

NISTS 2021

NOT-SO-SECRET TRANSFER AGENTS FEBRUARY 23-25, 2021 | VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

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Educational Session

Busting and Bridging Barriers to Transfer Student Success

Transition Programs and Services, Partnerships and Collaboration

Busting and Bridging Barriers to Transfer Student Success will present participants with an opportunity to consider best practices for supporting transfer students. Because our university is completely online, this year's pandemic and social unrest has posed an opportunity to evaluate, validate, and launch many transfer student support practices and programs. Join us to learn how these practices may apply to your institution and share some of your success with transfer-focused colleagues.

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Western Governors University



2021 NISTS Conference

Busting and Bridging Barriers to
Transfer Student Success

We are happy to be talking with you today!

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OUTCOMES

1. Participants will **analyze theoretical concepts of successful student transition** and degree completion through the presenters' review of literature.
2. Participants will **apply theoretical concepts** from literature review to established and new transfer student support practices offered through WGU and institutions represented in the audience.
3. Participants will gain an **awareness of typical barriers to transfer student success** from the presenters and audience peers.
4. Participants will practice **identifying barriers at their institutions and creating solutions** to remove those barriers. This practice will occur through facilitated discussion and prompts on the summary handout and activity sheet distributed by the presenters.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Schlossberg's Theory of Transition, an adult development theory, says students adapt to transition based on their perception of the transition, environmental characteristics, and personal characteristics (Evans et al, p. 213).
- WGU addresses all three factors through mentoring, EVB team, and the OWL Program.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Habley, Bloom, and Robbins recommend expanding our definition of student success to include the student's goal and credential completion regardless of institution (p. 340).
- The OWL Program and our new metrics for success include these expanded definitions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Student engagement has been proven to increase student success but tends to be lower for community college students due to the non-residential environment (Cohen et al, p. 210-211).
- WGU has addressed engagement by use of program mentors.

PROGRAM MENTOR

- Mentors and Instructors interface with students by phone or by web to provide tailored instruction and support in their areas of experience,
- *Upon enrollment, each student is assigned a Program Mentor, an expert in the field who:*
 - Create a personalized term plan that fits the student's life and goals.
 - Provide program instruction and guidance from enrollment to graduation.
 - Provide information on programs, policies, and procedures.
 - Assess students' strengths and development needs to help establish a study plan.

OWL TRANSFER PROGRAM

Create a seamless transfer process for select community college partner institutions to ensure graduates are prepared to be successful at WGU resulting in faster completion of bachelor's degrees.

- New or early enrolled community college students seeking to pursue a BA or BS degree
- Motivated students
- Student seeking transfer into one of our 13 programs in the Teacher's College, College of IT or College of Business

OWL TRANSFER PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- **Early Engagement with WGU**
 - Nurture Emails
 - FREE Transfer Success Courses
 - FREE Social and Emotional intervention course (PACA)
 - Social Media Groups
- **All early engagement is designed to promote retention and completion of the associate degree and move toward their goal of a bachelor's degree**
- **Guaranteed Reverse Articulation**
 - Offered to any student from Community College who transferred to WGU prior to completing their associate degree

OWL TRANSFER PROGRAM BENEFITS

- **OWL Scholarships**
 - All participants in the OWL program are eligible to receive a \$900 scholarship every term for up to four terms
 - Awarded on a first-enrolled, first received basis
- **Strong 2+2 degree transfer pathways**
 - Allowing students to complete their bachelor's degree in approximately 2 years
- **Co-advising while at the Community College**
 - Assist student with course selection to meet CC degree and WGU transfer needs

BARRIERS IN STUDENT TRANSITION

- August / January / May Start Dates
- Student : Teacher ratio
- Synchronous classes – meet at an assigned time
- Class availability
- Transfer of classes / degree
- Tuition Cost
- Housing/meal/parking cost and other fees

BARRIERS AT INSTITUTIONS

- Limited Course offerings – 1x a year – timing
- Accepting transfer credit / degree
- Current industry/workforce knowledge
- Student : Teacher ratio – adjunct instructors/graduate students
- High tuition cost – student debt
- Mandatory fees (Activity, Athletic)
- Parking (fees, limitation)

ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS (EVB)

- Special team to support students
 - Monitor daily severe weather, fires,
 - COVID-19, and other major events
- Assessment Support
- Financial Support
- Device Support
- Term Support
- Local Relief Agencies

SOLUTIONS TO BARRIERS

- Start 1st of Each Month
- Asynchronous – Access 24/7 – Study at own pace
- Mentoring program – First day to Graduation
- Student: Teacher ratio – 1:1
- Low tuition – pay for 6 months
- Identified pathways for AA/AS/AAS degrees, share online for 24/7 access.
- Affordable housing, parking, and meal plan
- No excessive fees – athletic, activity, medical
- Scholarships for Transfer students
- Scholarships for out of the box expenses like internet access.

We look forward to connecting

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