PROGRESS REPORT
ON
ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER
FOR
ARIZONA PUBLIC
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Academic Year
2008-2009

Submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee

By

The Arizona Board of Regents

and

The Arizona Community Colleges

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Highlights

The 2008-09 academic year offered several advancements to Arizona's well established transfer system.

AZTransfer.com is launched:
- AZTransfer.com, Arizona's redesigned web site for transfer students, went live in August 2008. Since the redesign, there has been a significant increase in the web usage, with a 24% increase in 'hits' over the previous year.

17% increase in students completing the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC).
- Over 6100 students had an AGEC certified for FY2009, an increase of over 900 or 17% over the previous year . The AGEC is the foundation of transfer articulation in Arizona and has a positive correlation to student success at the universities.

Creating a Culture of Transfer:
- The Academic Programs Articulation Steering Committee (APASC) initiated a new direction in community college-university relations on transfer articulation at its 2009 retreat, with the theme, "Creating A Culture of Transfer". Four priorities emerged: data driven decision making; improved marketing of the statewide transfer system; improved student services related to transfer students; and policies that support student success.

Better Information for Community College Faculty on Course Equivalencies.
- Arizona Course Equivalency Tracking System [ACETS], the system by which community colleges submit courses to the universities for course equivalencies, continues to be enhanced to meet the needs of the users. A change in the system now requires that university faculty provide feedback to community college faculty who request a direct equivalency, if it's not deemed equivalent. The community college faculty member will be able to more effectively pursue the direct equivalency, if desired.

Lumina *Making Opportunity Affordable (MOA)* Grant Proposal Submitted
- The Arizona MOA Team submitted the state's proposal to Lumina Foundation for Education on September 1, 2009. The proposal focused on addressing accessibility and affordability through new institutional models and, if funded, would provide resources to develop online advising tools for students. The proposal was developed by a state wide team with board representation including the governor's office, the Arizona legislature, community college and university academic leaders, and the business community.

Improving the process to develop match transcript information with program requirements
- Two institutions have installed and two additional community college districts are in the process of installing the Interface Management Systems [IMS] software which uploads student information into the interactive academic program planning guides, which match a student's courses against university program requirements. This software replaces a manual course by course process.

2008- 2009 Progress Report
ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER FOR
ARIZONA PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

BACKGROUND

In 1996, the Arizona Legislature directed the state's public community colleges and universities to cooperate in articulating course transfers and academic programs, and to collaborate in identifying and meeting the postsecondary education needs of Arizona citizens. In response to this legislative directive, the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) and the State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona (SBDCCA) enhanced existing collaborative efforts and implemented services and procedures. When the SBDCCA was disestablished by the state legislature in 2003, the community college responsibilities were assumed by their district governing boards. The oversight of the Joint Conference Committee (JCC) consisting of members of both the public universities and community college districts has ensured cooperation and collaboration. As required, regular progress reports have been submitted to the legislature, 1996-2002 from ABOR and SBDCCA and since 2003, from ABOR and the community colleges through the Arizona Community Colleges Association (ACCA).

• Since 1996, the report has outlined progress implementing the statewide transfer model. The model was designed by the statewide Transfer Articulation Task Force (TATF) and is now being guided by the Academic Program Articulation Steering Committee (APASC), a group of community college and university academic officers. The TATF designated the JCC and APASC as the groups responsible for overseeing and implementing the transfer model.

• Since 1998, the report to the Legislature has addressed a collaborative process to identify and meet statewide postsecondary needs. The progress report that follows addresses both postsecondary needs and articulation. It is submitted to the legislature in response to ARS 15-1824, as shown below.

ARS 15-1824. Transfer Articulation; annual report.

The community colleges and universities shall cooperate in operating a statewide articulation and transfer system, including the process for transfer of lower division general education credits, general elective credits and curriculum requirements for approved majors to facilitate the transfer of community college students to Arizona public universities without a loss of credit toward a baccalaureate degree and that the post secondary education needs of students statewide are met without unnecessary duplication of programs. B. The Arizona board of regents and the community colleges shall submit an annual report of their progress on both articulation and meeting statewide postsecondary education needs to the joint legislative budget committee on or before December 15 and shall provide a copy of this report to the secretary of state and the director of the Arizona state library, archives and public records.

DESIGN OF THE ARIZONA TRANSFER ARTICULATION SUPPORT SYSTEMS [ATASS]

Overview
Collaborative leadership provided by the Arizona Board of Regents and Arizona community colleges has enabled the ongoing and successful implementation of the transfer model. The Academic Program Articulation Steering Committee (APASC) has responsibility for the oversight of the implementation and evaluation of the model. During this year, there has been continuous improvement to and on-going refinement of many components of the model. Significant efforts have been made to ensure that accurate and timely information is available to the various task forces, committees and institutions regarding policies and processes. The implementation of the model has been facilitated through the efforts of the staff, the active involvement of members of the Articulation Task Forces (ATFs) and the appropriate use of technology.

Improvements to the Arizona Transfer Articulation Support Systems [ATASS]

- Successful New Website for Students and Advisors .
  - The redesigned website "aztransfer.com" went live in August 2008 and student use has increased considerably.
  - A new 'look' and improved navigation makes it easier for students to find what they need.
  - The new website also is easier to use by advisors and others who work with students
  - Usage is up by 24% over the previous year.
- Arizona Course Equivalency Tracking System [ACETS], for determining community college course equivalencies at the universities has been improved for smoother functionality, and better communications. Universities will now provide specific feedback to the community colleges for courses which do not receive the direct equivalency that was requested.
- Admissions and Records ATF Portal Page has expanded information for community colleges to help students prepare to transfer.
  - Information on International Transfer Admission to the universities; and
  - Copies of community college transcripts with the AGEC and associate degree designated so credential evaluators become familiar with where those are located.
- Virtual meetings were conducted to determine their potential effectiveness for ATF meetings, anticipating additional institutional budget cuts.

Articulation Task Force System
Forty discipline specific Articulation Task Force (ATF) groups, comprised of faculty from public and tribal community colleges and universities, provide a significant part of the articulation infrastructure for addressing academic issues. Each ATF meets at least annually and addresses program and course articulation between and among institutions, maintains ongoing discussions regarding curricular changes in courses and/or programs already articulated, courses and programs to be developed and other institutional changes.

System for Quality Improvement: The ATF infrastructure provides a mechanism for ongoing quality improvement. Faculty ATFs have, over the last several years, been asked to evaluate the institutional equivalencies for Advanced Placement (AP) exams and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams to work toward common cut scores statewide. Fifty-nine percent of the AP exams now have common cut scores and thirty-three percent of CLEP exams have common cut scores. Since on-going consideration of additional AP and CLEP exams is now part of the standard ATF agenda, these percentages may increase. Appropriate ATFs will be asked in the fall of 2009 to investigate possible common cut scores for International Baccalaureate exams.

- Training for ATF Members
  Training for all Articulation Task Force (ATF) chairs and members is delivered, in part, at the institutional level by other ATF members. This reflects the strength at participating institutions in local expertise about ATF processes and goals, and the strong institutional commitment to support the ATFs. Additionally, there are training PowerPoint presentations for chairs, hosts and members online, and an ATF Handbook. These online tools are available on the Faculty/Admin page of the aztransfer.com website.

- ATF Effectiveness
  During the 2009 ATF meetings, the ATF Effectiveness Committee is requesting feedback from each, to assess the current ATF structure and determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the model. Faculty comments will be summarized and shared with APASC for further discussion in the Spring of 2010.

CURRICULUM
The transfer model was designed to allow for flexibility at the institutional level and to support the dynamic needs of college and university curricula. The design of the transfer model includes the general education core that is common and transferable between and among the community/tribal colleges and the public universities.

- Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC): The AGEC constitutes over half (35-38) of the curricular unit requirements for the transfer associate degrees. Based in part on the results of the Hezel Associate's evaluation of ATASS, and in part on data generated by ASSIST, completion of the AGEC strongly promotes academic success. The chart in Appendix 1 demonstrates the number of students who received an AGEC over the last several years.
- Common Courses: Many majors common among the universities also have courses in common. The lower division courses may be completed at the community colleges and will apply to a baccalaureate degree upon transfer. This is especially helpful to students who are clear about a major but not the university which they plan to attend.
- Pathways/Associate Degrees: For students who know the major they wish to pursue, roadmaps or "pathways" have been developed which generally include an AGEC and often common courses.

System Support
A. Management
Consistent with the 1996 Transfer Articulation Task Force (TATF) recommendations, the followingcomponents of a statewide approach to management are in place to support the Arizona TransferArticulation Support System (ATASS).

- Staffing: Six positions are funded jointly by the legislature, the community and tribal colleges and the universities to support statewide efforts:
  - Two technical analysts;
  - Two ASSIST staff;
  - Business analyst; and
  - Articulation facilitator
- Financial Resources: The state, the universities, the community college districts and the two tribal colleges jointly fund ATASS. The FY 09 approved ATASS budget was $865,584. Because of salary savings and savings initiated by the technology team, the budget was reduced by $25,000 to $840,584.

B. Computer Based Systems
   The Arizona Transfer Articulation Support System's budget appropriation has provided the
   resources necessary for on-going development and maintenance of the AZTransfer.com website
   and the Arizona State System for Information on Student Transfer (ASSIST).

   1. AZTransfer.com
      - The redesigned website, launched in August of 2008, has resulted in a significant
        increase in web usage. 2008-09 has been the first complete year collecting usage
        statistics after deploying the new website. The number of hits to the website has
        increased by 24% over the previous year.

Academic Year	Number of Hits
2007-2008	11.9 Million
2008-2009	15.9 Million

      - Peak Usage: The usage during the peak month in the 2009 AY was double the usage
        during the previous year's peak month.
      - The number of services developed and supported by the AZTransfer.com staff has also
        increased this year. Appendix 2 outlines the various applications and services.

   2. Arizona State System for Information on Student Transfer (ASSIST)
      Participation by Arizona's public institutions in the Arizona State System for Information on
      Student Transfer (ASSIST) is strong with continual improvements in the timeliness and quality
      of the data. The ASSIST database currently holds records for over 2.3 million current and
      former students who have taken over 22 million courses.
      - ASSIST data are used by community college in part to:
        o track persistence, time-to-degree, and GPAs of their students at other Arizona public
          institutions
        o comply with reporting requirements for the federal Carl Perkins III and Student Right to
          Know information,
        o comply with state dual enrollment course reports, and grant reports for federal and
          non-profit agencies.
      - ASSIST data are used by the universities in part to:
        o generate university system-wide reports to APASC and ABOR on topics such as
          persistence rates, graduation rates and average university GPA by transfer students
          broken down by transfer hours and transfer degrees.
        o conduct special studies focusing on the transfer student profile, transfer rates, and
          enrollment patterns of their key feeder institutions.
      - Capabilities of the ASSIST database continue to expand
      - Considerable effort was devoted during the year to finalize the definitions and methodology
        to measure transfer rates for Arizona public postsecondary institutions. Statewide and
        institutional transfer rates for the new-to-higher education cohorts have been tracked since
        2001-02, providing every institution with a baseline.

   3. Interface Management Systems
      APASC, in support of its mission to improve the effectiveness of the transfer model, has entered
      into a contract with Interface Management Systems (IMS), with funds from ABOR, which will
      provide students attending Arizona's public institutions with the ability to import their own

academic history into the u.select to develop a personal planning guide. Planning guides are designed to provide students with an *unofficial* transfer audit, showing how the courses they have completed at Arizona public post-secondary institutions apply toward their anticipated baccalaureate degrees. Currently, generating a planning guide requires a student to hand-enter each course. With the interface provided by IMS, students will be able to request that their academic records be sent to the aztransfer.com system by simply pushing a few keys. Pima Community College agreed to pilot this and has fully implemented the uploading of planning guides. This last year, Arizona State University and Cochise College have also implemented the IMS Interface. Central Arizona College and Northland Pioneer College are in the process of installation.

Transfer System Effectiveness and Accountability
A. Accountability
In the 2006-07 FY, Hezel Associates were contracted to provide the first objective analysis of the transfer model, and a baseline for subsequent studies. The report indicated a strong system, but provided direction for improvements, most of which are being implemented. ASSIST helps monitor transfer and student success and provides data for policy development and other changes.

B. Institutional Participation
APASC conducts an annual analysis of institutional participation in the discipline-specific Articulation Task Forces and other committees by monitoring member attendance and reporting back to the chief academic officers of the institutions when lack of attendance is identified. With the significant decreases in institutional budgets this last year, participation was impacted. Virtual meetings are being considered as viable meeting options for cost efficiency.

C. Advising and Transfer Student Ombudspersons
A key provision of the 1996 transfer model design was to improve academic advising, and one of the priorities for APASC has been to support efforts to provide timely, accurate and effective advising for transfer students. The Hezel study reiterated the importance of academic advising to the success of transfer students. Based in part on the study's recommendations, improving advisor training and communication will continue to be a focus this year. Arizona has submitted a grant proposal to be considered for funding from the Lumina Foundation. If selected, it is anticipated that an online adviser training tool will be developed. See Appendix 3 for more information on the "Making Opportunity Affordable in Arizona" initiative.

D. Admissions and Records ATF
The Admissions and Records ATF members assisted in the development of a document that provides academic advisors with general information demonstrating how the universities assess international students and credentials in the admission process, as it applies to the transfer agreements. This document has been posted on the Admissions and Records portal page. Additionally, copies of community college transcripts are available online, for more efficient transcript evaluation. Additionally, the implications and implementation of Prop 300, regarding undocumented alien students, and SAIS legislation are ongoing conversations.

JOINTLY IDENTIFYING AND MEETING THE STATE'S POSTSECONDARY NEEDS
During 2008-2009, the Arizona public community colleges and universities have acted jointly to meet the postsecondary needs of Arizona citizens. Through the statewide systems of committees and task force groups, there are ongoing opportunities for the community colleges and the universities to work together to plan and develop academic programs and articulation agreements and to develop policies and procedures that facilitate student transfer.
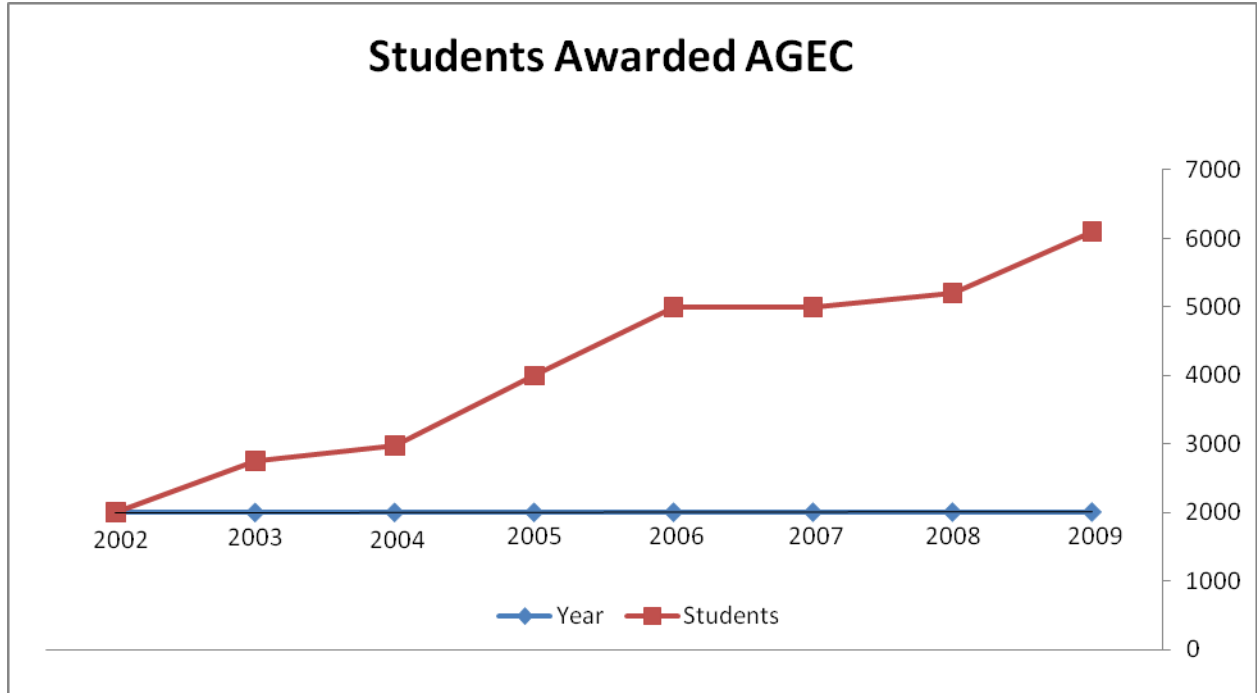
Creating a Culture of Transfer

The 2009 APASC Retreat focused on "creating a culture of transfer" in the state of Arizona. During that retreat Chief Academic Officers and/or their designees from each community college and university developed a set of priorities that more effectively support the success of transfer students in the transfer process. Four broad areas emerged on which APASC members will focus their attention this upcoming year. Committees have been established to address these priorities.

- Data-Driven Decisions: Data will be more efficiently utilized to review the strength of the transfer system and will be the foundation for policy decision making:
  - o The Arizona Board of Regents strengthened the university transfer admission policy based on ASSIST generated data.
- Marketing: Marketing the model effectively must be pursued to ensure all constituents are familiar with the transfer process and opportunities and to promote the efficient use of the public and tribal institutions for baccalaureate degree completion:
  - o The first attempt for a strategic marketing campaign was the development of a DVD for high school juniors and supporting documents including: posters; brochures; bookmarks and wallet card. Although at this point anecdotal, there is evidence that high school counselors are using the system with their students. Future evaluation will incorporate high school counselor opinions.
  - o Bookmarks promoting the new AZTransfer.com website have been distributed to ATASS institutions for distribution.
- Improve Student Services: To ensure student access and success, services need to be in place to support students at all stages of the postsecondary journey, to ensure that they stay on track academically and clearly understanding the transfer policies, practices and curriculum. Additionally, financial aid opportunities need to be transparent to ensure that finances are not a barrier toward degree completion
- Policies for Student Success: Policies need to be reviewed to ensure they support appropriate academic preparation promoting student success.
  - o As mentioned above the Arizona Board of Regents' admission policy for transfer students was revised in August 2009 to establish criteria for admission based on the data related to student success. It is anticipated that this policy will result in more community college students who transfer to the universities completing their degrees.
  - o Data used to make that decision can be found in Appendix 4.

AFH: 9.24.09; rev: 10.26.09 11.02.2009

Appendix 1

Students Awarded AGEC

Appendix 2

Web Application Key

AGECWeb *Arizona General Education Curriculum Database* https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/AGEC	A tool which allows (1) data-entry from community and tribal colleges to maintain their lists of AGEC courses, and (2) students to view the most up-to-date information on AGEC courses through the Major Guides.
ACETS Arizona Course Equivalency Tracking System https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/acets	The electronic process by which community and tribal colleges submit their courses to the universities for evaluation. Evaluated courses then appear in the Course Equivalency Guide (CEG).
ACRES *Arizona Curriculum Review and Evaluation System* https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/AGEC	An electronic curriculum routing system designed to be customized for each institution. Developed as a companion tool to ACETS, it allows courses to follow an approval process (with the final step, for community colleges, being the ACETS submissions).
ATF Chatlines *Articulation Task Force Chatlines* https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/ATF	A comprehensive resource which allows both institutional and statewide staff to maintain membership databases, curriculum (prefixes, degrees and pathways), meeting reports, and the master statewide calendar. Also, Chatlines has features for submitting action items, useful links to portal pages, and help documentation.
CEG *Course Equivalency Guide* https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Admin_CEG	Provides articulation information, i.e. how community college courses transfer to the three public universities.
Major Guides http://www.aztransfer.com/MajorGuides	For students who have selected a major but not a university. This source provides recommended lower division courses at the student's community college that will meet the requirements for that major at any of the three universities.
IMS Interface http://www.redlanternu.com/uselect/interface	"Interface Management System," is software installed locally at institutions which reads student records for the purpose of running u.select planning guides; these interfaces are efficient time and labor-saving tools and are compliant with FERPA confidentiality regulations.
Transfer Guides http://www.aztransfer.com/TransferGuides	For students who have selected a major and a university. Transfer Guides provide information for Arizona community college students about the courses they may take at the college that will meet degree requirements for a particular university bachelor's degree.
TSO Chatlines *Transfer Student Ombudspersons Chatlines* https://az.transfer.org/cgi-bin/WebObjects/TSO	Each Arizona college and university has a designated TSO who handles student issues which come up during the transfer transition. Any issues are recorded on an electronic form and tracked.
U.Select Planning Guides https://az.transfer.org:8080/cas	A tool which allows students to enter their coursework to determine their progress towards selected bachelor's degrees at the universities; automatic upload of community college transcripts is also an option for colleges which have installed the required IMS software. Once courses are entered, students may explore any of the majors that are available for applicability of their completed and planned coursework.

Appendix 3

MAKING OPPORTUNITY AFFORDABLE IN ARIZONA
A Higher Education Initiative of the Lumina Foundation for Education

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ARIZONA PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT IMPERATIVE

Purpose

The purpose of the Arizona Productivity Improvement Imperative is to complete a comprehensive redesign of the state's higher education system in order to expand capacity, serve more students at lower cost, and achieve completion and degree goals.

Methods and Values

The redesign will be:

- Informed by data and analysis that pinpoint the most compelling opportunities for student success.
- Focused on reducing or eliminating policy barriers that impede greater production of postsecondary education outcomes.
- Concentrated on student advancement and effective navigation through the higher education system.
- Communicated to higher education key stakeholders, including the public, in order to support and sustain its continued success.
- Achieved by optimal participation from all major players in an extraordinary statewide policy design process.
- Evaluated regularly to assess progress, make mid-course corrections, and learn from implementation experience.
- Measured by the extent to which degree production goals are actually achieved at lower cost to students, institutions and the state.

Key Elements

There are five key elements of the redesign:

1. Creating a student-centered system that improves advising and career planning, provides seamless pathways to the full range of statewide postsecondary opportunities, includes joint admission to both two-year and four-year institutions, and tracks student success.

2. Creating four new institutional structures to produce more degrees at lower costs: (a) Deeply-integrated community college/university partnership campuses; (b) Regional universities established in partnership with community colleges; (c) New four-year baccalaureate campuses; and (d) New collaborative Arizona Public University Centers. These four structures will be phased in at two-year benchmarks through full build-out by 2020.

3. Building a completely new Higher Education Finance Model for Arizona that will maximize predictability, productivity and sustainability. The model design, which is being undertaken immediately, will include provisions for (a) a dedicated funding stream, (b) incentivizing course, transfer and degree completion, (c) generating and reinvesting savings, and (d) aligning state/local funding,, tuition-setting and student financial aid.

4. Planning for an improved coordination/governance system so as to optimize statewide goals of accessibility, affordability, quality and accountability.

5. Developing a communications and public engagement program that raises awareness levels and identifies bold actions to achieve Arizona goals – through postsecondary education – for economic development, quality of life and social justice.

Arizona University System
Students Entering as New AZCC Transfers in Fall 2004

| | | | | Status as of 21st-Day: | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | Fall 2005 Enrolled or Graduated | | Fall 2006 Enrolled or Graduated | | Fall 2007 Enrolled or Graduated | | Fall 2008 Enrolled or Graduated | | Fall 2008 Graduated | | |
Transfer Credits	Degree Status	Entering Number	First Sem GPA	Percent	CGPA	Percent	CGPA	Percent	CGPA	Percent	CGPA	Percent	CGPA	Total Univ Earned Hrs
All Students	AGEC Only	248	2.87	85.9%	3.05	83.1%	3.08	78.6%	3.12	78.2%	3.18	72.2%	3.18	67.6
	ASSC Only (AGS)	191	2.83	86.9%	3.05	80.1%	3.07	79.1%	3.12	75.4%	3.19	71.2%	3.19	67.1
	Both AGEC and ASSC	780	3.02	86.4%	3.24	80.8%	3.31	78.7%	3.35	78.1%	3.39	73.3%	3.39	65.5
	Neither AGEC nor ASSC	1,770	2.72	79.2%	3.01	71.5%	3.11	68.9%	3.16	66.7%	3.28	57.1%	3.29	71.4
	Total	2,989	2.82	82.1%	3.08	75.4%	3.16	72.9%	3.21	71.2%	3.30	63.5%	3.30	69.0
12-34	Neither AGEC nor ASSC	359	2.35	68.5%	2.75	56.5%	2.89	53.2%	2.97	47.1%	3.25	31.5%	3.24	97.6
35-59	AGEC Only	151	2.80	86.1%	3.03	81.5%	3.07	78.1%	3.11	78.1%	3.17	72.2%	3.17	69.2
	Neither AGEC nor ASSC	749	2.65	77.7%	2.98	70.1%	3.06	67.4%	3.11	66.1%	3.22	55.7%	3.23	72.3
	Total	900	2.68	79.1%	2.99	72.0%	3.07	69.2%	3.11	68.1%	3.22	58.4%	3.22	71.7
60+	AGEC Only	97	2.99	85.6%	3.08	85.6%	3.09	79.4%	3.14	78.4%	3.19	72.2%	3.19	65.1
	ASSC Only (AGS)	191	2.83	86.9%	3.05	80.1%	3.07	79.1%	3.12	75.4%	3.19	71.2%	3.19	67.1
	Both AGEC and ASSC	780	3.02	86.4%	3.24	80.8%	3.31	78.7%	3.35	78.1%	3.39	73.3%	3.39	65.5
	Neither AGEC nor ASSC	662	2.98	86.6%	3.16	81.1%	3.23	79.2%	3.27	78.1%	3.34	72.5%	3.34	64.4
	Total	1,730	2.99	86.5%	3.17	81.1%	3.24	79.0%	3.28	77.8%	3.34	72.7%	3.34	65.2

AZCC Transfers have 12 or more hours from one or more Arizona community college and less than 12 hours from any other institution.

Associate degrees reflect transfer degrees only; AAS degrees are not included.

Excludes students with a non-Arizona Associate degree and Maricopa students with a Transfer Partnership Degree.

January 5, 2009