

## Reverse Transfer

### The National Need to Increase Education Attainment

- As the nation works toward increasing higher education attainment, the higher education community is looking for ways to increase successful degree completion rates for students enrolled in higher education.
- Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce estimates that at the current production rate in higher education, the economy will face a shortage of 5 million workers with the necessary education and training by 2020.
- Moreover, by 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the economy will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school.
- Specifically, there has been a lot of dialogue about the need to increase the percentage of Americans with high quality degrees, certificates or other credentials to 60% if we are to meet future workforce needs.
- This goal cannot be reached without innovative ways of increasing degree completion. One such innovation is to provide the higher education community the ability to incorporate “*Reverse Transfer*” into its toolkit.

### What is Reverse Transfer?

- The most common notion of transfer is a “*Vertical Transfer*”, which is the process where a student transfers from a two-year institution to a four-year institution and is able to “carry forward” some, if not all, of the credits that the student earned at a two-year institution toward a degree at a four-year institution.
- However, there are no processes or guidelines for sharing student credit information from four-year to two-year year institutions for the possible award of degrees or certificates from a two-year institution.
- “*Reverse Transfer*” is the transfer of credits from a four-year institution to a two-year institution from which a student transferred for the purpose of facilitating the awarding of a degree or certificate.
- In other words, students would still be required to meet a certain number of *combined* credits between a two-year and four-year institution, plus meet all of the degree or certificate requirements from a two-year institution, in order to be awarded an associate’s degree or certificate.

## **Why Reverse Transfer?**

- The concept of “*Reverse Transfer*” has been gaining traction as institutions and states seek new ways to recognize credits that students have earned that did not result in the awarding of a degree or certificate.
- The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) has identified 1.2 million individuals that have completed more than 60 credit hours, but were not awarded a degree or certificate.
- The incorporation of “*Reverse Transfer*” as a practice within the higher education community would provide a much needed flexibility to increase college education attainment levels and prove to be beneficial to meeting future workforce needs.

## **AACRAO Recommendation Regarding Reserve Transfer**

- AACRAO supports the creation of a new exemption that will allow the sharing of student information between institutions that will facilitate increased college completion rates.
- AACRAO would propose the following amended language:

**Amend Section 444 (b) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g(b)(1) in the following manner:**

**In paragraph (1) and subparagraph (K)(ii) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon; and in subparagraph (L) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and” and insert the following language after subparagraph (L)**

*“an institution of postsecondary education in which the student was previously enrolled, to which records of postsecondary coursework and credits are sent for the purpose of applying such coursework and credits towards completion of a recognized postsecondary credential (as that term is defined in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102)), upon condition that the student provides written consent prior to receiving such credential.”.*

- Such language would allow an institution to share academic records with another institution for the goal of conferring a degree. This language would also meet FERPA standards of consent, since the institution would need to confirm that the student does in fact want to receive a degree from that institution.

### **About AACRAO**

Founded in 1910, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) is one of the oldest nonprofit higher education associations in the nation and represents approximately 11,000 higher education admissions and registration professionals who represent more than 2,600 institutions and agencies in the United States.

Our mission is to provide guidelines and standards for the higher education community regarding record management, admissions, enrollment management, administrative information technology and student services.

*Advancing Global Higher Education*

AACRAO Government Relations Staff:  
William R. Gil, 202-355-1080 [gilw@accrao.org](mailto:gilw@accrao.org)  
Michelle Mott, 202-263-0295, [mottm@accrao.org](mailto:mottm@accrao.org)  
Quintina Barnett Gallion, 202-355-1052, [gallionq@aacrao.org](mailto:gallionq@aacrao.org)