



CREDIT

when it's due

Hawaii

STATE PROFILE

State Funder: The Kresge Foundation

About Credit When It's Due

The Credit When It's Due (CWID) initiative is funded by six foundations and is supporting 15 states to develop reverse transfer programs and policies. Reverse transfer enables students to receive an associate's degree when students meet associate's degree requirements after transfer to a 4-year college or university.

State Implementation Context

The University of Hawai'i (UH) began work on reverse transfer prior to formal participation in CWID through participation in initiatives such as Achieving the Dream, Complete College America, and other statewide college completion planning activities. UH developed its own cloud-based, integrated, online advising and degree attainment support system called STAR Academic Pathway, which has been enhanced to accommodate reverse transfer system-wide.

Key Implementation Strategies

Term-to-Term Projected Outcomes and Degree Audits. To understand the expected number of reverse transfer eligible students each semester, UH employed a process it called a "pipeline analysis." The pipeline analysis projects that every semester approximately 500 students enter the UH 4-year campuses from the UH 2-year campuses without an associate's degree and approximately the same amount exit the other end of the pipeline by: (a) the student receives the reverse transfer associate's degree, (b) the student stops-out of UH without having met the requirements for an associate's degree, or

(c) the student graduates from the 4-year campus with a bachelor's degree. Based on this analysis, UH predicts that approximately 300 transfer students are eligible for reverse transfer every semester and will receive an associate's degree.

Refinements to UH's STAR Cloud and Policy Enactment. In Version 1.0 of the reverse transfer process, UH designed end-to-end automation of reverse transfer by: identifying eligible students, transporting records, applying transfer articulation policies to the records, and running degree audits in the UH STAR cloud system. In Version 1.0, the three key challenges addressed were: (a) upper-division courses that did not articulate to lower-division courses; (b) transfer articulation deficiencies; and (c) students dropped-out of 4-year institutions between consecutive semesters when audits were conducted. Also in Version 1.0, several new policies were enacted, including: removing associate's degree graduation fees for reverse transfer students, modifying FERPA policies to allow student information to flow across campuses, designing an opt-out consent policy for the purpose of reverse transfer, and creating global area competencies/equivalencies.

Establishment of Global Area Competencies/Equivalencies (Version 2.0). In Version 2.0 of UH's reverse transfer process, UH established and integrated global area competencies and equivalencies. For courses taken from Fall 2012 to present, global equivalencies allow upper-division courses to articulate to lower-division courses if those courses include similar competencies in the general education curriculum. Of the students who have received an associate's degree through reverse transfer, approximately 60% received it because of the new the new global equivalencies.

Campus-Specific Agreements. In addition to the global competencies applied to all UH campuses, UH 2- and 4-year campuses created specific agreements for the purpose of reverse transfer such as: (a) an upper-level oral communication course at a 4-year campus that meets the 2-year campus communication course requirement; (b) a student who completed 50% of the second language requirement at the 4-year campus that fulfills the second language requirement at the 2-year campus; and (c) a "Hawaiian emphasis course" required by the 2-year campus that can be fulfilled by any course in the UH system designated as "Hawaiian Asian Pacific." These agreements were created after in-depth analysis of the leading reasons students were ineligible for reverse transfer associate's degrees. These agreements also apply to students graduating with traditional associate's degrees.

Reverse Transfer Notation. Because of recent policy changes related to global equivalencies and campus agreements, there are a few ways in which students can meet associate's degree requirements for the purpose of reverse transfer. For each reverse transfer degree that is conferred, the student record indicates how the student has met the degree requirements through global equivalencies, campus agreements, and existing degree requirements. This notation eased concerns of registrars and staff at 2-year campuses conferring associate's degrees and allowed UH to monitor the ways in which students are meeting degree requirements over time.

Implementation Timeline

Spring 2013: UH implemented Version 1.0 of the reverse transfer process using STAR, including end-to-end automation of the identification of the student population, the transport of records, transfer equivalencies, and degree audits.

June 2013: The first reverse transfer associate's degrees were conferred.

Summer 2013: Analysis of Version 1.0 reverse transfer process revealed key structural challenges that limited UH from reaching 50% of its reverse transfer goal regardless of the automation involved.

Fall 2013: UH implemented Version 2.0 of the reverse transfer process that incorporated enhancements to address challenges experienced in Version 1.0, including the adoption of global equivalencies.

January 2014: UH began reviewing stop-outs from 4-year institutions since 2003 and identified many students who were within a couple courses from an associate's degree.

Summer 2014: UH used the reverse transfer technology to implement "Optimal point of transfer," a real-time technology that predicts the best time a student should transfer to the four-year campus based on the students' program of study.

January 2015: Identified additional associate's degrees that the UH would consider for Reverse Transfer, including STEM-related associate's degrees.



Credentials awarded as of May 2015: **1,458**

Credential Type(s): Associate in Arts and Associate in Science



Credit When It's Due: Hawaii Profile



Reverse Transfer Process

Based on a review of implementation across CWID states, OCCRL developed a framework for the reverse transfer process that consists of five broad processes, and Hawaii's process is applied to this framework.

1. **Student Identification:** The STAR system identifies students who have originated from a UH 2-year campus and meet the state's eligibility requirements.
2. **Consent:** Because data are centrally located in the STAR server, consent does not occur until after the degree audit. The consent process is an opt-out policy, so if students are eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree, UH sends them an email and the degree is conferred unless students indicate they do not wish to receive the degree.
3. **Transcript Exchange:** A transcript does not need to be exchanged because UH stores transcript data centrally in the STAR cloud.
4. **Degree Audit:** Degree audits are conducted using the STAR cloud, and audits are confirmed by 2-year campus registrars for official degree conferral.
5. **Degree Conferral and Advising:** UH audits degrees each term and organizes students into seven categories, and the registrars and counselors follow a prescribed course of action for degree conferral for each category:
 - Eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and continuing at a UH 4-year campus ▶ Associate's degree conferred
 - Eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and stopped-out of a UH 4-year campus ▶ Associate's degree conferred
 - Eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and receiving bachelor's degree from a UH 4-year campus ▶ No associate's degree conferred
 - NOT eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and stopped-out of a UH 4-year campus, however, only need one more course ▶ Case management
 - NOT eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree, dropped out of a UH 4-year campus, and need more than one course- ▶ Case management
 - NOT eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and receiving a bachelor's degree from a UH 4-year campus ▶ No associate's degree conferred
 - NOT eligible for a reverse transfer associate's degree and continuing enrollment at a UH 4-year campus ▶ No associate's degree conferred

Implementation Successes and Challenges

Successes: Building from UH's reverse transfer degree conferral work and the establishment of global equivalencies, UH implemented processes for auto-conferral of certificates and auto-identification of traditional graduates. Technology updates made during the grant period allow advisors to use the STAR system and communicate to

students that upon completion of current courses, they will have met the requirements for their reverse transfer associate's degree. UH awarded mini-grants to 2-year campuses to offset initial costs of moving to auto-degree conferral as part of the second year of CWID funding.

UH's processes for identifying students who are one or more courses away from the associate's degree resulted in the development of a case management process to support students to let them know the courses they need for the associate's degree. Case management or work flow software will be used by 2-year campuses to document work with students who have dropped-out of the 4-year campus or who are one course away from fulfilling requirements for the reverse transfer associate's degree. UH also provided 2-year campuses with detailed, step-by-step procedures for automatic degree conferrals with exact timelines, in collaboration with Chancellors and Vice Chancellors of the UH 2-year campuses who championed the process.

Reverse transfer has had a very significant impact on how degrees are awarded in the UH system by helping to identify practices that were inhibiting graduation. It also changed the paradigm from students telling UH they are ready to graduate, to UH congratulating students and communicating to them that they met the associate's degree requirements and that UH will graduate them unless they opt-out of reverse transfer.

Challenges: Despite UH's centralized and automated system to identify reverse transfer eligible students, campus registrars and counselors have historically completed manual degree audits. The automation of degree audits and conferrals was difficult for some campuses, resulting in different adoption rates. UH has implemented two key strategies to further improve trust and ensure the reliability of reverse transfer automation: (a) securing the data regarding students' reverse transfer eligibility and ineligibility, and (b) documenting the algorithm for how the STAR cloud determines eligibility and provides this information to the registrars and counselors. To address the challenge of resource constraints at UH 2-year campuses, UH has built in mechanisms for sustaining increased degree conferrals through automation and supporting reverse transfer degree conferrals during mid-semester down-time in the registrar's offices. Despite the automation of reverse transfer via STAR, adequate capacity to maintain STAR and implement reverse transfer is necessary at the institutional level.

Sustainability

Automation of the graduation process at UH began with reverse transfer and has impacted the awarding of all credentials at UH. Reverse transfer is embedded in system and institutional practice and will continue beyond the grand period. In 2015, the Hawaii state legislature passed a bill that provides funds for the additional development of the STAR program so UH can further improve STAR to support reverse transfer and additional degree completion initiatives.

Institutions Participating in Credit When It's Due

Hawai'i Community College
Honolulu Community College
Kapi'olani Community College
Kaua'i Community College
Leeward Community College
University of Hawai'i-Hilo

University of Hawai'i-Manoa
University of Hawai'i
Maui College
University of Hawai'i-West Oahu
Windward Community College

This publication was prepared pursuant to a contract awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in October 2012 to OCCRL, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Preliminary research associated with this project was funded by Lumina Foundation in July-September 2012. ©2015 Board of Trustees, University of Illinois

State Contacts: Gary Rodwell (grodwell@hawaii.edu) and John Morton (jmorton@hawaii.edu)
OCCRL: occrl@illinois.edu | CWID is online at <http://occrl.illinois.edu/projects/cwid>