

## **Safe Courses: CSCU General Education Alignment Based on Category-to-Category Mapping**

### **Overview:**

*Work Group requested by:*

- *Charged by the CSCU Interim Provost and Senior VP of Academic affairs*

*Group Members:*

- *Sarah Selke (TRCC, Co-Chair); Braxton Carrigan (SCSU, Co-Chair); Joseph Berenguel (ACC); Steve Mendes (NCC); Justine Gamache (CCSU); Kristina Kosnoff (MCC); Lindsay O'Grady (COSC); Edward Moore (CCSU); Mark Lynch (GCC); Amy Royal (NVCC); Christopher Paulin (MCC); Jeffery Buskey (ECSU); Kelly Pittman (TXCC); Francine Rosselli-Navarra (CSCU); Steve Marcelynas (CSCU)*

*Scope of work:*

- A. *Alignment of Connecticut State Community College Framework30 (FW30) categories with general education requirements at the CSCU four-year institutions based on learning outcomes.*
- B. *Documented verification of the completion of the Framework30 posted on students' transcripts.*
- C. *Automatic Acceptance to any four-year CSCU institution with the completion of the Framework30 and an overall GPA of 2.5 or higher.*
- D. *A sub-committee of the CSCU Transfer Council should be created to provide oversight of CSCU General Education alignment.*

*Estimated start and finish:*

- *Spring 2022 to Spring 2023*

***For the purposes of this recommendation, the CT State General Education requirements refers to the general education portion of the Associate Degree. In most cases, this will consist of seven categories of the Framework30 or 21 credits. The Framework30 (FW30), references the entire ten category package typically designated for degrees designed for transfer.***

***What:***

- A. ***Category-to-Category alignment based on similar general education outcomes will provide students, faculty, and staff the information necessary to select courses that meet general education requirements throughout the CSCU System. Based on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), each Framework30 (FW30) Category will be evaluated to identify similarities and opportunity to be paired with a comparable category at the CSCU four-year institutions. For example, based on the SLOs for Social and Behavioral Sciences (Framework30) all courses vetted for that category will meet the requirement for SA II Social Science or SA III Behavioral Sciences (CCSU), T1 Social Sciences (ECSU), Social Structure, Conflict and Consensus (SCSU), Gen Ed Elective/Exploration (WCSU), Social/Behavioral Science (COSC). The "safe course" list will consist of all courses vetted for that particular FW30 category and will seamlessly transfer to its associated category at the receiving CSCU four-year institution. Mapping will also demonstrate how courses from the CSCU four-year institution may be applied in a reciprocal approach to the FW30.***

- B. Document the completion of the Framework30 on students' transcripts to verify the satisfactory completion of aligned (mapped) General Education categories at the receiving institution.**
- C. Grant guaranteed acceptance to CSCU four-year institutions for any student who completes the Framework30 and has a cumulative 2.5 or better overall GPA.**
- D. Currently, the Framework Implementation and Review Committee (FIRC) has been charged with the oversight and assessment of the FW30. Starting in Fall 2023, CT State will adopt 21 to 31 credits of the FW30 as the general education requirement for all degrees. With that, assessment and oversight of general education will fall under CT State governance and nullify the need for FIRC.**

**Why:**

- A. Current practice for students completing general education requirements for the purpose of transfer is complicated and labor intensive for both students and advisors. Each institution has its own method of meeting NECHE's standard for General Education. This creates discrepancies that are difficult to navigate if a student is unsure of their transfer destination. Faculty and Staff who advise students do not have appropriate resources required to assist with guiding students toward courses that will be accepted and applied toward degree completion. This results in time lost in researching course equivalents rather than discussing student success.**
- B. Verification of the completion of the Framework30 has been a barrier toward documenting the completion of aligned (mapped) General Education categories and application of courses at the receiving institution. The current practice requests that a student submit a DegreeWorks evaluation for the purpose of course application toward general education requirements. This is an additional burden on the student, requires more time and attention on the part of the receiving institution, and allows for error. In addition, students who transfer prior to the completion of an Associate Degree have historically been excluded from the benefits provided by the FW30. This recommendation would extend the benefits that were originally intended for only graduating TAP students to all CT State students who complete the FW30.**
- C. Currently, students must complete an Associate Degree to be granted guaranteed acceptance to a four-year institution. This recommendation would allow another benchmark for students, faculty, and staff to aim for while working toward the overall completion of a baccalaureate degree.**
- D. A standing body of CT State and CSCU four-year institution faculty will need to be established to provide oversight of "Safe Courses" and overall general education alignment within the CSCU System. It is recommended that this group be established by the CSCU Transfer Council and be responsible to continue the work and intent of "Safe Courses."**

**Value Proposition:**

- A. Safe courses will provide transparency on how CT State General Education requirements will be applied to a CSCU four-year institutions degree. Each course that a student uses to complete a General Education requirement at CT State will be used to meet a General Education requirement at the receiving institution (or, in rare cases,**

*progress a student toward completion). By mapping CT State General Education categories directly to General Education requirements at the CSCU four-year institutions will eliminate any guess work associated with course transferability and application toward a degree. Allowing any course in a particular FW30 category to meet the requirement of the reciprocal category at the receiving institution will simplify advising and reduce risk of lost credits. CT State Faculty and Staff can be assured while assisting students that they are not guiding them toward excess credit hours.*

- B. Students are required to submit official transcripts from CT State to any receiving institution. Verification of the completion of the FW30 on that academic record will no longer require students to send additional documents. This will also simplify the process by which the receiving institution verifies and marks as complete the aligned (mapped) general education categories.*
- C. Students would be incentivized to complete the entire Framework30 and have a better understanding of where they stand while applying to the CSCU four-year institutions. Completion of the FW30 with a cumulative 2.5 GPA or higher would allow for acceptance to any CSCU institution while also providing transparency on how courses will be applied toward potential degree options.*
- D. A standing body of faculty with the sole purpose of addressing issues related to transfer of general education requirements will not only ensure the success of Safe Courses, but it will also allow provide a method to address any other issues related to concerns regarding this area of curriculum.*

**How:**

- A. Each CSU and COSC will verify the proposed mapping to the FW30 categories (see Appendix A). Institutions will have a timeframe, set by the CSCU Provost, to approve the mapping or suggest edits. Once FW30 mapping is submitted, all courses in the designated FW30 category will be coded (i.e. course-to-course equivalency or assigned attribute) to meet the requirement for the general education category at the CSU or COSC.*
- B. Due to changes in the FW30 starting in Fall 2023, all CSCU four-year institutions must update the TAP Composite Common Package sheet (Appendix B) by a deadline set by the CSCU Provost. Implementation of documentation of the completed FW30 on students' transcript will be determined by a Work Group of Registrars and other appropriate staff.*
- C. Guaranteed Acceptance will be granted with verification of completion of the FW30 and overall cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher. Students with courses in progress toward the completion of the FW30 will be granted acceptance with a 2.5 or higher. Students' acceptance may be impacted if final transcripts indicate that a course was not completed or if their overall GPA falls below a 2.5.*
- D. Upon recommendation approval, the CSCU Transfer Council will be notified of the request. The Transfer Council will discuss the matter and have a sub-committee convened no later than the end of the Fall 2023 semester.*

**When:**

- ***Upon recommendation approval, the CSCU Provost should immediately distribute Appendix A and B to the CSCU Chief Academic Officers. Based on their governance or general education structure, each institution will determine the appropriate way to review the suggested mapping and align general education requirements by category.***
- ***The CSCU Provost will need to determine deadlines for the following:***
  - ***Submission of finalized FW30 mapping***
  - ***Submission of finalized TAP Composite Common Package form***