

LDTP Update

The Lower-Division Transfer Patterns Project



OVERVIEW

The Lower-Division Transfer Patterns (LDTP) by Major project is one of several ways that California Community College (CCC) students earn credit towards their California State University (CSU) degree. For CCC students who know the major they wish to pursue and the CSU campus they wish to attend, traditional major preparation articulation and transfer admission agreements are valuable. However, for prospective transfer students who are uncertain about which CSU campus they will attend, LDTP provides a measure of flexibility and options for preparation. Additionally, LDTP may provide articulation for students whose community college does not have existing CSU articulation.

Just as CSU GE-Breadth is a statewide alternative to each CSU campus' unique General Education program, the LDTP is a statewide alternative to each CSU campus' lower-division major preparation. Students who complete any portion of the statewide component of an LDTP benefit because CSU campuses offering the discipline will honor this as progress towards the CSU degree in the major field of study.

Each LDTP has a both statewide and campus-specific component. The statewide component of the LDTP is appropriate for any CSU campus offering the discipline and is comprised of general education coursework and courses within the discipline. The campus-specific component identifies coursework relevant to the degree in the major at the specific CSU campus. The LDTP will generally total a minimum of 60 semester units, the number needed to apply for admission to CSU as an upper-division transfer student.

Please visit <http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/ldtp/> to access more information, links to all discipline patterns, previous newsletters, and LDTP descriptors.

LDTP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The LDTP Advisory Committee consists of CSU and California Community College faculty and staff who advise the CSU Chancellor's Office with regard to the implementation of LDTP. If you have comments or suggestions related to LDTP, please contact one of your representatives on this committee. For full committee details please go to <http://www.calstate.edu/AcadSen/Committees/LDTP/>

LDTP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Steven Stepanek, Professor and Department Chair in Computer Science at California State University, Northridge is a new member of both the LDTP Advisory Committee and LDTP Steering Committee. Professor

Stepanek joined the Computer Science Department in 1976 after previous careers at CSUN that included being a student and holding various staff positions at the campus Computer Center; he has also been a consultant in the computing industry. He has chaired the Department of Computer Science since 1999.

For the past 12 years, Professor Stepanek has been actively involved in campus faculty governance, serving on numerous campus committees including the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Educational Policies Committee, Educational Resources Committee, a WASC Report Steering Committee, various technology committees, and campus G.E. reform.

FACULTY CORNER

Reflections on LDTP

By Mark VanSelst

The development of formal lower-division transfer patterns (LDTP) for the CSU represents a major shift in faculty thinking about curriculum. Although LDTP does not change the fact that each college and university controls its own curriculum, the development of common course descriptors that include expected outcomes has served to push for some uniformity in the content of those courses which are common to the majority of the discipline requirements.

As a faculty member, I am by nature protective of curricular authority and the freedom for each instructor to be able to pursue what they view as the most effective means of assisting their students in achieving the objectives of the course that they teach. This independence is, of course, balanced by the large number of transfers that take place into and within the CSU and the desire to not hold students unreasonably accountable for changes in life circumstances. The LDTP sequences were developed by representatives of the CSU and for all future sequences and descriptors, combined groups of CSU and CCC disciplinary faculty. These sequences provide excellent guidance for students and the associated LDTP-based articulation provides a clean many-to-one savings in building statewide articulation well beyond that achieved by equivalent efforts with “local” articulation. Additionally, the large investment in building the descriptors has, in most cases, substantially improved the descriptor relative to prior statewide initiatives and thus provided better guidance for both the departments that teach the courses and codify the expectancies for the departments that require the courses. The course review phase of the LDTP initiative has been (and continues to be) somewhat cumbersome, both in terms of timeliness and (in some cases) fidelity of the response. As chair of the LDTP Steering Committee my goals for the coming year are to encourage further streamlining of the development and review process while maintaining the essential ingredients of collegial interaction, faculty control of the curriculum, and an increased responsiveness to concerns as they develop. As we continue our collaborative work to best serve the students of California, we will continue to negotiate the pathway between unreasonable inflexible standards and ensuring that the preparation a student receives (via the LDTP sequence) prepares them adequately for the journey they are undertaking.

HOW WE USED LDTP AS AN ASSESSMENT TOOL

By Kathryn Barth, Articulation Officer, CSU, Chico

Chico State has reaped secondary benefits from our LDTP discipline campus-specific review.

Our four introductory American and British Literature courses are designated as upper division. This designation precludes direct articulation with community college courses that often use the same texts. (In practice we sometimes allow substitutions of community college courses for content credit only, but we do not advertise this fact.)

When we analyzed what we needed to list for LDTP campus-specific information, we realized that our English major required more than 51 units of upper division coursework. This coupled with the 9-units of required upper division General Education meant the junior transfer student majoring in English would need more than 120 units to graduate. It became clear to our faculty that these four introductory literature courses should be lower division. This will happen in our next catalog (2009-11).

English was not the only major that was “top-heavy” with upper division requirements. The LDTP process afforded us a tool to assess our major requirements, compare what is standard in the state, and make the changes that will facilitate both transfer and graduation. I encourage other campuses to use this opportunity to look at the construct of their majors with the transfer student in mind. The results might surprise you.

DESCRIPTOR UPDATE

For the April 2008 LDTP Cycle, two new LDTP descriptors, Elementary Japanese and Mathematic Concepts for Elementary School Teachers, were posted in ASSIST for articulation submissions. This brings the total number of LDTP descriptors available for articulation up to 73.

New LDTP Descriptors for October 15, 2008

Cycle Submissions: The following descriptors have been added to ASSIST OSCAR to submit course outlines for LDTP articulation:

- Child & Adolescent Development
- Child, Family, and Society
- Circuits without Lab
- Circuits, with Lab
- Introduction to Programming Concepts
- United States History to 1877

- United States History from 1877
- World History to 1500
- World History from 1500

Once CSU faculty members have approved a new descriptor, it will be made available on the LDTP website at <http://www.calstate.edu/AcadAff/ldtp/ldtp-CrsDescription.shtml>.

A listing of all current and future descriptors are available at: http://www.calstate.edu/AcadAff/ldtp/docs/Course_Descriptors_20080716_000.pdf.

2007-2008 SUBMISSION REVIEW CYCLES

Review Cycle Update: The second set of review results for the November 2007 and February 2008 submission cycles will be sent to the community college articulation officers in September, 2008.

The April 2008 review cycle has been delayed while the LDTP OSCAR Review System is being upgraded. We anticipate that these reviews will begin soon. This upgrade will solve most of the technical issues we experience and we hope that reviews will occur in a more timely fashion going forward.

2006-2007 Review Cycles: All reviews for the 2006-2007 October and February review cycles are complete except for Economics submissions. A few April 2007 cycle submissions are still in the review process. We are working diligently to complete these reviews.

November 2007 Cycle: In the fourth LDTP review cycle, 58 LDTP descriptors were available for submission and 352 CCC course outlines were submitted for review. Review decisions for CCC course proposals have been completed for 242 courses. 155 of these submissions were approved for articulation with LDTP descriptors.

February 2008 Cycle: In the fifth LDTP review cycle, 73 LDTP descriptors were available for submission and 396 CCC course outlines were submitted for review. Review decisions for CCC course proposals have been completed for 253 courses. 181 of these submissions were approved for articulation with LDTP descriptors.

April 2008 Cycle: In the sixth LDTP review cycle, 73 LDTP descriptors were available for submission and 141 CCC course outlines were submitted for review. Faculty will begin reviewing these submissions soon.

2008-2009 LDTP Submission Dates: For the 2008-2009 Academic Year, the number of review cycles will be reduced from three to two.

October 2008.....October 15, 2008
 March 2009.....March 15, 2009

Though these are the final submission dates for each cycle, please note that you can post your course proposals at anytime. Course outlines submitted after a submission date will be queued for review in the subsequent review cycle.

LDTP REVIEW SYSTEM UPGRADE

The Chancellor's Office has been working hard to upgrade the LDTP Oscar Review System that is used by faculty throughout the state of California to review course outlines submitted by community colleges for LDTP. This major upgrade will speed up future review cycles by fixing many of the technical difficulties. Regrettably, this has caused a delay in the review of course outlines submitted in the April 2008 review cycle. These changes will occur in September and the Chancellor's Office will assign the April 2008 submissions for review at the same time as the October 2008 submissions.

If a community college representative has an urgent need to have a course outline from the April 2008 cycle reviewed, they may contact Karen Simpson-Alisca at ksimpson-alisca@calstate.edu for more details.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

- A basic online LDTP academic planning tool for CCC students to use is currently under development. The target date for delivery of this advising tool is October 2008. This advising guide will be available on the web site CSUMentor.edu.
- Chancellor's Office staff members are working with ASSIST, the intersegmental articulation information system, to provide LDTP reports that would enable faculty and staff at the CCCs to see what CCC courses are articulated for LDTP requirements. These reports, though initially targeted for October delivery, will be delayed.
- Beginning with the admission cycle for 2009-10, a question will be added to the admission application asking transfer students if they have followed an LDTP academic plan of study and, if so, which discipline. CSU campuses will be able

to access this information when extracting application data from CSUMentor.edu.

- In the 2009-10 cycle, CSU campuses will be able to provide LDTP admission agreements for CCC students via CSUMentor.

DID YOU KNOW...

The work of the LDTP project team is being used for multiple purposes. Here are a few examples:

- The LDTP initiative has prompted many CSU campuses to revisit and refresh their own curricular offerings.
- In reviewing degree requirements for native students, some campuses have decided to reduce upper division units required by some majors – thereby reducing the “top-heavy” distribution of degree requirements.
- SDSU School of Accountancy has streamlined the articulation for the accounting major using the LDTP statewide standard.
- The curricular patterns developed for LDTP have provided a framework for other projects:
 - MSTI Teacher Prep Programs in the Bay Area; Pilot AA with feeder CCCs for CSU East Bay and CSU Northridge
 - Troops to College initiative with University of Maryland, University Campus.

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