

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Columbus State Community College

Project Details			
<b>Title</b>	Reverse Transfer and Internal Degree Recognition	<b>Status</b>	COMPLETED
<b>Category</b>	9-Building Collaborative Relationships	<b>Updated</b>	09-30-2014
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>	10-15-2014
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 09-01-2013	<b>Created</b>	09-30-2013
	<b>Actual Completion</b> 06-30-2014	<b>Version</b>	1

### 1: Project Goal

**A:** The goal of this Action Project is to improve and expand on reverse transfer work undertaken during the 2012-2013 academic year. The project will focus on three primary objectives:

- A.** Expand the number of private four-year partner institutions from two to four.
- B.** Review and improve the internal processes used to determine degree completion for students who request reverse transfer degree consideration.
- C.** Design and implement a process to proactively identify, notify, and collect authorization to award associate degrees to native Columbus State students who have completed degree requirements but have not filed a formal Petition to Graduate.

### 2: Reasons For Project

**A:** Research indicates baccalaureate seeking transfer students who earn an associate degree are more likely to complete their four-year degree than students who do not complete the intermediate credential. Holding an associate degree also benefits a student in the job market in the event life circumstances delay their completion of a baccalaureate degree. For these reasons, the college believes it is valuable to proactively identify and facilitate associate degree awarding for those students who have satisfied all degree requirements.

### 3: Organizational Areas Affected

**A:** Several areas of the college are directly involved in the administration of this Action Project. The identified workflow includes sub-processes housed in the Records & Registration department, Advising Services, Office of Academic Affairs, Curriculum Management, and the office of the Dean of Enrollment Services.

### 4: Key Organizational Process(es)

**A:** This Action Project will build upon recent efforts of the Central Ohio Compact to build meaningful relationships among higher education stakeholders. By proactively identifying qualified native students as well as those at both public and private four-year institutions, the college will systematically increase the degree attainment in the Central Ohio region.

### 5: Project Time Frame Rationale

**A:** This project builds on knowledge obtained during the implementation of reverse transfer in the 2012-2013 academic year. Three primary milestones are identifiable in the stated timeframe: Ohio Board of Regents process debrief and process improvement recommendations from round 1 reverse transfer activities; participation commitment by additional four-year private partner institutions; and internal process design for identifying native students who have completed all degree requirements.

### 6: Project Success Monitoring

A: The college will continue to work with the Ohio Board of Regents to regularly report reverse transfer activity among University System of Ohio institutions. Additionally, the college will actively promote the concept of reverse transfer to new transfer-bound students through admissions and orientation processes and will incorporate messaging through Transfer Center activities.

## 7: Project Outcome Measures

A: Outcome indicators for this project include:

- Quantified number of participating private four-year institutions and resulting receipt of transcripts from students seeking reverse transfer consideration
- Timeliness of notification and processing of those students seeking reverse transfer consideration. Round 1 reverse transfer efforts during 2012-2013 culminated in degree awards for Summer Semester 2013. Process improvements will be guided by a desire to award degrees to eligible students for Spring Semester 2014.
- Internal identification processes will be measured by the number of native students identified and awarded degrees during Spring Semester 2014.

## Project Update

### 1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY

A: Project status: Completed  
Original Project Start Date: 9/1/2013  
Originally Projected End Date: 6/30/2014  
The College has successfully completed the second full cycle of reverse transfer under the Credit When It's Due statewide initiative. Additionally, pilot work has been completed to identify native Columbus State students who have completed all degree requirements but have not petitioned to graduate. Collectively these projects have identified and awarded over 530 associate degrees since inception.

### 2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: Stated project goals:

**A. Expand the number of private four-year partner institutions from two to four –**  
Added Otterbein University and Capital University to the partner list for reverse transfer with the first Otterbein students having been granted degrees in SP14 and the first Capital University student slated for AU14 graduation.

**B. Review and improve the internal processes used to determine degree completion for students who request reverse transfer degree consideration –** The notification process to students has been enhanced to include more specific details regarding their status as well as a feedback loop for subsequent questions.

**C. Design and implement a process to proactively identify, notify, and collect authorization to award associate degrees to native Columbus State students who have completed degree requirements but have not filed a formal petition to graduate. –** A technical and outreach process was developed and implemented that yielded the first internally identified group of students who were able to receive associate degrees.

### 3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: Columbus State conferred 186 degrees through reverse transfer in the most recent CWID cycle. This accounts for approximately 46% of all reverse transfer degrees awarded statewide during the reporting period. With the addition of Otterbein University and Capital University to the partner list, students from 14 universities will have received reverse transfer degrees by the end of the year. The work of the College has been

identified as a leader in this arena to the extent a Lumina Foundation representative has requested to meet with College officials in October 2014 to discuss how the Columbus State has been able to yield such impressive results. An additional 14 degrees were awarded to Columbus State students identified through the pilot effort who had completed all requirements for their program of study but had not filed a petition to graduate. These combined efforts are both predictable and sustainable and will allow the College to systematically grow the number of Central Ohio degree holders.

#### **4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT**

**A:** Both the reverse transfer and internal degree completion projects represent the work of a wide array of individuals throughout the College. Representatives from Enrollment Services, Records & Registration, Advising Services, Curriculum Management, Information Technology, and Academic Affairs have all played a role in the successful implementation of these efforts.

#### **5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES**

**A:** Through the Credit When it's Due reverse transfer process, the institution has identified partners and nurtured relationships that will allow the work to continue without the ongoing support of the Ohio Board of Regents. This institutionalization of effort will sustain the momentum of the pilot without adding to the resource demands of the College.

#### **6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS**

**A:** The single biggest challenge in expanding the scope of this project lies in the need to change existing College policy. Both the reverse transfer and internal degree recognition processes have identified more qualified students than have opted in to the process. Adjustment to College policy allowing for institutional driven awarding of awards will afford a greater latitude and ability to acknowledge the work a student has completed.

#### **7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIMELINE**

**A:** The leadership of reverse transfer has been transitioned to the Registrar who will schedule fall 2014 meetings with partner four-year institutions to articulate the process moving forward. The Dean of Enrollment Services will meet with the Academic Council in the fall 2014 to explore potential policy changes that will enhance the ability to confer degrees to students who have completed all required coursework but have not formally petitioned to graduate.

#### **8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS**

**A:** No additional information at this time.

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## **Update Review**

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#### **1: CURRENT PROJECT STATUS SUMMARY**

**A:** This completed AQIP action project has strong connections to AQIP Category 9 - Building Collaborative Relationships.

Columbus State is commended for completing the project; adding two institutions to the reverse transfer partnership, enhancing the feedback loop, and helping to achieve student success.

## 2: ORIGINAL PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

A: Columbus State's goals and deliverables were well defined for this action project. By using well defined goals, the institution was able to collect data pertaining to the project and create measures designed to notify students of eligibility to earn the reverse transfer degree.

## 3: ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR

A: Columbus State is commended for their work in the action project - awarding approximately 50% of the reverse transfer degrees in the state of Ohio. These results are a result of having clear goals and vision - and using the data collected to achieve the goal.

## 4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A: Columbus State is commended for making this action project an institutional priority. Based on the success of the project, it is evident that many college stakeholders were involved in the action project.

Columbus State has instituted plans to move this project forward by having the Registrar take the lead in administering the program. This is an astute move; however, Columbus State should look for a way to maintain the institutional involvement under the leadership of the Registrar.

## 5: EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

A: Columbus State has shown that the project has been successful. The reviewer recommends that as part of the institutionalization of the effort the creation of a standard operating procedure. By creating a standard operating procedure for the project, the institutionalization will be strengthened - along with having a reference document.

## 6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A: Columbus State is commended for identifying the need to change policy. It is unclear to the reviewer what specific college policies will need to change, and who will take responsibility for the changes in policy (i.e. Registrar, Dean of Enrollment Services, Academic Council).

However, Columbus State needs to be cautious in making change - as the expansion of the project may necessitate changes in the reverse transfer policy.

## 7: PLANNED NEXT STEPS AND TIME LINE

A: The transition to the Registrar is a logical choice as the project becomes part of the Columbus State operating procedure. It is unclear to the reviewer when the Fall 2014 Academic Council will meet to explore policy changes. A specific date would help maintain momentum towards the institution of this project.

## 8: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, QUESTIONS, OR CONCERNS

A: Columbus State has done an excellent job in completing this action project,

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## Project Outcome

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### 1: REASON FOR COMPLETION

A: This project is being closed because the Reverse Transfer framework has been operationalized and is no longer considered a pilot.

## **2: SUCCESS FACTORS**

**A:** The significant number of graduates (500+) confirmed to date through the Reverse Transfer process as well as the continued expansion of the process to include private university partners are key success points.

## **3: UNSUCCESSFUL FACTORS**

**A:** The need for a student to "opt in" to be considered a candidate for Reverse Transfer is a limiting factor in the ultimate number of degrees awarded.