

# MSCF Minute



An electronic publication of the Minnesota State College Faculty

## MnSCU's Transfer Pathways Process Begins, Part 2

by Glenn Merrick, Biology Faculty, Lake Superior College; Co-chair Transfer Pathways Coordinating Team

### What is a Transfer Pathway

A transfer pathway is a curriculum plan for a student who plans to pursue a bachelor's degree after completing an associate degree.\* Transfer pathways, which are being developed for 30 majors and programs in MnSCU institutions, provide a consistent curricular path from any two-year college offering an associate degree to a state university offering a degree in the same major. (\*AA, AS, AFA).

Each transfer pathway will describe all of the lower-division major content and competency requirements needed to prepare students to enroll in the major at the university. The pathway will identify any necessary pre-requisite courses, as well as the general education courses needed for the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). The lower-division curriculum also will include any experiential learning activities that are required for the university major or program (e.g., service learning, internships, undergraduate research). Students who have completed a transfer pathway associate degree will transfer into the university at a junior level. They will be eligible for admission to the major in the same way and on the same basis as direct-entry university students.

### **WHO develops the transfer pathways?**

Transfer Pathways Teams (TPTs)

for each of about 30 disciplines are being organized in 2016. Each team will include faculty from MnSCU colleges and universities, administrators involved in program development, staff with responsibilities for transfer, and students. Each team is composed of 20 people plus a non-voting liaison from the transfer pathways coordinating team. Twelve of the 20 team members are faculty, and each team is co-chaired by college and university faculty members.

### **WHO coordinates the work of the Transfer Pathways Teams?**

A group known as the Transfer Pathways Coordinating Team (TPCT) was organized in the fall of 2015 to develop the tools and guidelines for each of the Transfer Pathways Teams to follow. They are also a representative group composed of faculty, staff, students, and administrators who will help the TPTs do their work, resolve problems that may arise and evaluate the process for improvements. The TPCT will also be responsible for developing advising tools, and keeping the pathways current.

### **WHEN will this happen?**

The first four discipline groups (in biology, business, psychology, and theatre) are beginning their work in spring of 2016. Their pathway drafts will go out to all faculty, staff, and students for feedback in March 2016 and each final

pathway will be approved by May 2016. Once approved, the pathways will move to local college and university curriculum processes for final implementation of the transfer pathways by fall 2017. The first four groups are piloting the processes and will provide input to the TPCT for changes needed for future transfer pathway teams. An additional 12-15 discipline groups (TPTs) will be assembled to complete their work in fall 2016. Their drafts will be ready for feedback in October 2016 and the final pathways will be approved in December 2016. They will be forwarded to the campus curriculum processes for implementation by fall 2018. Spring 2017 will see an additional 12-15 discipline groups (TPTs) formed, with the same timeline as the first four disciplines. Their draft pathways will be completed by March for feedback and the final pathways will be approved in May 2017. They will also be forwarded to the campuses curriculum processes for implementation by fall 2018. Additional pathways may be formed after the first 30 are completed. A regular review cycle will be established to review, maintain, and revise the pathways.

### **WHAT does this mean for me?**

All faculty, students, and staff will have opportunities to provide input and feedback as the pathways are developed. There will be options to provide feedback in person, via email, via

Volume 2, Issue 19

February 4, 2016

the transfer pathways website and questionnaires. About 25 Transfer Pathways degree subjects will be identified in spring 2016, in the most popular bachelor degree major subjects at the state universities. If you teach in a Transfer Pathways program, or in general education courses that support one, you will be invited to provide constructive feedback to the TPTs by taking part in a Discipline Stakeholder Meeting. These meetings will occur after a first draft pathway is developed, approximately mid-semester (for each of three respective semester-long pathways development cycles). Finally, all affected or interested faculty, staff, and students will be asked to actively contribute to the curriculum and advising planning processes on your campus, and in the implementation of each pathway. Your actual role will depend upon your job on your campus.

### **HOW can I provide feedback?**

There will be multiple ways to provide feedback:

- Statewide Discipline Stakeholders Meetings (DSM) will be held at mid-semester during pathways development (the first will be in March 2016).
- Respond to surveys requesting input to the draft pathways.
- If you are faculty, provide comment in the discipline listservs as the pathways are being developed.