

Transfer to an Out-of-State or Independent University

Students who begin their bachelor's degree at Cuesta College transfer to universities located all over the country. The following are the essential elements that you and your counselor will consider while exploring baccalaureate programs in other states in the U.S. The same principles apply to gathering information about California independent colleges and universities with which Cuesta College does not have an articulation agreement.

The Transfer Credit Challenge

Perhaps the most intimidating aspect of transfer to out-of-state and many independent schools is the absence of the articulation agreements. These agreements, which exist between California's community colleges and public universities, provide assurance that transfer credit will be granted for the classes you are taking at Cuesta College. With a few exceptions, no one at Cuesta College can tell you with absolute certainty how an out-of-state or independent institution will treat your community college coursework. Aside from actually applying, the only way to know is to ask for an informal evaluation from the target university.

Step 1: Gather Information about the School

It is important that you gather some basic information about the transfer requirements for your target out-of-state or independent school before you begin inquiring about specific course credit. You will need to consult the school's website to find out:

- The minimum number of units you need to apply as a transfer student
- Any other transfer selection criteria, such as GPA minimums
- Lower-division General Education requirements
- Lower-division prerequisites necessary to enter your major
- Application procedures and deadlines

Some tips:

- Unit and GPA requirements are usually a part of information for transfer students in an "Admissions" section.

- General Education requirements are among the graduation requirements for a degree from the university; and they may be called by other terms, such as Liberal Studies, Essential Skills, or Foundations.

- Lower division major prerequisites will be on the pages that describe each major.

- For both GE and major preparation, you might need to look up the institution's *course numbering*, in order to separate lower-division from upper-division.

You are welcome to utilize the computer lab in the Transfer Center where staff is available to assist you if you need help. Print out or bookmark pages of everything and take it to an appointment with your Cuesta College counselor.

Step 2: Write a Proposed Educational Plan

Your Cuesta College counselor will review the information that you have gathered and make an educated guess about which Cuesta College courses will meet the requirements for transfer to your target school. Based on that guess, you and your counselor will write a tentative educational plan. It may take more than one appointment session to accomplish this step.

Step 3: Ask for a Review of Your Plan

At this point it is necessary to identify an admissions advisor at your target university. Look on the admissions website for an advisor who specifically works with students in California or your major. Your goal is to locate an advisor who will review your plan and provide feedback on whether it will meet the requirements to be admitted at the level you are seeking. You will offer to email the plan to them and ask the advisor to email their approval or suggestions for changes. You may also have to make separate contact with an advisor in the department of your major to find out about major preparation. Your Cuesta College counselor can help you find course outlines, so that you can pass instructions on to the university advisor if needed.

Step 4: Confirm and Carry Out Your Plan

After you receive the university advisor's evaluation of your plan, meet again with your Cuesta College counselor to review the feedback and make any necessary adjustments. Continue to meet regularly with your counselor, especially at any point that you want to take different courses or make any other changes that are not in the approved plan. Of course, follow all application instructions and meet deadlines set by the university.

Transfer/Career Center - SLO Campus, Room 3131

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