TRANSFER STUDENTS AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION (PART II)

Guest editorial

Transfers transform higher education

Currently college attendance (including where individuals go to college) and academic success reflect and enable modern social stratification. Transferring between colleges is an avenue for social mobility first because a bachelor's degree offers more economic advantages, and second because attendance itself at more selective, larger and/or higher-quality schools opens opportunities (Fink, 2017):

> Institutions of higher education are broadly viewed as engines of social mobility. But [sic] economic stratification among students attending different types of colleges is limiting that role. Wealthy students outnumber poor ones at the most selective colleges by 14 to one. A similar but reverse pattern holds true for the least selective colleges, including community colleges, which enroll 45 per cent of all undergraduates in the nation. (Huober, 2015)

Supporting transfer success is an act that both allows individuals greater social mobility and simultaneously dismantles the traditional social and economic class structures of academic institutions. To encourage transfer success, institutions of higher education must establish clear and straight-forward transfer paths that support early momentum toward a four-year degree, and which do not favor students of higher socioeconomic classes (Fink, 2017). Once the students have transferred, the schools must furthermore provide the resources and services to ensure a smooth successful transition to the new academic program.

In the last issue of *RSR*, we presented the first eight articles in a series focusing on the library's role in supporting transfer students. In this issue, we have ten more engaging articles about library services for transfer success. The issue kicks off with "Through three lenses" by Sandelli, which provides an extensive literature review-related transfer student experiences and initiatives. In "An interview with Rachel Mulvihill and Colleagues at the University of Central Florida about the Foundations of Excellence Transfer Initiative", readers will hear about an extensive university-wide initiative in which the UCF libraries were able to participate. Another large-school, university-wide initiative is described, this time at the University of Albany, in "Transfer student analysis and retention: a collaborative endeavor" by Jacobson *et al.*

Four of our articles describe specific initiatives or services for transfer students. "The library and the Common Reader Program" by Megwalu, Miller and Haller; "Ensuring a level playing field" by Yeager and Pemberton; "Use and users of the Minerva mobile app" by Hahn; and "Transforming for our transfers" by Coats and Pemberton. "Bridging the gap" by McBride, Gregor and McCallister describes how Appalachian State libraries have developed a variety of services designed to target transfer students.

Finally, our transfer series concludes with two articles that carefully consider the information literacy needs and impact of transferring students: "Connecting information literacy instruction with transfer student success" by Robison, and

"Assessing and meeting the information literacy needs of incoming transfer students" by Grigg and Dale.

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The depth and breadth of these articles demonstrate our profession's commitment to student success. The skills that students develop in school have the capacity to carry them forward into lifelong success, and libraries continue to be on the front line of imparting those skills to all students, transfer and traditional alike.

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References

Fink, J. (2017), "New evidence: five critical, understudied barriers to transfer success", Paper Presented at National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students Conference, Atlanta, GA, 16 February.

Huober, L. (2015), *Why Elite Institutions Need to Welcome Students from Community Colleges*, The Chronicle of Higher Education, available at: www.chronicle.com/article/Why-Elite-Institutions-Need-to/230127 (accessed 6 June 2016).