

*Smart Start* dedicates a chapter to those first year students who live off-campus and recognizes the unique challenges and opportunities with which they must contend. Most assume dual roles as student/employee, student/parent or student/caregiver. Issues of parking, where to spend time between classes, and even child care can be a daily challenge. Commuters are encouraged to get involved on campus to the extent allowed by their schedules, to establish relationships with faculty and staff that will prove helpful when references are needed, and to identify the contact person on campus who is a commuter advocate.

For those looking for a quick list of tips, the final chapter is a compilation of helpful advice from current college students, parents, faculty, staff and famous folks throughout history. Their words of wisdom are sometimes light-hearted, often astute, and always well-intentioned.

## The College Transfer Student in America: The Forgotten Student

*Edited by B. Jacobs, B. Lauren, M. Miller, and D. Nadler.*

Published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
2004, 230 pages.

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Reading *The College Transfer Student in America* provides an excellent foundation to help understand the transfer-student population and how to serve them, and more importantly, how to appreciate this growing constituency. Every two- and four-year higher education institution in the United States would benefit from having a copy of this brief monograph available to its faculty and staff; it is simply the most complete and current practical resource available on transfer students.

In Chapter 1 ("Today's Transfer Students: Trends and Challenges"), Editor Jacobs clearly established the changes that have led to the growth of the transfer phenomenon. She wrote that

*for an institution (two- or four-year) to fully understand the transfer student population, it must realize...that the students bring with them quite varied backgrounds, experiences, and academic portfolios. One thing is certain: The number of students who transfer is increasing, and the complexity of dealing with those students' needs has become an increasingly important issue in enrollment management. (p. 3)*

Jacobs acknowledged that the transfer process is complex, involving the sending institution, the receiving institution, and the student. For one thing, transfers are not only those who begin at a community college right out of high school and transfer to a four-year institution to complete a bachelor's degree (linear process). Jacobs also defined "traditional," "reverse," "lateral," and "gypsy" transfers, and outlined the challenges each group brings to the receiving institution. In response, transfer centers, transfer advisory boards, and specialized advising and counseling resources of all sorts are springing up on college campuses.

The chapters which follow constitute "essays" on many aspects of transferring. In Chapter 3, Borland explored the impact of growing numbers of transfer students on institutional attempts to manage enrollment and retain students. He noted that the transfer student phenomenon has emerged at the same time as the economic challenges of reduced public funding, pressure to keep up with technology, and greater reliance on student-generated revenues.

Borland identified several enrollment management issues regarding transfer students, starting with curricular concerns, which include articulation agreements, transcript evaluation, general education course work, availability of majors, special programs, and learning assessment. He also emphasized the importance of integrating transfer students into the community of the receiving institution through strategies such as orientation, living/learning communities, faculty interaction, campus housing, and financial aid availability. Borland concluded "Policy and practice on many campuses indicate that the transfer student phenomenon of recent years has been neither fully embraced nor constructively responded to" (p. 46).

Of particular interest to professionals working in orientation and/or new student programs is Chapter 4 ("Strategies for Successful Transfer Orientation Programs"), written by the Clemson team of Ward-Roof and Cawthon. The authors instructed readers that transfer students are not simply "older freshmen" but rather are students with unique needs, questions, and concerns that must be addressed in sessions especially designed for them.

Much of this chapter treated the topic of orientation generically and may be somewhat basic for the experienced professional; however, one of the most helpful parts provided recommendations for good practice in transfer orientation programs. The chapter also addressed the transfer student's proclivity to see orientation to a new campus as unfriendly, unnecessary, and frankly, an obstacle to enrollment.

Other particularly useful chapters address the critical connection between academic advising and the retention of transfer students (Chapter 5) and "Articulation to Collaboration? Understanding the Development of and Issues Surrounding Articulation Agreements" (Chapter 6). In the latter, Sullivan, Dyer, and Franklin provide an excellent historic overview of articulation agreements between two-year and four-year institutions, locating their roots in the 1940s when the community college evolved into existence through the present 21st Century articulation agreements. The authors concluded that "articulation is a controversial topic," involving "questions of academic freedom and integrity, rigor within courses, educational levels of instructors, differences in

accreditation standards, and 'turf' disputes" (p. 107).

Chapter 7 offered a brief survey of state practices related to transfer and articulation, while Chapter 8 took up the topic of articulation agreements that foster a transfer mentality. Swanson and Jones-Johnson, in Chapter 9, tackled the thorny issue of preparing community college students for transfer, claiming that "Student transfer from one institution to another is a defining characteristic of American higher education today" (p. 135).

Perhaps the most provocative chapter (13) addressed transfer trends in the future of higher education. Miller and Nadler offered the expectations of a) more transfer students on campuses, b) tighter articulation between community colleges and universities, c) challenges to notions of what "campus community" means, d) different demands on divisions of student affairs, e) emerging theories of student development for transfer and non-traditional students, and f) challenges to systems behavior. The authors advocated that "The ethical treatment of all [*italics added*] students is an inherent responsibility of the institution, but is paramount to successfully serving transfer students" (p. 199).

This compilation concluded with a useful compendium of transfer and state articulation Web sites and the joint statement on the transfer and award of credit developed by the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers, the American Council on Education, and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

As with many edited resources, this volume contains some redundancy among chapters, and some chapters make for more compelling reading than do others. On the whole, however, the book will be helpful in a variety of ways; including dispelling some of the myths and stereotypes about transfers; it clarified concepts and terminology frequently used; and it has informed and renewed this reviewer's practice with literally thousands of transfer students who come to my campus each year. This is a book for orientation and first-year experience professionals to read themselves and then pass on to campus colleagues (academic advisers, administrators, and faculty) who also will benefit from a greater appreciation of transfer students and their unique needs.