

Transfer Update

Montana Board of Regents

May 2026

- National Transfer Trends
- Montana's Transfer Trend
- Montana's Structural Position
- Removing the Friction — Operations
- Building Academic Confidence — Curriculum
- What's Next

- Transfer enrollment grew 4.5% nationally in 2024 — the second straight year of post-pandemic recovery
- More than 1.2 million students transferred this year
- Over 50% of students who intend to transfer never do
- Institutions that remove transfer friction capture students others lose

- From 2015-2025 transfer students make up 20-30% of new cohorts within the MUS
- Combined, transfer + dual enrollment students rose from 12.1% to 17.4% of MUS headcount
- Dual enrollment students have brought in over 159,000 credits into the system since 2018
- The pipeline is growing — students are arriving with credits and expectations

- **Structural Strengths**

- Common Course Numbering (CCN) — equivalent courses share the same title, number, and prefix across MUS campuses; credits transfer automatically
- Transmittal Policies — students can move between MUS campuses without a full re-application
- System networks and partnerships -community colleges, two-year institutions, four-year institutions and Tribal Colleges

- **Known Gaps — Our Focus**

- Low transmittal awareness — eligible students often don't know the option exists and restart unnecessarily
- Inconsistent CCN maintenance — the policy exists but hasn't been uniformly upheld
- Articulation gaps — without standardized guidance, students navigate the process alone

Removing the Friction: Operations

- Operational improvements are essential — every barrier removed is a student more likely to enroll and persist
 - Application Process — clarify which pathway applies to which student; eliminated unnecessary re-applications
 - Transmittal Form — simplified the form and added student-facing guidance; strengthened awareness of the transmittal option as a distinct pathway
 - Processing Timelines — identified bottlenecks during enrollment windows

Building Academic Confidence: Curriculum

- Students who know their credits are students who show up
 - Faculty Convenings — bringing faculty together to align on course content, rigor, and equivalency standards
 - Program Pathway Review and Development — systematically reviewed high-volume transfer pathways; updated agreements where curricula had drifted
- Student-Facing Communication — improve how and when articulation information reaches students — earlier, clearer, more actionable

What's Next

- **Sustain**

- Maintain faculty convenings as an annual touchpoint across MUS campuses
- Keep articulation agreements current as program curricula evolve
- Expand transmittal awareness through advisor training

- **Measure**

- Transfer rates year-over-year
- Time-to-degree for students entering via the transfer pathway

- **Develop**

- Continue to develop program alignment across system

Transfer is a pathway, not a
workaround.

Thank you.

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