BACKGROUND

The revised Transfer Compact builds upon and strengthens the Compact adopted by the Board of Regents in 1984 and represents another step in continuing efforts to facilitate the transfer of credit within the public system. The revised Compact extends the potential for transfer compact status to students who earn the Associate in Science degree as well as those who receive the Associate in Arts degree. The revised Compact specifies a strengthened general education core and directs that 60 credits earned by students who fulfill the core requirements and other provisions be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution. It also directs that a student who transfers under the Compact may be required to take no more than 68 additional credits to receive a baccalaureate degree unless the student changes his or her program after transfer, or transfers into a program that requires native students (i.e. students who began their education at the receiving institution) to complete more than 128 credits. The revised Transfer Compact reduces the student’s level of uncertainty about transfer of credits, and states the objective of applying the same requirements to transfer and native students alike.

THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSFER COMPACT
For students transferring from Massachusetts community colleges to public colleges and universities offering the baccalaureate degree

Section I. Requirement for Transfer Compact Status

A student shall be eligible for Transfer Compact status if he or she has met the following requirements:

a. Completed an Associate degree with a minimum of 60 credit hours exclusive of developmental coursework;

b. Achieved a cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.0 (in a 4.0 system) at the community college awarding the degree;

c. Completed the following minimum general education core, exclusive of developmental coursework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Composition/ Writing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral and Social Science</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Fine Arts</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural or Physical Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The sending institution is responsible for identifying the transcript of each student who is a candidate for transfer under this compact.

Section II: Credits to be Transferred

The 35 credits in general education specified in Section I will be applied toward the fulfillment of the receiving institution's general education requirements.

A minimum of 25 additional credits will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution. These credits may be transferred as free electives, toward the receiving institution's additional general education requirements, toward the student's major, or any combination, as the receiving institution deems appropriate.

Only college-level course credits consistent with the standards set forth in the Undergraduate Experience recommendations are included under this Compact. Credits awarded by the sending institution through CLEP, challenge examinations, and other life-experience evaluations for course credit may be included when the community college certifies that a student qualifies under this Compact.

Section III: Credits Beyond the Associate Degree

To complete the baccalaureate degree, a student who transfers under this compact may be required to take no more than 68 additional credits unless:

a. the student changes his or her program upon entering the receiving institution, or

b. the combination of additional general education requirements, if any, and the requirements of the student's major at the receiving institution total more than 68 credits.

Under these circumstances, transfer students will be subject to the same requirements as native students (The term "native students" refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.

Section IV: Admission to Competitive Majors or Programs

If because of space or fiscal limitations the receiving institution does not admit all qualified applicants to a given major or program, the receiving institution will use the same criteria for applicants who are transfer students under this Compact as it does for its native students.

Section V: Transfer Coordinating Committee
A Transfer Coordinating Committee, convened by the Board of Regents, will monitor use of the Transfer Compact, resolve appeals as they pertain to the provisions in this document, and collect and analyze relevant data.

Section VI: Publication of Requirements

Each public college and university shall include in its official undergraduate catalog the provisions of the Commonwealth Transfer Compact. A transfer student may not be held to any degree requirements at the receiving institutions that were established less than three years prior to transfer admission.

Section VII: Transfer Records

The student with Transfer Compact status will be furnished by the receiving institution a list of courses to be fulfilled to earn a bachelors degree no later than the end of the semester the student enrolls. With the agreement of the student, a copy will be provided to the Transfer Officer at the sending community college.

Section VIII: Transfer Officer

The President or Chancellor of each public institution of higher education will identify an individual who serves as that institution's Transfer Officer. The Transfer Officer's responsibility will be to assist students with transfer activities.

Section IX: Student Appeals

A student who believes that the provisions of this Compact have not been applied fairly to his/her transfer application has the right to appeal.

Initially, differences of interpretation regarding the award of transfer credit shall be resolved between the student and the institution to which she/he is transferring. If a difference remains unresolved, the student shall present his/her evaluation of the situation to the institution from which the student is transferring. Representatives from the two institutions shall then have the opportunity to resolve the differences.

Absent a satisfactory resolution, differences of interpretation may be presented to the Transfer Coordinating Committee.

Section X: Effective Date

Guidelines for Implementing the 1990 Commonwealth Transfer Compact

Chapter 15A, the legislation that created the Board of Higher Education, includes a section (15A:5) on the powers and duties of the Board, one petition of which reads "develop and implement a transfer compact for the purpose of facilitating and fostering the transfer of students without the loss of academic credit or standing from one public institution to another." The Commonwealth Transfer Compact applies to students transferring from Massachusetts community colleges to public colleges and universities offering the baccalaureate degree.

(The 1990 Commonwealth Transfer Compact is reprinted below with guidelines following each section)

Section I: Requirements for Transfer Compact Status

A student shall be eligible for Transfer Compact status if he or she has met the following requirements:

a. Completed an Associate degree with a minimum of 60 credit hours exclusive of developmental coursework.

b. Achieved a cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.0 (in a 4.0 system) at the community college awarding the degree.

c. Completed the following minimum general education core, exclusive of developmental coursework:

   - English Composition/Writing: 6 credit hours
   - Behavioral and Social Science: 9 credit hours
   - Humanities and Fine Arts: 9 credit hours
   - Natural or Physical Science: 8 credit hours
   - Mathematics: 3 credit hours

The sending institution is responsible for identifying the transcript of each student who is a candidate for transfer under this compact.
GUIDELINES:

I.A. The Compact applies to any associate degree provided that the 2.0 grade point average was achieved and the “minimum core” completed. Most Associate in Arts degree programs will include the “minimum core.” In some community colleges, Associate in Science degree programs have two tracks, a transfer track and a non-transfer track; in these cases, the transfer track curricula may include the “minimum core” and students completing such programs will qualify as Transfer Compact students. Curricula for Associate in Applied Science degrees do not include 35 credits of general education and therefore will not be covered by the Compact.

I.B. The Compact does not impose uniform general education requirements on the 15 community colleges. If any community college wishes to offer Transfer Compact status to eligible graduates, it will have to offer at least the proposed “minimum core” in terms of level and number of credits. However, the content may still vary detail and each college may offer general education programs that exceed the “minimum core.”

The 9 credit hour requirement in Behavioral and Social Sciences may be satisfied in either Behavioral or Social Sciences.

The 9 credit hour requirement in Humanities and Fine Arts may be satisfied in either Humanities or Fine Arts.

The 8 credit hour requirement in Natural or Physical Science should consist of two four-credit courses each with a lab component.

I.C. To be certified as a Transfer Compact student, the student must complete Compact requirements while meeting the requirements for the Associate
degree.

I.D. The sending institution, not the receiving institution, is responsible for calculating the student's cumulative grade point average for the purposes of determining whether the student meets the requirements of the Transfer Compact. Receiving institutions will not recalculate the grade point average in order to determine whether the student qualifies as a Transfer Compact student.

I.E. The sending institution should certify the student's Transfer Compact status on the transcript at two points: (1) when the student applies for admission to the state college or university, to indicate that the student is following a Transfer Compact program, and (2) when the student completes the Associate degree at the sending institution, to confirm that the student has met all the requirements for Transfer Compact status.

Section II: Credits to be Transferred

The 35 credits in general education specified in Section I will be applied toward the fulfillment of the receiving institution's general education requirements.

A minimum of 25 additional credits will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution. These credits may be transferred as free electives, toward the receiving institution's additional general education requirements, toward the Student's major, or any combination, as the receiving institution deems appropriate.

Only college-level course credits consistent with the standards set forth in the Undergraduate Experience recommendations are included under this Compact. Credits awarded by the sending institution through CLEP, challenge
examinations, and other life-experience evaluations for course credits may be included when the community college certifies that a student qualifies under this Compact.

GUIDELINES:

II.A. If the receiving institutions allows "D" grades to count toward fulfillment of graduation requirements for native students, it will do so for Transfer Compact students also. Transfer Compact students are treated like native students.

II.B. The Transfer Compact specifies 35 credits to be applied toward the fulfillment of the receiving institution's general education requirements and further specifies that a minimum of 25 additional credits will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution. Therefore, a minimum of 60 credits must be transferred for Compact students. If a Compact student presents more than 60 credits, the receiving institution may, but is not required to, accept additional credits for transfer.

II.C. All 25 credits (beyond the 35 credits in the minimum general education core) will be accepted either as free electives, toward the student's major, or toward the receiving institution's additional general education requirements (if any), or any combination. All 25 credits apply toward the receiving institution's graduation requirements, whether or not these credits were earned in courses similar to those found in the receiving institution's curricula. For students not certified as Transfer Compact students, the receiving institution is under no obligation to accept for transfer credit courses that it does not offer in its own curricula.

II.D. If the receiving institution's general education requirements are in excess of the "minimum core" specified in Section I, the receiving institution may require the student to complete additional general education credits. The
receiving institution may not require the Transfer Compact student to complete general education credits beyond those required of native students.

For example, if the receiving institution has general education requirements for all undergraduates totalling 40 credits, the Transfer Compact student may be required to complete 5 additional general education credits but not more than 5. If the receiving institution requires coursework in specific areas that the Transfer Compact student has not taken, the receiving institution may require the student to complete these courses but only within the total credits required of the student; in the above example, if the student must take 5 additional general education credits and the receiving institution requires native students to complete a course in the fine arts, the Transfer Compact student who has not taken such a course may be required to do so within the 5 additional credit requirement. Additional or specific general education requirements may not be used to exceed the 68 credit total in Section III unless III.a. or III.b. apply.

II.E. The Transfer Compact specifies that credits awarded by the sending institution through CLEP, challenge examinations, and other life-experience evaluations for course credit may be included when the community college certifies that a student qualifies under the Transfer Compact. The sending institution, not the receiving institution, is responsible for evaluating these credits.

II.F. The sending institution is responsible for entering clearly on the Transfer Compact student’s transcript, information showing which credits were earned at the sending institution, and which were transferred from other institutions or awarded as “life experience” credits.
II.G. The sending institution is responsible for validating any credits accepted from non-accredited institutions, using any of the three methods identified in the Transfer Compact: CLEP, challenge examinations, or evaluation of life-experience. Credits accepted from non-accredited institutions must be translated by the sending institutions into courses offered by that institution.

Section III: Credits Beyond the Associate Degree

To complete the baccalaureate degree, a student who transfers under this compact may be required to take no more than 68 additional credits unless:

a. the student changes his or her program upon entering the receiving institution, or
b. the combination of additional general education requirements, if any, and the requirements of the student's major at the receiving institution total more than 68 credits.

Under these circumstances, transfer students will be subject to the same requirements as native students. (The term "native students" refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.)

GUIDELINES:

III.A. The receiving institution will interpret the "change of program" provision in the same way as it does for native students who change their programs or majors.

Students who complete general liberal arts or science programs who declare majors in the liberal arts or sciences after transfer are not considered to have changes their programs. For example, a Transfer Compact student who completed an Associate in Arts program, which
normally has no major, and who declares a major in History upon admission to the receiving institution, has not changed his or program.

**Section IV: Admission to Competitive Majors or Programs**

If because of space or fiscal limitations the receiving institution does not admit all qualified applicants to a given major or program, the receiving institution will use the same criteria for applicants who are transfer students under this Compact as it does for its native students.

**GUIDELINES:**

IV.A. The Transfer Compact student, like the native student, is not guaranteed admission to a particular program or major upon admission to the college or university. If the program or major the Transfer Compact student wishes to enter requires a higher cumulative grade point average than the 2.0 specified by the Transfer Compact, or has other special requirements for admission, in these cases as in others, Transfer Compact students are to be treated like native students.

For example, if the program or major the Transfer Compact student wishes to enter requires that the native student repeat any courses in which the student has earned a grade of D, that requirement holds for the Transfer Compact student also.

**Section V: Transfer Coordinating Committee**

A Transfer Coordinating Committee, convened by the Board of Higher Education, will monitor use of the Transfer Compact, resolve appeals as they pertain to the provisions in this document, and collect and analyze relevant data.

**GUIDELINES:**
V.A. The Transfer Coordinating Committee will be composed of academic officers and transfer officers with equal representation from the community colleges, on the one hand, and the state colleges and universities, on the other.

Section VI: Publication of Requirements

Each public college and university shall include in its official undergraduate catalog the provisions of the Commonwealth Transfer Compact. A transfer student may not be held to any degree requirements at the receiving institutions that were established less than three years prior to transfer admission.

Section VII: Transfer Records

The student with Transfer Compact status will be furnished by the receiving institution a list of courses to be fulfilled to earn a bachelors degree no later than the end of the semester the student enrolls. With the agreement of the student, a copy will be provided to the Transfer Officer at the sending community college.

GUIDELINES:

VII.A. The institution's transfer officer will have the responsibility to convey to the Transfer Compact student and the sending institution the list of courses to be fulfilled to earn a bachelors degree, unless this responsibility is assigned to another staff member.

Section VIII: Transfer Officer

The President or Chancellor of each public institution of higher education will identify an individual who serves as that institution's Transfer Officer. The Transfer Officer's responsibility will be to assist student with transfer activities.

GUIDELINES:

VIII.A. While some institutions will have a staff member whose full-time
responsibility is that of Transfer Officer, in other cases the duties of Transfer Officer will be a part of the responsibility of a staff member with a different title and with other responsibilities as well. The decision about who serves in this capacity, and in which unit or division, is that of the institution.

Section IX: Student Appeals

A student who believes that the provisions of this Compact have not been applied fairly to his/her transfer application has the right to appeal.

Initially, differences of interpretation regarding the award of transfer credit shall be resolved between the student and the institution to which he/she is transferring. If a difference remains unresolved, the student shall present his/her evaluation of the situation to the institution from which the student is transferring. Representatives from the two institutions shall then have the opportunity to resolve the differences.

Absent a satisfactory resolution, differences of interpretation may be presented to the Transfer Coordinating Committee.

GUIDELINES:

IX.A. A Transfer Compact student who wishes to appeal decisions about the award of transfer credit should submit to the receiving institution's Transfer Officer, in writing, a request for reconsideration of a specific transfer of credit decision explaining fully the disagreement with the receiving institution's transfer of credit award. A Transfer Compact student may not appeal for exception to the provisions of the Transfer Compact.

If the difference remains unresolved, the student may continue the appeal by presenting the above information to the Transfer Officer of the sending
institution, who will initiate discussion with the receiving institution if the student’s appeal is found to be supportable.

Section X: Effective Date


GUIDELINES:

X.A. Enrolled students who were preparing for Transfer Compact status under the 1984 Compact should not be disadvantaged. Currently enrolled students should be certified as Transfer Compact students by the sending institution if they meet the 1984 criteria or the 1990 criteria.

In certifying that a student has Transfer Compact status, the sending institution is responsible for identifying whether the student is covered under the 1984 or the 1990 Compact.

X.B. Only the 1990 Compact applies to students entering the community college in fall 1990 or later.