TRANSFER STUDENT TRANSITIONS

Jill A. Pfister
The Ohio State University
May 21, 2008
Six Action Areas

- Transfer Credit Issues
- Transfer Student Orientation/Transitions Programs
- Technological Resources
- Transfer Student Groups with Special Needs
- Assessment of Transfer Student Issues
- Discipline-Based Transfer Student Advising
Transfer Credit Issues
It’s a Maze!

- Conversion from semester to quarters or vice versa
- Acceptance vs. applicability of credit
- False sense of security that courses will transfer as “2+2”
- Misinformation or misleading information from former institution
- Is there a limit to the number of transfer credits that can be used towards a degree?
- Direct equivalent vs. credit
- Do D grades transfer? If so, do they count?
- What is the minimum expectation for transfer student admission?
Transfer Credit Issues

- Are there transfer credit matrices for common former institutions?
- Is there a consistent and fair process for evaluating credit?
- Are departments involved in evaluating credit?
- Are there articulation agreements between institutions? Course by course, by program, by degree, statewide mandate?
- Do you advise students on course selection before they arrive?
- Are they given the best options for the student rather than for the institution as they select institutions?
- Is there a statewide model for course equivalents?
- Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGS)
Transfer Student Orientation/Transitions Programs

- Transfer students need to feel welcome.
- Do you work with your transfer students before they arrive at the university?
- How complicated is the process for evaluating credit?
- Transfer students need to know how the credit is applied up front.
- They need to know what to do next related to transfer credit once admitted. Directions need to be clear and concise.
- All credit should be evaluated before orientation.
- Curriculum information should be provided before orientation.
Transfer Student Orientation/Transitions Programs

- Exceptions should be posted to the degree audit as soon as decisions are made and no later than the end of the first quarter
- Give a list of remaining requirements so student knows what counts and what doesn’t
- Separate orientation program
- Separate University Survey course if you teach one
- Invite to a gathering of new students before classes start
- Transition into sequences in math and science may be difficult; help them be prepared
Transfer Student Orientation/Transition Programs

- Transfer students need an assigned adviser
- They need to feel comfortable asking questions
- Don’t assume they know and understand the policies
- Sometimes it is hard to teach an old dog new tricks
- Make them aware of resources available: Housing, traffic and parking, bus system, off-campus student services
Transfer Student Orientation/Transitions Programs

- Connect with student organizations
- Campus involvement (community integration)
- Differences in "campus culture"
Technological Resources

- Course Applicability System (CAS)
- College Source Online
- Computerized Degree Audit
- University web sites for transfer students
Transfer Student Groups With Special Needs

- Transfers from your own regional/extended campuses
- Those in remedial Math and English
- Those coming from two year vs. four year institutions
- Non-traditional (i.e., Older returning to college experience after extensive “real world” experience, midlife career change)
- Transfer students with families or single parents
- First generation
- The lower tier of those admitted
- Working adults (full-time or extensive number of hours)
- International
- Veterans, national guard, or current military
Assessment of Transfer Student Issues

- Transfer student advisory team or use of focus groups
- What are we doing well vs. where do we need to improve?
- What are the goals of the University for transfer student admission/enrollment/graduation
- Use Zoomerang surveys to determine issues and concerns
- Exit interviews with both transfer students and students who started as freshmen
Discipline-Based Transfer Student Advising

- Most transfer students know what they want and are excited to get started in the major.
- They are focused; they changed institutions for a reason.
- Having transfer credit applied to the curriculum no later than orientation helps the adviser focus on the student rather than the nitty gritty of transfer credit.
- They must have an adviser in the major who encourages and assists with the integration of courses, selection of courses in the major, and internship/graduation placement options.