REPORT FROM ACSCOTI TO THE ACADEMIC COUNCIL

July 26, 2023

I. *Introduction and Overview of Academic Senate Transfer Policies under Review*

ACSCOTI was created by the 2021-22 Academic Council to consider a broad range of issues and policies pertaining to transfer to UC, and specifically, to review and update existing UC Transfer Pathways, and to develop new ones as appropriate. The committee charge and the procedures for reviewing Pathways, approved by ACSCOTI, BOARS, and the Academic Council in 2022-23, are appended to this report. Approval of the latter document was an important milestone during the 2022-23 academic year. That report addresses some of this overview material, as well. ACSCOTI appreciated partnership with BOARS and the Academic Council's support for the document, which establishes the Senate's role in determining policy concerning UC Transfer Pathways.

ACSCOTI is a special committee of the Academic Council, so this report does not exactly resemble the recitation of the year's activities, as might describe annual reports from standing committees of the Assembly. Members of the Academic Council should consider whether they wish to continue the committee, so the emphasis is more on recommendations that come from the work the committee has done this year. The intended audience also includes UC's academic leaders in administration, UCOP consultants to ACSCOTI, SGR, and members of BOARS and other committees who are following various transfer-related issues. These issues include outside pressure to conform to CSU expectations for transfer students, to homogenize majors at UC, and the budget negotiations concerning a UC transfer-admission guarantee, as well as specific pieces of legislation such as AB 928 and the current AB 1749.

ACSCOTI recognizes that constant references to ADTs, TMCs, and TAGs, the alphabet soup that seems to characterize and obscure the transfer process, can be a barrier to understanding. The good news is that things are not nearly as complex as they seem, at first blush, but it is also fair to say that they are not as simple as we would like. Outside UC, many would emphasize the last point, and they appear to remain heavily invested in the notion of the "Transfer Maze," so ACSCOTI's efforts to provide better information for transfer students seem particularly worth highlighting. Our efforts prioritize clarity and providing complete information about majors over homogenization and simplification; the latter may be good, achievable longer-run goals, but any steps toward the latter outcomes will have to come from faculty responsible for the majors involved. Moreover, those steps require the information we have developed. We elaborate below. This summary uses the Sociology major as an illustration of some key points, but comparable observations apply to all majors.

What is a UC Transfer Pathway? A UC Transfer Pathway (UCTP, or simply Pathway, a term used for many purposes, but which we'll reserve for UC's Pathways) exists for 20 majors, and we hope there will be more soon. Each Transfer Pathway is a set of courses, constructed by including any course in the major (including courses from other disciplines that provide major-preparation, e.g., calculus required for Economics, Physics, and other STEM majors) that a campus requires for *admission* as a transfer student. For Sociology, for instance, the Pathway consists of a course in Introduction to Sociology, a course in Social Problems, and a course in

Statistics. The Sociology majors at Merced and Santa Cruz require the first two courses for transfer admission, hence these courses are in the UC Transfer Pathway. UCLA requires the Intro course and a course in Statistics. Hence all three courses are in the Pathway. Those three courses constitute the Pathway, because there are no campuses requiring any other courses for transfer admission. The Pathway remains the superset of those three campuses' requirements, unless another Sociology major requires some fourth course for transfer admission; if that were the case, the Pathway would be constructed in the same manner, adding any other requirements from around the system. As it turns out, the three courses are sufficient. Nearly every campus also requires a course in Research Methods for Sociology majors, *for the major,* but none require it for admission, so that course is not in the Pathway.

When the Pathways were created, there was a premium placed on homogeneity and avoiding information about campus-specific variations, though these existed. The Pathways were created to respond to the criticism that a student who wanted to prepare for multiple UC campuses needed to consider requirements that differed by campus. ACSCOTI feels that, with the benefit of 20-20 hindsight and taking current priorities into account, too much weight has been given to this goal.[1] It requires hiding two important types of information, not unlike type-I and type-II errors in testing hypotheses. The first error is the failure to identify instances where a specific campus does not require a specific Pathway course. A student interested only in the Sociology majors at Davis, Irvine, Riverside, or Santa Barbara would benefit from knowing that each of these majors requires none of the Pathway courses for transfer admission, even for a guaranteed admission via TAG. Additionally, Berkeley and San Diego have lower-division requirements for the major but not for transfer admission.[2] The second type of error is to fail to identify additional courses worth taking, even though they are not in the Pathway. For instance, the student who does not take a Research Methods course because it is not in the Pathway delays a lower-division requirement for the major until after transfer.

Expanded Pathway Descriptions. Continuing with the example of Sociology, currently, a prospective student would need to consult ASSIST and departmental web sites to learn that the first three campuses above do not each require all three courses, or that the four TAG campuses mentioned above do not require any Sociology courses, even for guaranteed admission; no indication is provided in the Pathway description itself, and its only message is that preparing for all UC campuses should be based on all Pathway courses. In fact, the administration tends to come very close to implying that there are no omissions of either type described above. For instance, "Transfer Pathways give you a roadmap to prepare for your major and graduate on time from any UC campus.[3]" Also, "The Transfer Pathways can help students who want to make themselves competitive across the UC system; some majors listed may want fewer courses for admission, but none will expect more." Or "Having completed a UC Transfer Pathway and a

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[1] It is important to emphasize that the Pathways and especially the preference for homogeneity across UC campuses were a necessary response to political pressure.

[2] This raises a separate concern: ASSIST pages routinely include language indicating that completing lower-division major requirements is "strongly encouraged" and of course, the degree of preparation for a major is a factor in comprehensive review. Especially for non-TAG campuses, it is easy to sympathize with a student who would simply like to be told what to do for admission, a sentiment that appears to lead some to think that homogeneous Associate Degrees for transfer are a better model.

[3] https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/transfer-requirements/uc-transfer-programs/transfer-pathways/

campus-based TAG in the same major, Pathways+ students are best prepared for competitive admission across all nine of UC's undergraduate campuses while simultaneously securing guaranteed admission to one of the TAG campuses.[4]"

The student who follows the Pathway recommendations does not learn that Social Problems is not always (and often not) required. Presumably the course does not do any harm, but all courses have an opportunity cost and a student could end up even delaying transfer in order to take each Pathway course, when it is not necessary to do so.

Moreover, there is nothing in such statements to indicate that nearly every campus also requires a course in Research Methods for Sociology majors, and it presumably makes a student even more competitive for admission. It certainly means the student has one less requirement to deal with post-transfer, negating the claim that the Pathway provides the "best" preparation. Taking Research Methods presumably improves the competitiveness of the student's application, with better major preparation, and also improves the chances of success and timely degree-completion post transfer. Moreover, without this course, the student would start out at UC behind the point that freshman students admitted to the same major have reached, by their junior years. The current AB 1749 uses the term "junior status" and anecdotally, our understanding is that at least some outside UC mean more than that the student will have transferred at least 60 semester units; they use the term to mean that the student has made the same academic progress in a major as a junior who began in the major as a freshman. That standard may apply to Associate Degrees for Transfer to CSU—at CSU—but it is clear that it does not apply to our Pathways. That wasn't their purpose. By conveying to students the full sets of existing major requirements, ACSCOTI intends that students will know not only how to be eligible for admission at any UC campus (with the Pathway courses) but how to be fully prepared for the major (with the Expanded Pathway) and be comparable to students who were admitted as freshmen when they are in their junior year.

These problem might seem small, when the Pathway consists of only three courses out of 60 semester units pre-transfer, but similar statements can be made about every major. Our proposal to provide this more detailed information about admission and major requirements is easily the most important improvement needed for the Pathways.

This added information is also easy to collect in tabular form. It will be considered an unfortunate outcome by those who emphasize simplicity and homogeneity, when we say that major requirements vary by campus, but ACSCOTI feels that the more important objective is to provide full information. We defer to the faculty delivering the major concerning whether particular requirements are appropriate. It may be that providing full information will cause the majors to converge, at least partially, on a more similar set of requirements, but whether or not this occurs, ACSCOTI favors providing students with the information they need. This information, and the variation that exists across campuses, is already obtainable with some effort from web sites for the majors; we are simply aggregating it to convey the requirements across the campuses in one table. We should emphasize that we are not proposing changing any admissions requirements. It will be clear which courses meet major requirements and also admission requirements, and which are not needed for the latter purpose, only for the major. The courses

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[4] https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/sept22/a1attach.pdf (page 6)

could, in most cases, be taken at CCCs, but if they aren't, then the student still needs to take them after transfer. ACSCOTI's view is that either plan is fine, as long as the student is aware and not surprised by the additional requirements, after transferring. Indicating which campuses have additional requirements and which courses meet them is needed for that to be an informed choice instead of a surprise.

Comparison to ADTs Council members are no doubt well aware that many outside UC feel that our requirements should align with those for the CSU system, reflected in Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs). They also do not think that UC majors should differ from each other in their requirements. For some majors, an ADT falls short of adequate preparation for UC. For others, it involves excess units—courses that UC would not require for transfer admission or even for the major. Both outcomes represent imperfect alignment and explain why UC should not support reducing the CCC experience of preparing to transfer to selecting and completing an ADT. And within UC, the majors vary in their respective emphases within a discipline; there is no reason to expect that these majors offer identical sets of courses. The Anthropology major provides an extreme example. The Davis and Irvine majors require the Pathway courses and three additional courses; all 18 units in an Anthropology ADT could potentially be used to meet major requirements at those two campuses. But at the other extreme, the Anthropology major at San Diego does not require any lower-division course. Transferring to that campus in Anthropology with an ADT means taking 18 more units in the major than required. Clearly the courses taken are not harmful, but they could have a high opportunity cost and complicate scheduling for students. *It is worth emphasizing here that the author of AB 1749 believes that these differences will be eliminated by the bill.* ACSCOTI is aware of no mechanism, including AB 1749, that would cause majors at UC to adopt the major requirements in an ADT degree, nor would we encourage doing so.

In providing such detailed, more complete information, we anticipate the return of the "Transfer Maze" criticism. However, if we provide clear and consistent information across all platforms and disseminate it to faculty and advisors in the other two segments of higher education in California, the result will be clarity and informed students who should be trusted to make good decisions with the right information. No one is well-served by oversimplification and the Academic Senates of the three segments should be trusted when they convey that fact. If we do not do so, we will continue to face an ongoing series of well-intentioned pieces of legislation that continue to miss their target, and students will be forced into convenient boxes that may not serve them well.

ACSCOTI intends for the information about each expanded pathway to be presented on a single webpage that clearly and transparently tells students the courses they need to complete in order to be well prepared for all UC campuses, and to understand differences that exist across the majors. The page can also state the extent to which the pathway and the corresponding ADT overlap, so that students do not need to choose between UC and CSU as soon as they enter community college[5].

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[5] Currently, the Transfer Pathways include high-level comparisons to the ADTs. ACSCOTI intends to work with the faculty representing the various majors to give more precise information about how the majors compare to those at CSU.

We anticipate that this information may also be used by faculty in all three segments of higher education in California to achieve greater alignment. For example, the current characterization of the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) for Sociology—the template used by the community colleges to create their individual ADT degrees—is that it "aligns" with the UCTP. However, as explained above, that means that an ADT is sufficient, but it is not necessary, and moreover, the ADTs fall well short of alignment if judged against the Expanded Pathways. If UC provides full information about its own lower-division requirements, not just those required for transfer admission, community colleges might recognize courses they would be interested in adding to their own offerings. At the same time, UC may recognize some of the existing community college elective courses as suitable substitutes for current major requirements. The first step in a faculty-driven effort towards greater alignment, especially to guide UC's participation in it, is to assemble and share the information for each Pathway that ACSCOTI is compiling.

ACSCOTI is well aware of the ongoing pressure from outside to simply accept ADTs. We are past the point of being tired of well-meaning but misguided proposals to guarantee admission at every campus based only on completing an ADT. No one making such a proposal should be taken seriously if they do not at least acknowledge that they would be committing many students to three or more years at UC, post-transfer. The vast majority of UC faculty care very much about transfer students succeeding, and it is the faculty that sees the adverse consequences when a student is admitted though under-prepared. Our clear message should be that we want students to transfer to UC, but not before they are prepared. It is time for the Academic Senate to speak more publicly about all we are doing to try to improve transfer students' success, an outcome that does not happen by simply lowering admission standards. The message should convey that we not only want transfer students to come to UC, we want them to succeed when they do. Admitting students who are less well-prepared simply sets them up for failure. They have worked hard and often have overcome extraordinary obstacles to get to where they are. Allowing them start their UC careers already behind their classmates risks having them miss out on the goal behind everything they have accomplished to get to the point where they can transfer.

II.   *Recommendations from ACSCOTI*

1. *Expanded Transfer Pathways.* UC should provide clear information about expanded transfer pathways, with a single web page for each pathway. While retaining the present definition of the pathways, an expanded pathway will show when a course is not required for the specific UC campuses a student is interested in. At the same time, it will show what additional courses will prepare the student to enter UC at the same level as a student admitted as a freshman who then spent two years in the major (reflecting legislation and other references to "junior status") or, at a minimum, to graduate in two years after transfer. The many benefits of doing so have already been discussed in this report.

2. *Consistency.* The system-wide description of Transfer Pathways and all associated major requirements will put all majors that belong to a pathway (which not all majors do) on a comparable basis. At the same time, a common format should be determined for all the campus websites that list requirements for transfer admission and for Transfer Admission Guarantees, so that all the essential information is presented in the same way, and nothing

is unclear. This common format should be developed in consultation with the community colleges, for whom this information is intended.

3. *Transfer Guarantees.* TAG agreements are obviously desirable for campuses wishing to attract more transfer students, and for students seeking more certainty. TAGs presumably play a positive role in encouraging students' interest in a particular campus, particularly in the light of the 2:1 target. ACSCOTI recognizes that at least some UC campuses will want to continue to offer guaranteed admission in at least some majors. UC should continue to encourage students with TAG agreements to apply to multiple campuses, so that students explore more opportunities. Although ACSCOTI does not find limiting TAG agreements to one campus per student to be a problem, a case can be made that a backup guarantee would be desirable for a student who ends up falling short of a requirement such as the minimum GPA, for instance, at their first TAG campus. ACSCOTI would not oppose multiple TAGs per student.

   While ACSCOTI does not oppose guarantees and recognizes their value in guiding academic planning as well as managing enrollment, it should be kept in mind that they directly contradict UC's admissions policy adopted by The Regents, especially when based on little more than GPA and perhaps a short checklist of courses. Transfer guarantees ignore much of the information considered by comprehensive or holistic review. Campuses with more qualified applicants than they can admit do not need TAGs, and the absence of holistic review is likely to reduce the diversity of the student population. Accordingly, ACSCOTI strongly opposes responding to pressure from outside UC for the most selective campuses to start offering TAG agreements.

   For the campuses that offer TAGs, there are various deadlines and other procedural requirements that are different for each campus, with no obvious academic justification, e.g., differences in when the GPA is calculated and how a California Community College student is defined. The information is also presented differently by each campus. To the extent possible, these should be made uniform. Transfer students and community colleges attach great value to these guarantees, and the inter-campus differences are confusing and hurt UC's reputation, feeding the narrative that transfer is too difficult.

   ACSCOTI is also concerned that the existing pattern of TAG requirements has largely gone unexamined by faculty responsible for the participating majors; a review is long overdue.

4. *General Education/Cal-GETC.* ACSCOTI welcomes the achievement from all three segments of California higher education, working through ICAS, to bring about a common GE model with Cal-GETC. At the same time, the committee is very concerned that a 34-unit expectation will crowd out courses needed for major preparation (or other courses that are strongly recommended). This concern exists not just for the most demanding of STEM majors, but for any majors where students would benefit from taking more than 26 units in that specific field, more so than meeting a GE requirement. Post-transfer, the opportunity to take required GE courses might help students better balance their academic loads and provide opportunities for GE courses that may not be

available at some community colleges.

ACSCOTI strongly supports greater flexibility in allowing students to complete any fraction of Cal-GETC that they consider appropriate post-transfer. In every instance, the committee would advise students to ignore Cal-GETC in favor of major preparation and meeting campus-specific GE requirements, if adhering to the 34-unit model means weaker preparation for their intended major. Regardless of one's beliefs about GE requirements, the evidence shows that stronger preparation for a major improves time-to-degree and reduces the likelihood of academic difficulties, changing majors, or not completing the degree. We are aware of no such evidence for GE courses, and in fact, expect that the variety provided by taking a GE course alongside major-specific courses post-transfer will provide a benefit for students.

A separate issue worth noting here concerns double-counting. The 60-unit constraint in an ADT (or the possible 66 units for STEM under AB 928) could be made less binding by double-counting courses that meet both major and GE requirements. However, the choice to double count has been left to the CCCs, presumably because they and not UC create these degrees. Additional double-counting and being more flexible about the specific categories in GE requirements (for instance that there must be one natural and one physical science course) can be added to the possibility of deferring some courses until after transfer, as ways to create more room, pre-transfer, for making major preparation a priority.

5. *Articulation concerns.* ACSCOTI recognizes and supports the need for faculty responsible for a major to make decisions about the articulation of CCC courses to UC courses. The committee would not oppose faculty in a particular major basing such decisions solely on C-ID numbers and descriptors, but also recognizes why this is unlikely to be an option chosen by most majors. The committee strongly opposes outside pressure to base articulation solely on C-ID information. That said, more support is clearly needed for articulation efforts and for ASSIST, where such information is housed:

ASSIST agreements often are difficult to understand. For instance, how close to "required" is "strongly recommended" and how such courses compare to courses that are merely "recommended"? A common and clear format for the ASSIST agreements is needed.

Also, there seem to be problems created by articulating only entire sequences, particularly for cases where one course ought to suffice for the requirement. ACSCOTI understands that this arises due to different sequencing of topics at different institutions, for otherwise comparable sequences of courses. It would be better to see more uniformity in the sequencing of topics in year-long sequences than to manage the problems created by articulating only full sequences.

Finally, the search capabilities in ASSIST should be expanded considerably, recognizing that it is obsolete to think of all prospective transfer students as attending a single community college and being interested in a single degree program at a specific UC

campus.

6. *UCTP Degrees*. UC does not require an Associate degree for admission. ACSCOTI recognizes, however, that many students and their families view an Associate degree as an important milestone. The committee sees two models for Associate degrees that are consistent with preparing for UC. In one case, a student completes an ADT, meaning 34 units for Cal-GETC (beginning in 2025; IGETC until then), as many units as the ADT requires for the major, and then remaining units to fulfill any requirements for UC that are not already part of the ADT. When this can be done within 60 units, the only downside we can see is that the student may take courses for the ADT requirement for which UC provides only unit credit; that is not an unreasonable cost for the flexibility that preparing for both CSU and UC requires.

Where the ADT is too dissimilar to UC's requirements, a better approach is to construct an Associate degree based on the UCTP for the major. ACSCOTI would prefer to build that degree by starting with all of the courses that make sense for major-preparation, based on the UCTP and associated major requirements, and then add units for GE. If there is insufficient room for 34 units, ACSCOTI's strong preference would be to defer as much GE as it takes to meet any unit caps, although since we would not be constructing ADTs, we would not be limited to 60 units, and the degree could simply require Cal-GETC plus the UCTP courses. This is the approach that was taken in the pilot of UCTP degrees for Chemistry and Physics (although those two degrees took advantage of IGETC for STEM, allowing some deferral of GE units). ACSCOTI strongly supports expanding this model to other majors.

In order for this model to work, it is essential for UC to be as flexible as possible with the timing of Cal-GETC completion, and to streamline the TAG process as much as possible, to be able to compete with the "degree with a guarantee" image of the ADTs.

7. *Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT).* A key choice for community-college students is whether to follow the requirements for an ADT. The student could be considering applying to both UC and CSU, or could simply be influenced by the significant promotion and publicity those degrees receive. Once AB 928 takes effect, students who are interested in transfer and do not opt out will be placed on an ADT pathway.

For many majors, choosing the right electives means that the ADT can be adapted to more closely follow the best preparation for UC. For other majors, UCTP-based degrees, linked seamlessly to TAGs, can serve as an alternative. Even for these, there will still be some overlap with the ADT requirements. Often, the differences do not appear until the second year of coursework (assuming a two-year plan for lower-division coursework). The UCTP-degree descriptions should make it clear whether this is the case, so that students do not necessarily feel that they must decide between preparing for UC and following an ADT at the beginning of their enrollment at a community college.

8. *ADTs are not ideal.* ACSCOTI recognizes substantial outside interest in ADTs, and pressure for UC to accommodate them. The committee's view is that UC needs to

continue to try to help students with ADTs select the best courses within the sets of electives offered, to best prepare for UC's majors, but we also feel that in many cases, these are second-best solutions, compared to simply selecting the best courses to prepare for UC or, where applicable, following the requirements of an Associate's degree based on the UCTP of interest. Currently, UC states only differences in the sets of courses included in the Pathways and ADTs, but provides no justification, and no information is provided that links these differences to more fundamental differences in the majors. Unfortunately, no advice is given for meeting the non-Pathway requirements in the majors at UC, something our top recommendation will remedy. **Faculty in each discipline should be consulted to provide short characterizations of the aims of majors at UC, how they differ from corresponding majors at CSU, and then how those differences are reflected in the respective patterns of courses required for each.**

9. *Unnecessary Barriers to UC, and the need for data to support majors.* Higher education is demanding of a student's time and financial resources. These demands often present barriers to progress and in many cases, explain why students do not continue beyond a community college. Course and other requirements also present additional hurdles, so it is imperative that UC do nothing to make inclusive access even more difficult to achieve. Our recommendations above are intended to achieve clarity and flexibility, with administrative matters such as specific deadlines as homogeneous across UC campuses as possible, so that the need to master campus-specific detail about processes does not become another unnecessary barrier for potential transfers to UC.

   We are not proposing any changes to the course requirements and recommendations for admission. But these requirements should be academically justified in terms of predicting future success, including time-to-degree and good academic performance. The guiding principle for both requirements for admission and the major, and for the information we convey to students, should be that taking the courses identified contributes to an increased likelihood of academic success at UC. ACSCOTI trusts the faculty's informed judgments when it is claimed that UC's requirements often need to differ from CSUs, but at the same time, empirical support for such requirements would be very helpful and very persuasive.

   It follows immediately that there should be better support for analyzing the incredibly rich but largely unutilized data resource that student records represent. Faculty who oversee individual majors cannot be expected to take on the job of assembling data sets to allow studying the determinants of success, modeling important questions such as the effects on time-to-degree or success in the major from taking (or delaying) various required courses. But such studies are imperative, and they should be done by the faculty who know the majors best. UC is far short of approaching best-practices in the area of data-based advising and curriculum oversight.

   ACSCOTI believes very strongly that faculty should be given access to the data available to IRAP and other administrative units that would facilitate such studies.

10. *Transfer Enrollment Targets.* The 2:1 target needs to be revisited, particularly considering the declining enrollments at community colleges. First, ACSCOTI sees no reason why each UC campus should have the same target. If the system as a whole meets the enrollment target, that ought to suffice. In addition, the target itself seems dubious; it has been set and never revised, and determined without regard even to the number of freshman applicants relative to transfer applicants. Much more work is needed to understand the cause of enrollment declines at community colleges, just as much work is needed to better understand the pattern of transfer applications. The target becomes counterproductive if it causes a campus to turn away highly qualified freshman applicants or compromise its admission standards for transfers, or principles such as comprehensive review, simply to meet a targeted ratio set long ago. ACSCOTI favors aggressive promotion of the transfer process, but still finds the idea of a fixed-ratio target to be worth review. The many considerations involved extend beyond our committee's portfolio, and should involve BOARS, UCPB, and UCAADE, at a minimum.

11. *Updating Requirements.* While changes to requirements are infrequent and should not make it infeasible to put static information on the web that is updated infrequently, there does need to be a system whereby changes in major requirements and especially admission requirements are communicated to the systemwide Academic Senate and UCOP. For instance, the B.S. degree in Business Administration at UCR now lists a programming course as an admission requirement. There is no such requirement in the Transfer Pathway, so as long as UCR does treat this course as a pre-transfer requirement, the Pathway needs to reflect this information. ACSCOTI suggests that campus admissions offices are the best place for this information to be captured and conveyed to the system. When the divisional Senate office is aware of such changes, it would add very little to their workload (given how rare such changes are) to provide the same information, so that there would be little chance that it would remain unnoticed for updating system-wide Pathway descriptions.

12. *Cross-segment collaboration.* The UCTP degrees were the direct result of collaboration between the Academic Senates of the CCC and UC systems. The CCC Senate has proposed a series of discipline-based meetings, convening faculty representing similar majors from all three segments. ACSCOTI sees many benefits that could potentially come from convening faculty in this manner, and supports this proposal. It will be important to work within UC toward a better understanding of what we could accomplish, not to mention what we could do within the UC system and in cooperation with others. But once that work has been done, we are strongly supportive of collaborating.

III. *Curriculum or Pathway-specific Topics*

At the committee's May meeting, a number of specific proposals were mentioned as avenues to pursue.

- The "San Diego Rule" for electives.

The Sociology major at UC San Diego requires a lower-division elective to be chosen from a set of several courses offered at UCSD. The major advises, however, that students attending a California community college that does not offer a course that articulates to one of these electives may substitute any elective eligible for credit at UC. While obviously not a solution to articulation gaps that may still exist for specific requirements for majors, this idea does seem to ACSCOTI to be worth encouraging. By definition, an elective course might provide breadth in a particular discipline that the faculty see as important, but the specific material covered is not considered to be core material, or it would not be an elective. We would encourage majors that specify such electives, for the purpose of adding breadth to consider adopting this same rule.

- Additional Pathways

Early in the year, a proposal for a pathway in Data Science emerged as a promising new option. As reflected in the procedures document adopted this year, ACSCOTI views its role as supportive, and the process is moving forward to create such a pathway. We felt that it might be valuable to also create a Statistics pathway. Although obviously similar, this might be a way to accommodate differing approaches without having any conflict within a pathway.

ACSCOTI sees the development of engineering pathways, perhaps with associate degrees based on them, following the Chemistry and Physics model, to be not only promising, but an effective way to counter outside pressure tied to AB 1749. There are two existing pathways in engineering, but no ADTs. It will be critical to involve engineering faculty who have experience with transfers in this effort, and developing these new pathways and possibly degrees would not only benefit students, it would provide further demonstration that UC has better ways to achieve the goals advocated by the proponents of bills such as AB 1749.

The committee also discussed the possibility of pathways for various majors in Ethnic Studies, both in specific, area-studies type majors and broader ones.

Finally, while AB 928 instructs the CCCs to put all students interested in transfer on an ADT pathway, it also provides for students interested in UC to opt out. ACSCOTI feels that, AB 1749 notwithstanding, such students need alternative models for transfer to UC, and an ADT is not necessarily ideal. For majors in the biological sciences, the ADT falls short of adequate major preparation (mainly due to the absence of the organic chemistry sequence), hence the committee sees potential in enhancing the existing UC transfer pathway for these majors by creating associate degrees, again outside the ADT framework, following the Chemistry and Physics models.

These efforts of course require intersegmental cooperation, especially with the CCC system that creates associate degrees. ACSCOTI's main interaction is through the Transfer Alignment Project, but we see other opportunities to strengthen these links.

IV.   *Two Futures*

ACSCOTI sees many things that the faculty could do to improve the transfer process, but we would be building on UC's successes, not replacing them with harmful legislation. If we are able

to avoid at least the worst excesses in AB 1749, we think that most of the things we have proposed remain feasible and that they would empower the faculty responsible for delivering the majors to use their expertise to make changes at the local level, where they would be best informed by both empirical evidence and experience with students. Our recommendation would be to continue to concentrate the Senate's efforts systemwide in our committee, still working closely with BOARS and others.

The other future is the one reflected in AB 1749, and AB 928 before it. Our perception is that these bills are not what the faculty in the other segments would advocate, so we continue to be interested in greater cooperation to innovate in the area of transfer policies. But we were very disappointed to see that the Chancellor's Office of the CCC system supported AB 1749, and think that this does not bode well for the first path forward. This other future would leave ACSCOTI to be the "ADT Implementation Committee" and we see little reason to continue to have a special committee on transfers, if the choices the Regents delegated to the UC Academic Senate are going to be made by others.

V.   APPENDIX: A Post-AB 1749 View of Transfers to UC

A subset of ACSCOTI's concerns were already communicated to the Academic Council, prior to the Senate Education Committee hearing and the formal "Oppose" position taken by both the administration and the Academic Senate. We won't repeat these concerns in detail, but will add some remarks about what might be left for the Senate to do, in the event the bill is ultimately passed and signed into law.

AB 1749 makes most pathways that map to ADTs obsolete. For instance, there is little and probably no point in promoting an anthropology pathway; if students know that their classmates who complete the ADT will jump ahead of them in the admissions queue, then they will also pursue the ADT route. This is the most important consequence that we see in the bill; the legislature is seeking to seize control of transfer admissions and overrule the judgments of admissions professionals in comprehensive review and the judgments of the faculty in determining the best preparation for a major. It is tempting to say that they must not understand what they are doing, because how could they be that arrogant?

It is true that there are still some opportunities to improve transfer in other areas:

- The Pathways will not become completely obsolete if UC will pursue some of the possible loopholes we have identified in AB 1749. Examples include creating pre-majors, as already exist on some campuses. Where ADTs fall short of the requirements for a major, a campus could admit students with an ADT only to a premajor, requiring that remaining major-preparation courses be completed with a sufficiently high GPA before formal admission to the major. Since most of the cases where ADTs fall short are STEM majors and likely to be B.S. degrees, the campuses could create majors that confer a B.A., essentially a more applied chemistry or physics, for instance.
- The proposed pathways like data science remain viable, since they don't currently exist in ADT form. For certain pathways in the biological sciences, we might make the case that the Biology ADT maps only to evolutionary biology, perhaps, or some kind of applied biology major, while treating cell biology as sufficiently different that it becomes like data science or ethnic studies, where ADTs do not exist. But here again, is the Academic Senate and the administration willing to defend such interpretations? Is the Academic Council willing to assert that the Social Justice Studies: Ethnic Studies ADT doesn't map to our Ethnic Studies programs? Knowing the answers to these questions will be important. Mounting a unified UC transfer effort with a common understanding about these points is critical, or else a committee like ACSCOTI will be wasting its efforts. To elaborate briefly, will we now want to discourage the simultaneous pursuit of an ADT in data science, because it triggers an advantage in transfer admissions, even though it might represent weaker training than a UC Transfer Pathway in the field? Will we be able to work with the CCCs to create associate degrees outside the ADT framework in these new areas, or will we want to avoid associate degrees altogether, so as not to propagate still more degrees that bring favored admissions status?
- The substantial outside pressure on UC and the sequence of legislated constraints on the authority delegated by The Regents to the Senate require a very coordinated response,

and probably a degree of system-wide coordination and uniformity of at least some admissions practices that we are not used to. Most of the suggestions that we made in our May version of the future represented coordination of information, but avoided trying to dictate any academic decisions, as opposed to more innocuous ones like cleaning up TAG requirements and agreeing on better, clearer language for program descriptions in ASSIST.

A final point concerns how the Academic Senate might balance adherence to Regental policy and accommodating AB 928 and AB 1749. It is motivated by our concern that especially AB 1749's guarantees will likely derail UC Transfer Pathways (not to mention the roles of ACSCOTI and BOARS in transfer admissions and policy). ACSCOTI has been concerned all year about the Academic Senate's limited role on some campuses in transfer admissions, relative to the roles play in freshman admission. Even if the Academic Council is completely persuaded by this document, it should be recognized that, in order to deal with the issues it raises, the Senate is going to have to find a way to energize divisional processes and committees involved in transfer.

To bring this about, we recommend a simple standard that the Senate could insist that all 9 undergraduate campuses implement. To codify specifics and how it would be carried out would more appropriately be assigned to BOARS, but ACSCOTI would be eager to collaborate where it is helpful. As background we note that Regents policy requires that "Undergraduate Admission to the University of California be based on Comprehensive Review for which the preferred implementation is Single Score Holistic Review." This policy applies to both Freshman admission and transfer admission and it is the Senate's responsibility to implement it. Holistic Comprehensive Review, along with UC's 9% Eligibility in the Local Context, have proved to be the two of the most significant levers UC has to enhance diversity, including the UC campuses becoming the first Research I Hispanic serving institutions in the country. Therefore we suggest that the Senate should establish the policy regarding guaranteed admission:

> "Any guaranteed admission program for transfer students shall be implemented in such a way to ensure that it does not displace applicants with higher Comprehensive Review evaluations than those offered a guarantee of admission."

In this way, UC will do its best to honor the legislative intent of AB 1749 should it pass, while recognizing that we have to honor Regents policy as well. With this step, UCTP-completing applicants in disciplines where the UCTP offers significantly stronger preparation than a minimal ADT in the subject would not be displaced by an ADT student whose coursework may have fallen well short of UCTP expectations. Presumably implementation would work by capping guarantee numbers if necessary. This policy should also apply to existing TAGs that would have to be reexamined, as we have already emphasized, as well as any new guarantees.

We have expressed plenty of frustration with the political process, but we are not unrealistic. Giving in to an impulse to simply say no, and cite constitutional independence, does not seem like a good strategy. ACSCOTI and BOARS could possibly honor the intent of the legislation without completely scrapping comprehensive review, with this approach.

ACSCOTI cannot by itself bring about an entirely new strategy. If the Academic Assembly and the Academic Council are willing to reassert the Senate's authority over admissions policy, then we all have something to work with. By adopting all of ACSCOTI's recommendations, the Senate could offer UC-based ADTs or close approximations that achieve not only our goals for transfers but the goals our critics seem to want. This would provide a viable alternative for the students who opt out of the ADT, as AB 928 provides for. It would give them a reason to think that guarantees to ADT-earners do not completely crowd them out from admission to UC. We would still need to back this alternative with ongoing and strengthened emphasis on major-preparation over general education. Adopting this strategy and our recommendations would also require dropping the extreme homogenization UC's critics advocate, but if we continue to make our case and show the results we already are achieving, this seems to us like a viable alternative to complete control by individuals outside UC.