

# State-Level Workshop for Two- and Four-Year Colleges to Improve Transfer

## *An Implementation Guide for State Systems and Higher Education Agencies*

### SAMPLE FACILITATOR NOTES

This document includes sample facilitator notes for each of the sessions featured in the sample agenda. These notes are by no means comprehensive, but are instead meant to help the workshop planning team pull together a facilitation agenda that includes details about what will occur within each session. For each session, we also flag relevant details such as: who will facilitate, how will participants be seated, and what other materials will be needed? These notes can be used in combination with the sample Facilitation PowerPoint (available for download at [as.pn/transfer](https://as.pn/transfer)).

#### Workshop Pre-Work:

Though it is at your discretion to assign pre-work and request submission prior to the workshop, the following four items are encouraged as an effective baseline:

- a. Read Aspen and CCRC's [The Transfer Playbook](#)
- b. Conduct transfer student focus groups
- c. Complete either the 2- or 4-year Self-Assessment Tool either individually or as a college team.
- d. Work with the Institutional Research office to complete the Community College Transfer Student Outcomes Report (i.e. Data Report).<sup>1</sup>

#### Description of Participant Groupings:

Within each session, we provide a suggested seating arrangement for participants. The groupings are as follows:

- **Institutional teams.** Best when the conversation is centered on quantitative data, practice assessments, goal setting, or planning for improvements that are specific to the institution.
- **Sector tables.** A good setup to provide a bridge from institution-level discussions to regional ones, as it provides institutions within the same sector the space to share their ideas and goals before diving into conversations with a mixture of two- and four-year institutions.
- **Regional partnership tables.** Provides space for two- and four-year partners to compare notes, understand perspectives, and make specific plans for improvement. Generally, tables can be organized for sets of institutions that are geographically close to each other, as students who transfer tend to do so among geographically proximate institutions. It is possible, however, that some tables may need to include one or two four-year institutions that receive transfers from across the state—such as flagships—or rural two-year institutions that are not physically close to any four-year school.

#### Related Materials:

In several instances, we reference other materials to be used during the workshop. These appendix materials can be downloaded at [as.pn/transfer](https://as.pn/transfer).

- Transfer Workshop Action Plan Template: Parts I-IV
- Community College Transfer Student Outcomes Report (i.e. Data Report) [Pre-Work]
- 2- or 4-year Self-Assessment Tools [Pre-Work]

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<sup>1</sup> Please see [as.pn/transfer](https://as.pn/transfer) for blank Reports for both two- and four-year institutions. Two-year institutions should reference CCRC's "[How to Measure Community College Effectiveness in Serving Transfer Students](#)" for additional guidance. Four-year institutions may reach out to CCRC with any additional questions.

**Day 1 (1pm start time)**

**15m**

**Welcome & Workshop Kick-off**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Sector Tables

*Related Materials:* Slides

*Goal:* Generate excitement for the workshop ahead, introduce workshop goals, and briefly summarize agenda.

**5m**

**Workshop Organizer**

- Welcome everyone to the state-wide workshop on strengthening transfer
- We have a full day ahead, and we look forward to digging into the conversations.
- But, before we do, we'll start with some context on the steps that led to us coming together today. (Highlight the origins of the workshop – what inspired the state to take on this work, and how have participants contributed to the creation of the goals and agenda?)
- Introduce {Session Facilitator}

**10m**

**Session Facilitator**

Thank you. Welcome everyone again. Thank you to our partners who made this work possible:

- Philanthropic partners whose donations funded the work?
- State-level partners or organizations involved in or supportive of the planning?
- A special thanks to individuals directly involved with the planning process, including the coordination of logistical details

Briefly review workshop objectives and agenda.

Other important notes:

- As you go through the workshop sessions, you may not have a chance to speak with every single institution with whom you would like to speak. However, we encourage you to use unstructured time and meal times to have those conversations and make those connections.
- As you navigate conversations and activities today, we encourage you to reflect often on your answers on the self-assessment tool.
- There are index cards on the table if at any point you have questions or comments that you do not want to make in front of the entire group. Facilitators will collect these and take them into account.
- Finally, by way of ground rules for the table conversations, we ask each of you to take responsibility for the health of your conversation by making sure everyone at your table has ample opportunity to share. Listen as much as you talk, ask questions, and be candid.

A couple of questions to kick us off... by a show of hands:

- 1) Ok, who's in the room: 2-yr? 4-yr? Faculty? Administrator? Student Services? How many of you have the word "Transfer" in your title? How many of you are involved in a committee that has "Transfer" in the name?
- 2) Who here considers yourself a true transfer champion?
- 3) How many of you are sincerely interested in improving transfer outcomes but feel continuously challenged when it comes to making that a reality?

**30m**

**Why Transfer? Why Now? Making the Case for Transfer**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Sector Tables

*Related Materials:* Slides

*Goal:* Make the case for why transfer matters, and why it is important to work on now.

**30m**  
**Session Facilitator**

Deliver an overview presentation that includes the following:

1. Introduce the cases for transfer [Slides 5 – 7]
  - Affordability. The 2+2 pathway can be an affordable means to attain a bachelor’s degree but requires too many students to repeat multiple credits. This repetition makes transfer pathways unnecessarily expensive.
  - Business. Two- and four-year college partners with strong transfer outcomes have proven that student enrollment can be increased at both institutions by delivering an affordable bachelor’s degree through strong partnership practices.
  - Efficiency. The current rate of credit loss among transfer students translates into duplicated time and effort on behalf of faculty and administration, wasted student tuition dollars, and, ultimately, the inability of many students to attain a bachelor’s degree, which could have provided a strong return on investment for individuals and taxpayers.
  - Equity. Low success rates for transfer students have an especially negative impact on students traditionally underserved in higher education—including Black, Hispanic, low-income, first-generation, and older “nontraditional” students—who are disproportionately likely to begin higher education in community college.
2. Overview of national statistics on transfer from the Tackling Transfer Project [Slides 8 – 16]
3. Overview of Tracking Transfer 5 Measures and Findings [Slides 17 – 21]
4. Contrast of state and national data on transfer student outcomes (create based on data in your state), as well as suggested slides on how to frame what the state already does well and what workshop planners have identified as areas for improvement [templates as Slides 22- 24].

**1hr15m**

**Data Reflection: Transfer Student Outcomes for your College**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Institutional Teams

*Related Materials:* Slides, Action Plan Template: Part I, Data Reports

*Goal:* Know key data points about transfer student outcomes and identify information still missing, then reflect within college teams about whether the data align with institutional perceptions of transfer student success.

**15m**  
**Session Facilitator**

Now it’s time to focus even more comprehensively on outcomes at your own institutions.

- Each college was asked to complete a data report prior to today’s workshop. Please take a moment now to pull out those data reports, as they’ll shape our conversations today.
- Provide a brief overview of what’s included in the data templates for both community colleges and four-year colleges [Slides 25 – 29]
- Open for any remaining questions about the information contained in the templates

**60m**  
**Facilitator introduces,**  
**then college teams**  
**discussing data together.**

Sitting at a table with your institutional teams, pull out your **Action Plan Template and turn to Part I**. For the next 60 minutes in your college teams, you will review your data report and answer the same questions (projected on the PPT).

- As you hit on important points in your discussion, please fill Part I of the handout.
- No need to go beyond that in the handout; we will get to Part II in the next session (unless you’ve already talked through the data and are ready to keep it rolling).
- An electronic copy should have just been sent to your email in case you would prefer to work digitally.

Guiding Questions:

- What surprised you about these data? What questions does this data bring up for you?

- What seemed consistent with what you already knew?
- What gaps do you see? What hypotheses do you have about these gaps?
- How equitable are your transfer outcomes across student demographics (by race/ethnicity, Pell-eligibility, etc.)? What does this suggest about the specific outcome(s) you want to improve for any specific population(s)?

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*Additional facilitation notes:*

- Meeting facilitators can mill about, sit with teams, and answer any questions
- Facilitators can also use the below supplemental questions to prompt further conversation.

*Supplemental Questions for Community Colleges [Slide 32]:*

- Why don't more students transfer out?
- What incentives are there to complete the AA?
- Do we track transfer outcomes by program/major?
- How can we improve outcomes for low-income students? Students of color?
- How can we better help older students seeking to transfer?
- What about our relationships with particular universities might explain partnership results?

*Supplemental Questions for Universities [Slide 33]:*

- Do we track transfer student progress/success?
- Do we know transfer student enrollment/success by college and major?
- Do we help encourage community college students to choose a major and complete the AA before transfer?
- What do we need to do to improve outcomes for low-income students? Students of color? Older students?
- What about our relationships with particular community colleges might explain partnership results?

15m

Break

30m

**Overview of The Transfer Playbook**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Sector Tables

*Related Materials:* Slides, Copies of The Transfer Playbook

*Goal:* Introduce the three strategies in the Transfer Playbook and encourage regional reflection on how institutions can, together and in partnerships, improve the transfer student experience.

15m

**Session Facilitator**

First, before we dive into this session's activity, we'd like to share with you a quick overview of the Transfer Playbook, which you hopefully read before arriving here today.

*Facilitation notes:*

- The Transfer Playbook is built around strong practices identified at six highly-effective partnerships of two- and four-year colleges
- Outlined within the document are three categories of Essential Practices: make transfer student success a priority, create clear programmatic pathways with aligned high-quality instruction, and provide tailored transfer student advising
- In the presentation, highlight specific strategies that correspond to each of the three categories of Essential Practices, using the slides provided in the Sample PPT Deck to guide the overview.

15m

**Tables**

Now, we'll do a quick activity to get us thinking about the preconceptions we have about transfer students on our campuses, and how these ideas might shape our own approach to prioritizing and

improving transfer.

On this slide [Slide 43] are several statements, each of which has blanks. In the next five minutes, fill in these blanks based on your own experiences with transfer students.

*Statements:*

- The “typical” transfer student at my institution is \_\_\_\_\_.
- When I hear about transfer students on my campus, I frequently hear that they struggle with \_\_\_\_\_.
- To address this common struggle, my institution could improve the transfer student experience by \_\_\_\_\_.
- I wish I understood more about transfer students’ experiences when it comes to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Based on what I know about transfer students at my institution, I think our institution could work to improve \_\_\_\_\_. Furthermore, I think focusing on \_\_\_\_\_ with our partner institutions could help improve the transfer student experience.

Once you’ve finished, discuss as tables what you wrote.

...after 5 minutes

*Guiding Question for Discussion (printed for participants or displayed in the PPT):*

- How do your answers differ?
- Which answers seem grounded in myths, versus those which are evidence-based?
- What makes it easier and harder to develop a shared sense of ownership for student progression/completion? How does this conversation differ when you’re working with colleagues from your own institution versus colleagues from partner institutions?
- If you were uncertain about how to complete a particular statement, how might you go about gathering the information you need to be able to answer it accurately?

**1hr**

### **Assessing Practices for Success (College Teams)**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Participant Groupings:* Institutional Teams

*Related Materials:* Slides; Action Plan Template: Part II; 2- and 4-year Self-Assessment Tools, Data Reports

*Goal:* Assess institutional practices that can be improved in order to better serve transfer students

**10m**

**Session facilitator**

So now, using your college’s completed self-assessment tool (completed as pre-work) and data reports (that were just reviewed), **assess your institutions practices** using **Action Plan Template: Part II**, which includes three sets of research based strategies aligned to transfer student success:

1. Prioritize Transfer
2. Create Clear Programmatic Pathways with Aligned High-Quality Instruction
3. Provide Tailored Transfer Student Advising

Questions for consideration:

- What jumps out at you?
- What makes you hopeful?
- What raises concerns?

For each of the three practice areas, answer the following questions:

- Where is the college strongest? How might those strengths explain strong quantitative student outcomes that appear in your data?
- Where are the college’s practices least well aligned with those in the assessment tool? How might those misalignments explain relatively weak quantitative outcomes that emerge during your data review?

For the next 50 minutes, you and you team will be filling out Part II of the Handout, which you can find on p2.

<b>50m</b>	Sitting in institutional teams, participants complete <b>Action Plan Template: Part II (p.2)</b> .
<b>In institutional teams with facilitators milling about</b>	<p>For each of the three practice areas, answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Where is the college strongest? How might those strengths explain strong quantitative student outcomes that appear in your data?</li> <li>- Where are the college's practices least well aligned with those in the assessment tool? How might those misalignments explain relatively weak quantitative outcomes that emerge during your data review?</li> </ul>

<b>15m</b>	<p><b>Wrap-up Day One</b>  <i>Facilitator(s): _____</i>  <i>Participant Groupings: Institutional Teams (or wherever comfortable)</i>  <i>Related Materials: Slides</i></p>
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<b>10m</b>	Ok let's get a couple volunteers to share some of the most interesting things that came out of your conversations just now. [Call on 2-3 folks].
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<b>5m</b>	<p>Thank you all for a great day! Tomorrow, we will think more about models of effective transfer partnerships and how we can strengthen our own partnerships with regional action plans.</p> <p>Breakfast will be available tomorrow morning at {time}. {For now, we'll break to a social, if hosting.}</p>
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**Day 2 (1pm start time)**

<b>15m</b>	<p><b>Kick-off Day Two</b>  <i>Facilitator(s): _____</i>  <i>Participant Groupings: Regional Partnership Tables</i>  <i>Related Materials: Slides</i></p>
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<b>5m</b> <b>Session facilitator</b>	Yesterday, we took a look at your institution's data and assessed your institutional practices that are serving transfer students.
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Today, we will learn more about models of effective transfer partnerships, and from there develop institutional *and* regional action plans to improve individual and cross-institutional practices.

<b>9:05 – 9:18am</b> <b>Session facilitator</b>	<i>Partnership building warm-up: interactive polling activity</i>
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Prior to the workshop, generate the below questions using a polling service (options include [Menimeter](#) or [PollEverywhere](#)). If no service is available, revise questions to work with a show of hands.

- Test question: How are you feeling this morning?
- My institution regularly reviews transfer data to inform transfer practices and policies (agree, disagree, etc.)
- My transfer partner institutions and I are on the same page and working well together on transfer matters (agree, disagree, etc.)
- What is one thing you are excited to cover today?

**1hr** **Model(s) of Success**  
*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Regional Partnership Tables  
*Related Materials:* (if any) Slides

*Goal:* Explore and identify partnership models that foster the success of transfer students within the state’s higher education system. Build an understanding of what an effective transfer partnership looks like.

**5m**  
**Session Facilitator**

Session facilitator provides brief opening remarks to introduce the session

- Offer observations to transition from yesterday’s sessions to the panel
- Purpose of the panel: to provide a stellar example of a highly effective transfer partnership
- Invited leaders from highly-effective two- and four-year partnerships to shed light on how institutions’ practices can create strong transfer partnerships
- Introduce panelists

**35m**  
**Session Facilitator**

Moderated Discussion:

- Let’s start with the history of your partnership. How long have the two institutions been working together, and how has your role in this partnership evolved?
- To what would you attribute the strength of your partnership? How would you suggest other institutions build something similar with their partners?
- In what ways does the strength of the partnership support the work that you do on campus and alongside your campus community?
- Tell us about a time you encountered an obstacle in your partnership. What was it, how did you handle it, and what did you learn?
- What work have you done to identify clear joint goals that the partnership hopes to achieve?
- What comes next / how do you intend to build on your existing work?

**20m** Open Q&A from participants

**2m**  
**Session Facilitator** Closing remarks

**15m** **Break**

**1hr15m** **Action Planning for Success (College Teams)**  
*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_  
 We recommend that, in addition to the session facilitator, this session also include group facilitators who are assigned to college teams to help guide participants through the action planning exercise. We also recommend that each group designate a note-taker.  
*Participant Groupings:* Institutional Teams  
*Related Materials:* Action Plan Template: Part III; Slides  
*Goal:* Set institutional short-term goals, identify primary improvement strategies, and develop action steps in order to improve the transfer students’ outcomes

**5m**  
**Session Facilitator**

Now that we have looked at the data, assessed our practices, and heard about innovative models, we want to synthesize all of that into some short-term action plans as a college.

- Pull out the **Action Plan Template and look at the third page (Part III)**
- Soon, you will be breaking into your college teams to fill out this page

- The goal here is to **set institutional short-term goals, identify primary improvement strategies, and develop action steps in order to improve the transfer students' outcomes at your institution**
- Folks will be walking around and spending time at your table to help guide the process and answer any questions, so don't be surprised if a new face joins your group
- If you are unable to finish this conversation in this time, we encourage you to find a time to continue the conversation with your colleague here
- We want you to be thinking in terms of measurable outcomes and targets you would like to hit in the next 6-months & 1-year
- An electronic copy should have just been sent around to your email in case you would prefer to work digitally

If requesting that college teams submit their plans, share the following:

- \* We will ask you to turn in this document (1 per college team) to {person/email} by {date}

### 1hr05m

#### Facilitators with assigned college teams

Facilitators guide their assigned college teams in the action-planning exercise using the following questions:

#### About 5-10min on **Long-term Goals**

- What are the aspirations for transfer at your institution within the next 3-5 years?
- What are one or two specific transfer student outcome you would like to improve over the next 3-5 years?
  - o What are the subpopulation(s) you would target within this outcome?
- What student outcome metrics do you expect will improve and by how much?
- For example:
  - o Increase Bachelor's completion rates by X% for a select population of transfer students (within X years of beginning community college)
  - o Increase the rate (X%) at which transfer students are able to apply the majority of their credits to a Bachelor's in their desired major
  - o Increase the percentage of students (X% increase) transferring to 4-yr from 2-yr that have earned an Associate's degree

#### About 10-15min on **One-year Goals**

- What are tangible 1-year goals that your institution can set to work towards that larger 5-year vision?
- For example:
  - o Gather data on metrics indicated in long-term goal(s) and hold meetings exploring data and areas for improvement
  - o Set targets with partners on increases in [fill in metrics]
  - o Establish plan to build program maps in 3 of the largest programs of study.
  - o Establish plan to improve transfer advising

#### For remaining 20-30min on **Major Actions (6mo & 1-yr)**

- In 6 months – what specific steps will your team take towards your 1-year goal?
  - o Who will be involved?
  - o What is the anticipated result?
  - o For example:
    - By early 2018, with our data team we will disaggregate our transfer data based on various student demographic breakdowns (race, Pell, age) and will have had a meeting to discuss why we believe disparities exist, set targets for improvement, and identify what institutional policies and practice need to be changes to improve those outcomes.
- In one year– what specific steps will your team take to achieve your 1-year goal?
  - o Who will be involved?
  - o What is the anticipated result?
  - o For example:



- By this time next year, by working with our partner colleges (a, b) we will identify transfer success rates in X, Y, Z fields/majors and convene academic and student services staff from across our institutions to develop a plan for improving outcomes for these particular fields/majors.

Facilitators spend 20min with each team, or adjust as you deem necessary based on how the teams are doing.

... 5m before end

Give a 5 min warning until lunch

**60m**

**Lunch**

**1hr30m**

**Action Planning for Success (Regional Teams)**

*Facilitators:* \_\_\_\_\_

We recommend that, in addition to the session facilitator, this session also include group facilitators who are assigned to regional partnership teams to help guide participants through the action planning exercise. We also recommend that each group designate a note-taker.

*Participant Groupings:* Have every participant from each institution within a regional partnership come together in a large group in a designated area or corner of the meeting room.

*Related Materials:* Action Plan Template: Part IV; Slides

*Goal:* Set goals as a partnership, identify primary improvement strategies, and develop action steps in order to improve the transfer students' outcomes

**10m**

Welcome back everyone. How did action planning as a college team go? [Call on 2-3 people to share].

**Session Facilitator**

Synthesize findings and make connections between institutions. Connect what was shared to the overall goals and what comes next.

So now we want to break into regional teams to do a similar visioning and planning activity.

- Pull out the **Action Plan Template: Part IV** handout and look at p.4
- Soon, you will be breaking into your regional teams to fill out this page
- The goal here is to **set regional short-term goals, identify primary improvement strategies, and develop action steps in order to improve the transfer students' outcomes in your region**
- You will have facilitators with your regional team to help guide you through the conversation, as well as a note-taker
- Now we have about 90min for this activity, and our goal is for you to complete this worksheet in that time.
- An electronic copy should have just been sent around to your email in case you would prefer to work digitally

Additional Direction to be Shared with Teams:

- \* Please be prepared to turn in **one copy per region** of the **Part IV of the Action Plan Template** to {specific individual} (in writing or electronic is fine) **BY THE END OF THE SESSION**
- \* Assign one very good note-taker to capture your conversation in your break-out room
- \* We will come together again by {time} and have one representative from each team share what you discussed

**5m**

Colleges transition to their regional partnership tables.

## Seating transition

### 1hr 10m Facilitators w/ partnership groups

Facilitators guide their assigned colleges in filling out the Regional Short-term Action Planning handout. Before beginning, some **important notes**:

- Determine a **note-taker** for the conversation to **take detailed notes about everything you discuss**
- Be prepared for someone to turn in one version of pg. 4 of the handout Part IV for your region
- Assign one person to give the 'report-back' presentation for 1-2minutes when we comes back to full group

#### **Asset Inventory (20 min)**

- What are the ways in which we are already working together?
- In what areas are the institutions in your regional partnership implementing transfer policies and practices implemented at scale?

#### **Share institutional plans (20 min)**

- Each team goes around and shares institutional short-term plans

#### **Action Steps (remaining 30min):**

- What action steps will you take as a region to achieve your aspirations?
  - o What do you still need to know/find out?
  - o What will you do as institutions and what will you do altogether?
  - o Example: As partners, we will host a brainstorming & planning meeting by early 2018 with folks from our advising teams to identify challenges for transfer advising and come up with a plan to address.
- On what timeline will these take place?
- Who will be responsible for these steps?
  - o Will you need to engage others at your institution? The state? Who? And how will you get them involved?

Prompts for facilitators if you suspect institutions believe they are performing better than reality:

- "So if you did X, would it improve your transfer outcomes to a significant degree?"
- "If you are performing so well, why does the data not reflect better outcomes?"

Note-takers capturing notes. Assign one person to report-back on what you discussed for the full group share-out.

### 5m Seating transition

Participants transition back into their seats

### **30m**

#### **Share-out & Reflections**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Participant Groupings:* Regional Partnership Tables (or sit wherever comfortable)

*Related Materials:* Slides

*Goal:* To share and gain a wider understanding of partnerships' reflections and action plans

### **30m**

Let's have one representative from each region share for 2-3min what you discussed in your region and some action steps you came up with. [Call on one representative for each region to present].

### **Session Facilitator**

Have state representatives respond to some of the things they are hearing and ways in which they can support further efforts.

**10m**

**Workshop Wrap-Up**

*Facilitator(s):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Participant Groupings:* Regional Partnership Tables (or sit wherever comfortable)

*Related Materials:* Slides

**10m**

**Session Facilitator**

Thanks everyone again for such a wonderful Institute.

- Philanthropic supporters
- State-level organizational partners
- Any other partners involved in the work
- A special thanks to those who coordinated the planning for the event

Please remember to turn in your **Handouts Part I, II, and III (1 per institution) as a team by {date}** to {workshop contact} and turn in your **Regional Partnership Short-Term Action Plan (Part IV) to a facilitator** now if you have not done so already. If you have any questions about logistics, please reach out to {designated person}.

Thanks everyone again for such a wonderful workshop.

- Any announcements & reminders