

National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students

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Multiple Ways of Enacting Partnerships for Transfer Student Success: What Promotes and Impedes Collaborations



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Introductions

- Name
- Institution
- Why you are interested in this session?

Learning Objectives

- Share results of a multi-state study on transfer partnership and the ways partnerships are enacted
- Share results on the influence of culture, policy, and practice to facilitate or impede transfer partnerships
- Utilize findings to facilitate conversation for practitioners on how this research could be useful at their own institutions

Why Transfer Partnerships Are Important For Underserved Students

- We lose many students in the transfer process, particularly those facing more barriers and with fewer resources
- Collaboration within and among higher education institutions is increasingly recognized as an essential strategy to improve student outcomes as well as institutional effectiveness (Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007; Eddy, 2010; Kezar, 2006)

High-Performing Transfer Partnerships Study

Multistate, mixed-methods study of partnerships between 2- and 4-year institutional pairs:

- Quantitative: Students from higher-performing pairs have higher than average odds of all transfer students graduating or still being enrolled
- Qualitative: State policy context analysis, site visits, website reviews and interviews

Research Questions

1. How do transfer partnerships support underserved students?
2. What do high-performing partnerships look like, and how do they vary?
3. What are the catalysts and barriers to forming and sustaining transfer partnerships?

Qualitative Phase: Methods

- Interviewed staff, faculty and students at each partner institution (3 states, 7 institutional pairs, 231 individuals)
- Transcribed interviews and conducted coding and iterative analysis to identify themes

Research Question 1:

How do transfer partnerships support underserved students?

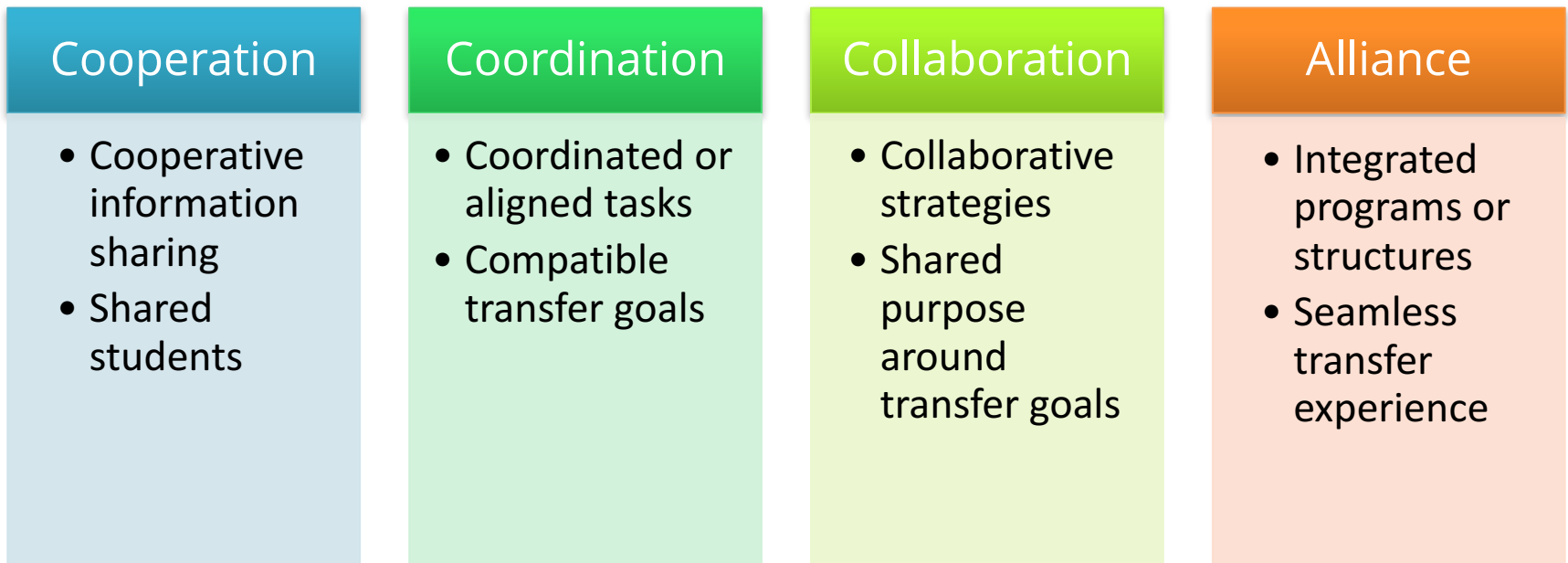
- Partnerships can help support students baccalaureate completion by:
 - facilitating bachelor's degree options for place-bound students
 - providing more affordable bachelor's degree options
 - improving efficiency of the transfer process (e.g. reduce credit loss)
 - creating connections for students between institutions
 - helping students feel a sense of belonging at both institutions

Research Question 2:

What do high-performing partnerships look like, and how do they vary?

- Partnerships are dynamic
- There are varying levels of collaboration
- Not all institutional pairs are partners

Findings: Levels of Collaboration



Adapted from Bailey & Koney (2000)

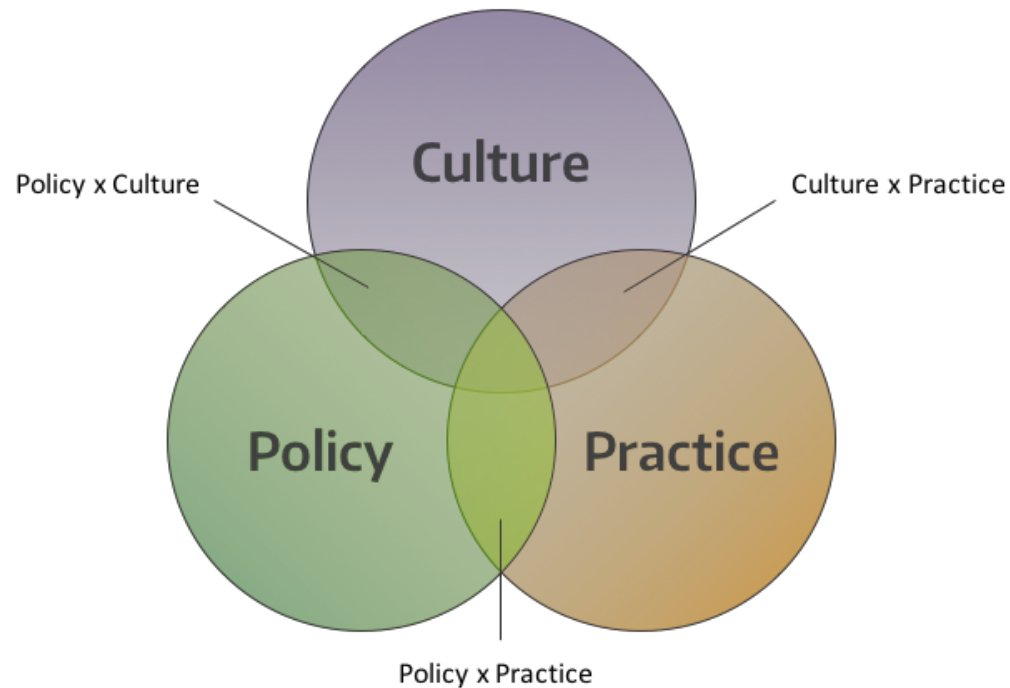
Examples of Different Collaboration Levels

- *Coordinating Partners*: Isolated pockets of staff and faculty communicate, work on articulation agreements together; “pockets” occasionally communicate
- *Collaborating Partners*: Many staff and faculty invested in working with each other, work on curricular alignment, communicate regularly, visit each others institutions and sometimes share resources
- *Alliance Partners*: Staff and faculty create common goals, see partnership as a win-win relationship; co-branded 2+2 programs; partnership positions

Research Question 3:

What are the catalysts and barriers to forming and sustaining transfer partnerships?

What Influences Strong Partnerships?



Push-pull Factors of Transfer Partnerships

Barriers

Catalysts

Culture & Practice

Leadership does not value partnership	→	←	Leadership prioritizes partnership
Staff & faculty work in isolation from partner institution	→	←	Multiple working relationships across campuses
Distrust or conflict between partners	→	←	Trust & respect between partners
Decision-making prioritizes institution	→	←	Decision-making prioritizes students
Color-blind perspective	→	←	Focus on racial equity
Loyalty to institution	→	←	Culture of collaboration
Little to no communication between partners	→	←	Frequent & open communication between partners

Policy & Practice

Over-reliance on a few informal partnership champions	→	←	Partnership institutionalized (as a position or other structure)
Institution-level barriers to implementation	→	←	State-level directives to collaborate on articulation & pathways
Lack of partnership structures to guide practice	→	←	Having institutional structures & policies to guide partnership

Policy & Culture

Funding & accountability policies that promote competition	→	←	Funding & accountability policies that promote collaboration
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← **Culture of collaboration**

← Frequent & open communication between partners

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Policy & Culture

Funding & accountability policies that promote competition →

← Funding & accountability policies that promote collaboration

Institutional Loyalty vs. Culture of Collaboration

“I think that we work to serve a common group of students, and that we do share the value of their obtaining and earning the higher degree. We hold that as a shared value, and know that that is really best for the professions they’re entering and for the students themselves.”

“There’s great benefit to the institutions to [work together], and it would be unwise for us to try to compete with [our partner] . . . They do some things that we can’t offer, and likewise . . . students can progress from their excellent programs into our programs, so it’s a mutually beneficial arrangement It’s a positive and win-win for all parties, students and institutions.”

Wetzstein, L. & Yeh, T. L. (2019, January). Transfer partnerships: The importance of a culture of collaboration (Transfer Partnerships Series, Data Note 9). Seattle, WA: Community College Research Initiatives, University of Washington

Overview of What We Learned

1. Transfer partnerships are dynamic, contextual and take intentional effort to start and continue
2. Transfer partnerships can benefit students
3. There are multiple ways to enact transfer partnerships
4. Collaborative transfer relationships can vary along a continuum of levels

Small group work: What types of collaboration are you engaged in?

Spend a few minutes looking at the Data Note on your table or go to <http://www.washington.edu/ccri/2018/12/14/datanote6/>. Answer the following questions:

1. What institution do you collaborate with the most?
2. How would you categorize your relationship? (Cooperate, Coordinate, Collaborate, Alliance)
3. What is the purpose of your partnership?
4. What are some positive aspects (or catalysts) of your partnership?
5. What barriers are you currently facing?
6. What could be leveraged to increase or improve your collaboration?

Small group work: How can you use what you just learned at your own institution?

1. Find someone else who has the same level of collaboration as you
2. In pairs, discuss your answers
3. Share out answers to #6

Transfer Partnerships Resources

CCRI Website: ccri.uw.edu

HPTP Data Notes: www.washington.edu/ccri/research/transfer/

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