

**NISTS 2023**

# BE A CONNECTOR FOR TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS

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The following presentation was given at the 21st Annual Conference for the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students. Please cite responsibly and direct questions to the original presenter(s).

*Educational Poster*

## **2816 - Reverse Transfer: Students Thoughts and Observation**

Transition Programs and Supports, Matriculation Trends and Issues

A series of focus groups were done with transfer students to discuss their thoughts and feelings about reverse transfer agreements. This session will present the results of the focus groups and discuss observations and changes that resulted from the student feedback.

**Lisa Helm**, *Director of Transfer and Persistence Initiatives*  
Governors State University

# Reverse Transfer: Students Thoughts and Observation



***Governors State***  
UNIVERSITY

# A Little About GSU...

- Public university in University Park, IL (30 miles from Chicago)
- Minority-serving institution
- Less than 5,000 students (undergrad, grad, doctoral)
- Founded as an upper division and graduate university
- Started admitting first-year students in 2014 (max. of 270)
- Continues to be predominately transfer students at the undergraduate level (approximately 90%)



# A Little About The Project

- GSU received a Partnership for College Completion and Illinois Equity in Attainment (ILEA) Catalyst Grant in 2021.
- The focus of the grant application was looking at improving the Reverse Transfer Process.
- One of the initiatives was to conduct research to understand student observations about the option of Reverse Transfer and to present the information at other colleges/universities

# The Project Implementation

- This was a project, if could go wrong it did go wrong but in the end, we did get some very interesting information from the survey.
- Originally, the project was going to do focus groups with the students, however due to the issues with getting the names of the students, we were only able to do a survey.
- The survey was e-mailed to 606 students and 73 responded to the survey. A 12% return rate on the survey.

## Reverse Transfer of Credit Survey

GSU is conducting a short survey to students who transferred but did not earn their associate's degree. We will be asking a question about Reverse Transfer. Reverse transfer of Credit means the transfer of earned academic credit from a State university to a community college for the purpose of obtaining an associate degree at the community college.

The online/emailed survey included the information about the IRB process and that this was an anonymous survey that they could stop completing at any time. It is not included here for space.

1. Are you a transfer student?

Yes                      No

2. Are you male or female?

Female                  Male                      Preferred not to answer

3. What is your age range?

18 to 24                                      45 to 54  
25 to 34                                      55 to 64  
35 to 44                                      Over 65

4. How many credits do you believe you are missing to complete your Associate's degree?

1 to 3                                      12 to 29  
4 to 6                                      Over 30  
7 to 11

5. Are you aware that you can earn your Associate of Arts degree or Liberal Studies degree by transferring back your GSU Gen Ed classes or elective credits, in other words reverse transfer of credit?

Yes                      No

If you would like more information, please contact your academic advisor.

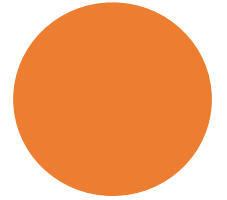
6. Do you believe that your transfer credits expire?

Yes                      No

7. Please share any concerns or issues that you have about earning your associates degree.

# The Who's of the Surveys

- **The 606 students were transfer students without an Associates degree of any type; who attended in the Spring of 2022; and were not finishing their bachelor's degree at the end of Spring or Summer 2022.**
- **They had to have earned at least 24 hours at one of the Illinois community colleges previously.**





# The Respondents

- *73 Respondents.*
- *50 were over the age of 35*
- *68 were female*
- *32 stated that they were only one course away from the associate's degree*





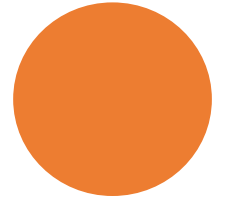
# Interesting Results

- 72 of the 73 were not aware that they could transfer back credits to finish their Associate's degree.
- 63 of the 73 thought that their credits expired.
- 55 of the 73 identified that they were 6 or less credit from their associates degree.
- Math or Science classes were the only responses that we received to the question "Please share any concerns or issues that you have about earning your associates degree".



# Next Steps

- **Focus Group with the Students to look deeper into the process of transfer.**
- **Materials for the advisors to give to students who have not earned their associate's degree on the process.**
- **A smoother pipeline with our transfer partners for the students to earn their associate's degree.**



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BE A **CONNECTOR**  
FOR **TRANSFER STUDENT**  
**SUCCESS**

Thank you  
for attending!

**PLEASE COMPLETE  
A SESSION EVALUATION**

(via the conference app)

This  
session's  
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**2816**

# Contact Information

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