COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Cabrillo College adds transfer classes at three locations

Transfer students more likely than freshmen to earn UC degree

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SCOTTS VALLEY » Cabrillo College has expanded its transfer-level course offerings this summer in response to growing demand and state pressure for a streamlined pathway to four-year degrees.

Transfer-level courses, equal to lower-division courses at a four-year university, will be offered this summer at Cabrillo's three locations in Aptos, Watsonville and Scotts Valley. Pre-requisite classes have also been added.

New eight-week math and science courses, longer than the typical six-week summer class, will be offered at the Aptos campus, said Rachel Mayo, dean of education centers, Watsonville and Scotts Valley.

Taking summer session helps math and science students, who have a regimented course sequence, graduate quicker, said Carolyn Jackson, Cabrillo's director of articulation.

Since 2012, Cabrillo has awarded an increasing number of transferrable degrees, from 475 to about 700 this spring, said Jackson.

The growth in transfer-ready students is partly due to the Associate Degree for Transfer program, also known as “degrees with a guarantee,” which began in 2012.

State legislation passed in 2011 mandated that community college students with 60 units within a major are not only guaranteed a degree but also admission to a Cal State university school. Once there, they have just 60 units left to complete for a bachelor's degree.

Cabrillo is awarding 87 associate degrees for transfer this spring, up from 22 the previous year, said Jackson.

A report released by the UC system on Wednesday suggests that UC may be interested in developing a similar partnership with community colleges, said Kathleen Welch, Cabrillo's assistant superintendent and vice president of instruction.

With an 86 percent graduation rate, transfer students perform well at UC slightly outperforming those who enter college as freshmen, according to the report.

A team appointed by UC President Janet Napolitano, assigned to streamline the transfer process, called for a commitment to enroll at least 33 percent transfers by campus, according to the report.

Jackson, who also directs Cabrillo's Honors Transfer Program, an intensive academic program developing transfer-ready students, said because of UC's commitment to transfers, community college may be an easier way to gain entry.

About 60 honors transfer students graduate from Cabrillo each year, with an 80 percent admit rate to UCLA and 90 percent rate to UC Berkeley, Jackson said.

The 2014-15 freshman admit rate was 18.2 percent for UCLA and 17.3 percent for UC Berkeley, according to a UC report.

Community college may be the best option for some, despite the stigma, Jackson said.

"You're being taught mostly by doctorates instead of grad students. You're in classes of 35 instead of several hundred. And then you have a better chance of getting into your top choice public university than you did as a freshman," said Jackson. "So why aren't we looking at this as an option?"