

Planning Your College Transfer

When it comes to planning your transfer, there is no time like the present. Start planning today!

The longer you wait to make decisions, the longer it may take you to complete a degree and transfer. Do your best to complete the following as soon as possible:

- **Declare your major.**
- **Select a transfer institution.**

The following is a general timeline to assist you in planning your transfer. Remember, the process for transferring out of one institution and into another varies at each college or university.

Make sure you are working with both an academic advisor at your current institution AND an admissions counselor at the institution where you plan to transfer. ***When everyone is involved in the process, you are less likely to end up with any surprises!***

STEP I:

- **Identify your area of study.** This is vital in choosing courses each semester as well as a college. If you don't know what you want to major in, then make an appointment with your academic advisor or a counselor in your college's career development center who can assist you with this decision.
- **Investigate possible transfer institutions.** Use PA TRAC to [Search for Institutions](#) and review [College Profiles](#). Look for desired features such as cost, location, size, student services, availability of distance learning, etc. Ask yourself, "What is important to me in a college?" Here are other questions to consider:
 - ✓ Where do I want the college to be located? How far away is the college from my home?
 - ✓ Does the college offer my program(s) of study?
 - ✓ What size institution is good for my learning style?
 - ✓ What is the cost? What financial aid is available?
 - ✓ What is the campus setting? Is it rural, city or suburban?
- **Send for information.** Request college catalogs and applications or look for this information online.
- **Begin looking for scholarships, discounts and other ways to meet costs.**
- **Pay attention to required course sequencing** and GPA requirements for your program of study at your current institution. This is especially important if you plan to earn an Associate Degree before transferring.
- **Register with "transfer" in mind.** When you meet with your advisor each semester, remind him/her that you plan on transferring in order that they can assist you in selecting courses that transfer easily.
- **Remember your grades are important from the start!** Your transfer GPA is cumulative so work hard and make every grade count.

STEP II:

- **Select a transfer institution.** Tell your current advisor which college or university you have selected. If you are still searching for a transfer institution, consider going to these Internet

sites to narrow your choices: www.collegeview.com, www.collegeboard.com, and www.mycollegeguide.org.

- **Research the admissions requirements for the college or university where you plan to transfer.** Search catalogs, advising manuals, and websites. Investigate program-specific selection criteria and requirements such as auditions or portfolios and be aware of deadlines that may affect your major of study.
- **Confirm your choice of academic major or area of study.**
- **Register for courses that will fulfill your current degree requirements and also meet the requirements of the degree program at your transfer institution.** Use the [Course Equivalency Guide](#) on PA TRAC to assist you with course selection.
- **Get to know your chosen transfer institution's academic calendar and deadlines.**
- **Visit the university BEFORE you apply.** This is a good time to find out information about the institution as well as let them know who you are.
 - Check out the bulletin boards in the buildings. What is happening on campus?
 - Visit a class in your major.
 - Visit the cafeteria. Can you live with the food? Does the food meet your dietary requirements?
 - Visit the residence halls, if you plan to live on campus. Are they co-ed by floor or room? What is the atmosphere like?
 - Read the college newspaper.
 - Talk to students (even beyond your tour guide.) What do they like and dislike?
 - Go to the library. Is it welcoming? Do they have the materials you will need?
 - If you will commute, how are the services for commuters? Do offices have hours that are convenient for YOU?

STEP III:

- **Continue selecting courses that transfer appropriately within your program of study.**
- **Apply for admission.** Submit your applications along with **all** of your official transcripts, and AP and CLEP test scores (if you have any).
 - Even if you know the college you want to attend, you may still want to consider applying to more than one college just to be sure. Many students will apply to at least 3 institutions – one college where you know you will be accepted; one that might be considered a "long shot"; and at least 2 colleges that meet all of your needs but may or may not accept you. Applying to more than one institution will give you choices and that's always a good thing!
 - Depending upon the college and major of study, high school transcripts and test scores such as ACT or SAT may also be required. Check with the Admissions Office before applying.
 - If references are needed, use professors who know you. Ask them early and provide them with a stamped, addressed envelope to make the task easy.
- **Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** Make sure to include the institution codes for all of the colleges or universities to which you plan to apply. The key to maximizing financial aid is applying early and meeting all of the deadlines!
- **Once admitted, send in your deposit and complete specific scholarship applications.** Apply for housing, if needed.
- **Talk with advisors and academic professionals at your transfer institution.** Call ahead for an appointment. Find out if orientation is required and stay up-to-date on changes to program requirements.

- **Meet with your current college advisor to discuss future plans.** If you are planning to transfer the next semester, find out from your advisor what you need to do to leave your current institution and transfer to another. If you are working toward an associate degree, verify your eligibility to graduate and discuss what you need to do next to earn your degree.

STEP IV:

- **Complete transferable coursework at your current institution.**
- **If you are earning an Associate Degree, apply for your Associate Degree and Graduation.**
- **Send official transcripts at the end of your last semester to your transfer institution.** Make sure you do not have any financial/administrative holds that might prohibit your transcript from being sent.
- **Attend the new student orientation or use online orientation tools to become familiar with your new college or university.** Be sure to request maps, directories, tour information and other essentials before you start classes.
- **Register for courses at your transfer institution.**



For additional information about transferring college credits in Pennsylvania, go to www.PATRAC.org.