

South Puget Sound Community College Transfer Guide



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Transfer Timeline



This guide is merely a general timeline for planning purposes, and does not include specific dates for specific schools; this information must be obtained from your prospective colleges and universities.

DURING YOUR FIRST 45 CREDITS

- 1. Explore Majors and Careers**

Four-year colleges and universities expect transfer students to arrive at their schools major-ready-prepared to begin courses in their major.

 - Explore careers and majors by visiting the Career Center, a career counselor, or advisor.
 - Know the requirements of the various transfer degrees at South Puget Sound Community College and decide early which degree you want to pursue.
- 2. Begin your search for colleges and universities that would be a good fit for you.**
 - Conduct a search for schools that offer your major of study.
 - Visit some four year colleges and universities—many have “Transfer Days” specially organized for transfer students.
 - Talk with college representatives that visit South Puget Sound Community College.
 - Decide on a “short list” of colleges or universities you’d like to attend.
- 3. Create a long-term plan for your degree completion and transfer.**
 - Meet with an advisor at the four-year institution you are interested in to make sure you are taking courses that transfer and meet lower division program requirements.
 - Discuss your educational plan with an advisor at SPSCC. Use Degree Audit!!!

DURING YOUR LAST 45 CREDITS

- 4. Start searching for scholarships and gathering admissions application materials.**
 - Attend a transfer workshop and/or make a transfer planning appointment with an SPSCC advisor.
 - Start preparing scholarship applications and continue narrowing college search.
 - Apply for scholarships. (www.fastweb.com, www.washboard.org are two websites to search).
 - Make contact with an admissions representative and scholarship representative at prospective four-year institutions.
- 5. Get your applications ready and turned in.**
 - Apply for admissions. Fall admission deadlines are usually between January and April.
 - Request an official copy of your transcript from all schools attended.
 - Write a strong personal statement/essay. See a transfer advisor and work with the Writing Center if you need guidance.
 - Prepare to fill out your FAFSA and any other financial aid paperwork early!
www.fafsa.ed.gov
- 6. Decide on your four-year school and finish up at SPSCC!**
 - Complete graduation requirements.
 - Visit your prospective four-year schools if you have not already—accept/reject university offers.
 - Apply for housing (if needed).
 - Request final transcript from South Puget Sound Community College.

Bachelor's Degree Overview

A bachelor's degree is usually at least 180 quarter credit hours or 120 semester credit hours

General Education and Major Prerequisites taken at South Puget Sound Community College—approximately 90 credits (*your transfer degree*)

+

Major/Minor Coursework and Electives at the four-year college or university

=

Bachelor's Degree

Why Earn a Transfer Degree?

- *priority admissions at some universities
- *possibly enter the university with junior standing
- *you've completed most if not all lower division general education courses
- *the degree can transfer as a "package deal" to many colleges and universities-no need for course-by-course evaluations
- *transfer up to 15 credits of "normally non-transferable" courses as part of your degree

Completion of a transfer degree at South Puget Sound Community College does not guarantee admission to your intended four-year college or university.

What if you don't complete your transfer degree?

- *more of your credits might not transfer
- *there may be additional admissions requirements such as SAT/ACT scores, submission of high school transcripts, etc.

Basic Requirements for graduating with a transfer degree from South Puget Sound Community College:

- Earn at least 90 college level credits (over 100-level) courses
- Fulfill all categories and requirements for the chosen degree
- Complete the last 15 credits or 30 out of the last 45 credits at South Puget Sound Community College
- Have at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average

*****to be competitive for admission at most four-year institutions and major programs, a much higher GPA is expected***

Transfer Degree Options at South Puget Sound Community College

Associate in Arts

The Associate in Arts (Direct Transfer Agreement-DTA) is our most general transfer degree. Students who successfully complete degree requirements and elective courses recommended for their area of study will transfer to many four-year schools with junior standing. In planning this degree students need to work closely with their advisor and a representative at their prospective four-year school. SPSCC also offers a variety of AA degrees with emphasis on subjects such as criminal justice, anthropology, international/intercultural studies, and others.

Associate in Business

The Associate in Business (DTA) is designed for students interested in preparing for a business major and to enter as a junior at most baccalaureate institutions in Washington. Admission to Washington public baccalaureate Schools of Business is not guaranteed to students holding an Associate in Business. It is strongly recommended that students contact the baccalaureate-granting Business School early in their Associate in Business – DTA program to be advised about additional requirements (e.g., GPA) and procedures for admission.

Associate in Pre-Nursing

The Associate in Pre-Nursing (DTA)/MRP is for students planning to receive their Bachelor of Science in Nursing and nursing credentials from a four-year college or university. After completing the Associate in Pre-Nursing students can enter as a junior at many four-year institutions in Washington. In planning this degree students need to work closely with their advisor and a representative at their prospective college or universities.

Associate in Science

The Associate in Science enables students to complete the lower-division prerequisites needed for transfer into upper division math and science classes at a four-year college or university. Two study options are available under the Associate in Science Degree. **Track 1** focuses on the biological sciences, environmental sciences, chemistry, geology and earth science. **Track 2** focuses on computer science, engineering, physics and atmospheric sciences.

Associate in Elementary Education

The Associate in Elementary Education (DTA)/MRP is designed for students interested in becoming an elementary classroom teacher. The degree will transfer to most teacher certification programs in Washington. Admission to Schools of Education is not guaranteed to students holding an Associate in Elementary Education Degree. It is strongly recommended that students contact the four-year education programs early to be advised about additional requirements (e.g., GPA) and procedures for admission.

Associate in Biology

The Associate in Biology (DTA)/MRP is available for students interested in studying the biological sciences. Students who successfully complete degree requirements and elective courses recommended for their specific area of study will transfer to most four-year degree programs in Washington with junior standing. In planning this degree students need to work closely with their advisor and the transfer institution so that the science credits within the degree create a seamless passage to the transfer institution.

Being “Major Ready”

Colleges and universities expect students with a completed transfer degree to be ready to enter their major course of study. Choosing a major does not require committing to a specific career, but knowing yourself and your long and short-term goals can help you to narrow your focus. It can also prepare you for taking courses at South Puget Sound Community College and being ready to move on to the four-year college or university. **If you aren't “major ready” you risk needing to take longer to complete your bachelor's degree and/or taking prerequisites at the university where they are potentially much more expensive.** Here are some tips for getting started with the process of deciding on your major:

Know your interests:

- *which classes do you really enjoy?
- *what do you like to do outside of school?
- *do you like working: alone, with people, on computers, with numbers, etc.?

Know your abilities:

- *which classes do you do really well in?
- *what skills have you used in your job?
- *what skills or talents would you like to develop?

Know your resources:

- *Attend a “Choose your Major” workshop
- *Meet with an advisor or counselor
- *Research colleges and universities

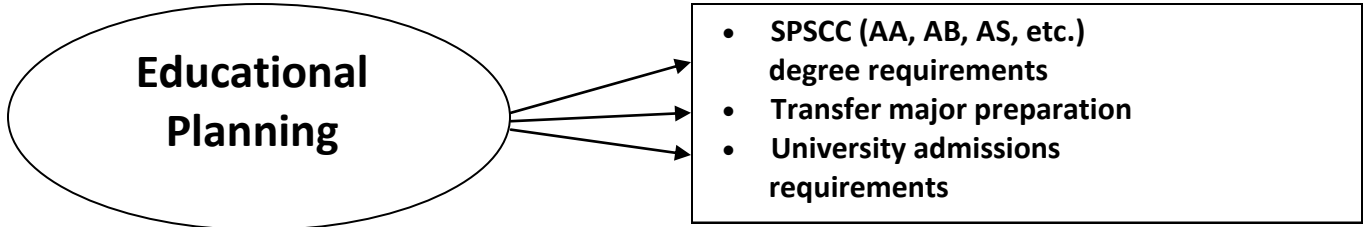
Know your values:

- *what classes have felt really valuable to you?
- *what is important to you in the workplace: money, making a difference in community, working with others, etc.?

Educational Planning Worksheet

Using your South Puget Sound Community College program planning guide, degree audit, and the requirements for your prospective four-year college or university, come up with a plan for how you can complete the required courses for a smooth transfer.

Remember to ask questions if you need help!!



Remaining requirements for my degree at SPSCC:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Quarter I intend to apply for SPSCC graduation: _____

Quarter I plan to enter the 4-year school: _____

My potential transfer major(s):

1. _____
2. _____

Are there prerequisite courses required for admission to my intended major(s), or suggested introductory course? YES _____ NO _____

If YES, the remaining transfer major requirements (prerequisites) or suggested courses I plan to complete at SPSCC are:

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| * _____ | * _____ |
| * _____ | * _____ |
| * _____ | * _____ |

My first choice of a four-year college or university:

Other four-year colleges or universities I am interested in attending:

Admissions requirements for the four-year institution I am interested in:

GPA: _____ GPA for major (if applicable): _____

Foreign Language: _____

Other courses: _____

Deadline for university application: _____

Deadline (if different) for major admissions: _____

Other important dates/deadlines: _____

The College Search: How do you know which school is best for you??

Choosing a four-year college or university can seem like a daunting task. Here are some questions to ask yourself when researching schools:

Does the school offer your major?

Once you've decided what you'd like to major in, find out which schools offer that particular program. Not all majors are offered at every college or university, and some schools specialize in certain fields of study or are really well known for something specific.

What are the admissions requirements?

Make sure you know the admissions requirements for the schools you might want to attend. What GPA do you need to have to be competitive? Do you need to apply simultaneously to the school and the major department? If so, what are the admissions requirements for your academic major?

What are the characteristics of the school?

Every college and university is a little bit different. The size, cost, and location of a school can all make an impact on the student experience. Find out what it means to be private vs. public, urban vs. suburban, research or liberal arts focused and take these factors into consideration.

What is the campus culture like?

Think about:
Housing options
What sports or activities are offered?
What is the community/surrounding area like?
What support services are available for students?



Does it feel like a good fit for YOU?

Internet research is not enough—take the time to VISIT CAMPUS. Get a feel for the physical campus as well as the students. Talk to students, staff, and faculty from your academic major. Check out the neighborhood. Avoid pressure from family or friends to choose *their* #1 choice for you. Avoiding outside pressure

**Now you've chosen
some schools—it's
time to apply!**



Some Tips for being a competitive applicant:



Have a competitive GPA.

Your grade point average is important—work hard to keep up your grades from the beginning. Your transcript is your permanent academic record! If you have a rough quarter, work hard to improve your GPA the next term, and address any major issues in your personal statement.



Be ready.

Know the application deadlines, request your transcripts, and fill out all necessary forms early. Pay attention to application fees, whether letters of recommendation are required, and how you apply for admission scholarships or financial aid.



Prepare a strong personal statement.

Your personal statement is where you set yourself apart from other applicants. Your GPA is important, but so is your clarification of your goals and why you make a good fit for the college or university you are applying to. Think of your personal statement like an interview on paper.



Complete a transfer degree if possible.

Many colleges and universities give priority admission to students who have completed or will complete a transfer degree. You'll be able to transfer many if not all of your SPSCC credits, depending on the university. Make sure to be major ready or have a plan for when you will complete major prerequisites.

Writing a Strong Personal Statement

Not all colleges and universities require a personal statement, but writing one to include with your admissions application can be a great way for your prospective school to get to know you. While some schools will give you required prompts or questions to answer, others will leave it open to you. **What do you want them to know about you so that they can best determine if you are a good fit for their campus?**

Some things to think about as you prepare and write your personal statement:

✓ **Introduce yourself, you are unique!**

The personal statement is where you set yourself apart from other applicants. What is it about you that the admissions committee should know beyond your transcripts or test scores?

✓ **Mention overcoming challenges and hardships**

Are there any past experiences that have had an impact on you or your educational record that you want the admissions committee to know about? Make sure to focus on your strengths or what you learned from your experiences.

✓ **Be specific about education and career goals**

What do you want to major in or have a career in? What research have you done into that area of study? Make it clear that you've done your research and have a plan.

✓ **Tailor your statement to each college**

Why do you want to go to this particular school? If you know what major you are going to pursue-why are you choosing this specific college or university for your studies? Why are you a good fit for their campus?

✓ **Be honest about your academic record**

If you have a quarter or semester when you didn't do as well as you wanted-explain why. Emphasize improvement!

✓ **Include introduction and conclusion**

✓ **Remember to proofread!**

Don't forget to edit your personal statement. Ask a transfer advisor or the Writing Center if you need any help or want someone to read over your statement.



Financing your Education

Tuition and fees at four-year colleges and universities can be significantly higher than at South Puget Sound Community College. Although expensive, continuing your education is one of the best investments in your future you can make. Here are some tips to help you pay for your college education.

Applying for Financial Aid

- Be on Time! Know application due dates and deadlines. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is available year-round online at www.fafsa.ed.gov and a new application comes out each January. Colleges and universities have their own deadlines for FAFSA.
- Schools might have their own supplemental application for financial aid and scholarships.
- Money does not transfer from year to year or school to school. You need to apply for aid at each school you are interested in attending—you can have your FAFSA information sent to up to ten schools.

Types of Aid

- **Federal Pell Grants and Washington State Need Grants** are need-based grants that do not need to be repaid. Eligibility is based on your FAFSA information.
- **Scholarships** are available from many sources and do not need to be repaid. Strong GPA, community service, certain academic interests, or affiliations with particular groups are sometimes factors in scholarship awards. Check out www.washboard.org for some scholarships and ask your prospective four-year school for any specific transfer scholarships.
- **Institutional Aid** can come in the form of scholarships or grants that do not need to be repaid.
- **Student Loans** can be obtained by students and/or parents and must be repaid after graduation. They might be subsidized (without accruing interest) or unsubsidized (accruing interest). Remember to borrow conservatively!!
- **Work Study** is another type of financial aid. Work study jobs are awarded based on the FAFSA and might be on-campus or off-campus hourly positions.



After you Transfer...then what?

Understand your Campus and its Culture

- **Take advantage of orientations for transfer students
- **Join clubs and activities to get involved right away
- **Introduce yourself to someone in your classes so you can study together
- **Visit your academic department



Identify your Resources

- **Visit the library and take a tour
- **Seek help if you need it from your professors or study and tutoring centers
- **Utilize advising and counseling services
- **Form study groups with other students

Know Yourself

- **Remember that you bring your own valuable experiences and story to campus
- **Be confident in your strengths and willing to ask for help if you need it
- **Find your "place" on campus where you feel at home-a club, a job, a team, etc.

Know the Lingo....A Transfer Glossary of Terms

Associate Degree: A 90-credit degree offered at the community college level. Provides a broad general education base and allows student to fulfill some or all general education and major prerequisites for many four-year degrees.

Bachelor's Degree: The degree granted by four-year colleges or universities upon completion of approximately 180 quarter credits or 120 semester credits in a specific field of study. Often called an undergraduate degree or baccalaureate degree.

Credit/Credit Hour: The value given to completed coursework, usually in terms of how many hours per week the course meets (either online or in person).

Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA): The DTA is an agreement which states that students who complete a transfer degree at a public community college in Washington will have satisfied the lower division general education requirements at a number of participating four-year colleges and universities. The DTA does not guarantee admission.

Educational Plan: Developed with an academic advisor, an educational plan can serve as a student's "road map" to completing their degree requirements, and if necessary, major prerequisites for the four-year college or university of choice.

Equivalency Guide: A guide found on the websites of many colleges and universities that allows students to see how a course at South Puget Sound Community College will transfer to that four-year institution. Many equivalency guides can be found at:
<http://www.spscc.ctc.edu/current-students/services/transfer/4yearlinks>.

General Education Requirements: The group of courses that provide a student with a broad base of knowledge in the areas of communication, humanities, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, diversity, etc. Most colleges and universities have a general education curriculum, and often times the coursework within a transfer degree can satisfy most if not all of these requirements.

Major: The academic area of interest or specialization at the four-year school. Includes mostly upper-division (300 and 400-level) courses.

Prerequisite: A requirement that must be met before a student can enroll in a particular program or course. Might be completion of a previous class or a satisfactory placement test score.

Quarter: A calendar system of classes at some colleges or universities which covers approximately 12 weeks. Usually these schools offer three quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring), and then a shorter summer quarter.

Know the Lingo, continued...

Semester: A calendar system of classes at some colleges or universities which covers approximately 16 weeks. Usually these schools offer two semesters (Fall and Spring), and then a shorter summer semester. 1 semester credit hour equals 1.5 quarter credit hour.

Transcript: A student's official record of college or university course work showing courses taken, grades, overall GPA, and degree completion. Official transcripts must be requested by the student for each school attended and submitted during the admissions process. Official transcripts have not been opened.

Transferable courses: Classes that transfer from one school to another are usually 100-level and above and are similar in nature based on the course catalog. Colleges and universities have different policies regarding the courses they will accept based on grade received in the course, if it has been retaken, etc. Courses which fall into general education categories are often transferable between college and universities, but it is the student's responsibility to check with an advisor or equivalency guide at the transfer institution with questions.

Transfer Shock: the tendency of students transferring from one institution of higher education to another to experience a temporary dip in grade point average during the first or second semester at the new institution as defined by Hills (1965). A subsequent recovery in grade point average is also common.

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