the minimum criteria for admission are not guaranteed admission to the institution to which they have applied, but they are eligible for consideration.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Attachment A: Section I Part F Proposed Revisions to the Admission Policy.