



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- **Why do the academic leaders want a new transfer framework based on learning outcomes rather than courses and credits?**

**Answer:** They want to make the transfer process more efficient and equitable by basing it on what the student knows, rather than on a list of courses and credits which can lead to students repeating courses unnecessarily when they transfer. The new more flexible framework will better embrace other non-course-based learning options of the future.

- **Why is the scope of this project so small? How is the block transfer of the lower-division GE core more of an advantage?**

**Answer:** This pilot project is a test of concept. The constraints of only two years of funding and 23 institutions in five states demands a narrow scope to be manageable in that timeframe. The lessons from the two years of the pilot project will provide a process model for expansion.

- **What LEAP learning outcomes are included in the Passport GE Core?**

**Answer:** The Passport GE Core contains the following LEAP outcomes: oral communication, written communication, quantitative literacy. These were selected by the Pilot State Facilitators as foundational, ubiquitous and most approachable in the short timeframe.

- **Will the Passport have different versions?**

**Answer:** We plan to scale this project in phases as we address lower division general education in its entirety. Each phase will address additional LEAP outcomes. Once we know the details for the next phase of the project we will then evaluate alternative passport options for implementing the new outcomes.

- **Will the learning outcomes be tied to courses in the Passport project?**

**Answer:** In this pilot project, each participating institution identifies the academic work they use to impart transfer level proficiency with the learning outcomes. Some institutions may require two or more courses to meet a single outcome while another institution may only require one course, but each institution will understand the composition of the block at every other institution.

- **Our institution/academic unit has already developed and adopted our own Learning Outcomes. If we participate in the Passport project, must we now discard our Learning Outcomes and adopt the Passport Learning Outcomes?**

**Answer:** No. The only requirement is that the Passport Learning Outcomes are consistent with yours, and that you are able to identify your courses that impart proficiency with the Passport Learning Outcomes at a level appropriate for lower division general education transfer

- **There are a large number of Proficiency Criteria listed for each of the Passport Learning Outcomes. Is every Passport student required to demonstrate proficiency with each of these criteria?**

Answer: No. The Proficiency Criteria that are listed are examples, generated by faculty teams from 2 year and 4 year institutions, of the behaviors that a student will display when she has attained adequate proficiency to succeed in her academic endeavors after transferring to another Passport institution. No individual student is expected to display all of the proficiency criteria.

- **Can a student meet the learning outcomes for the Passport by ways other than completing a course such as by a portfolio or test score?**

**Answer:** Each institution determines and informs every other institution how its students meet the learning outcomes for its lower division general education core. Each institution decides if it chooses to participate in the Passport Initiative, in part based on its knowledge of the methods other institutions employ to insure student proficiency with the learning outcomes in the Passport block.

- **What is the advantage of a block transfer vs. a course-by-course transfer?**

**Answer:** A learning outcomes-based block transfer retains institutional individuality in defining the academic work required for a student to become proficient with the learning outcomes in the block, insures that the student will not have to repeat academic work, and simplifies the transfer process by eliminating the necessity to deal with every single course on an individual basis. Two among the many models for such block transfers are the Oregon OTM (the first year Gen Ed) and the Oregon AAOT (two years of Gen Ed), neither of which can be "unpacked" when a student with an OTM or AAOT transfers to another Oregon institution. The Passport will function the same way and thereby simplify the transfer process while insuring that the student does not have to unnecessarily repeat any academic work.

- **Does each pilot state already have an identifiable GE core we could make reciprocal among the pilot schools, and bypass the piecemeal approach? Some institutions already accept several GE patterns from other states.**

**Answer:** Though many do have identifiable GE cores based on a list of courses, the Pilot State Facilitators deliberated in February 2012 and concluded that this pilot project, since it includes discussion with faculty about the work needed to accomplish defined learning outcomes, dictates a concentrated focus. Institutions and states with current agreements for GE transfer would make good candidates to apply the lessons and process from the pilot project in future versions of the Passport.

- **We accept AA degrees from all accredited institutions as meeting the GE requirement – how is the Passport different than getting an AA?**

**Answer:** The relationship of the composition of a learning outcomes-based Passport to that of current course-based AA degrees has yet to be determined. The Passport project does include the stipulation of tracking student academic progress. Those AA degrees that do not require the

student to repeat any GE courses, are not “unpacked” by the receiving institution, and also work across state lines throughout the WICHE region may eventually prove to be very close or identical to the Passport.

- **Would a comment or pseudo course be generated automatically when a transcript is printed?**

**Answer:** Once grades are posted, registrars would look to see if a student has met the Passport requirements. If so, s/he would post a comment and/or pseudo course on the transcript to be recognized at other institutions. This should be viewed as an end-of-term process, not a transcript process.

- **Will participation in the Passport Initiative require institutions to modify their student information system?**

**Answer:** Simple solutions have been identified by registrars that should not require vendor modifications at this time.

- **Why must receiving institutions provide data to sending institutions about Passport students?**

**Answer:** By comparing the success of Passport transfer students with native students and non-Passport institutions, the receiving institution can determine what patterns are most successful for students and develop interventions as needed. By forwarding data to the sending institution about the subsequent success of transfer students at the receiving institution, the former will have data to help shape its continuous improvement process.

- **What data about a transfer student must a receiving institution send to a sending institution and what is the term of that obligation?**

**Answer:** This topic is still under development in discussions among the Pilot State Facilitators of the information that is most desirable, and among the Task Force on Student Tracking members of their ability to send and receive this information in a useful manner. Descriptions of this information, once it has been defined later in the year, will be posted on the Passport website.

- **How do students find out about the Passport?**

**Answer:** We encourage participating institutions to include information about the Passport in their student catalogs. As the Passport expands, we will increase efforts to build public awareness.

- **Where can registrars find out more information about the Passport, particularly about what is included in each version of the Passport?**

**Answer:** This information is available on the Passport website at [www.wiche.edu/passport](http://www.wiche.edu/passport).