

Increase Your Transfer Success in Engineering: Advice to Community College Students from Successful Transfers

Interested in transferring from a California community college to earn a bachelor's degree in engineering? **Learn how to increase your success from the “experts”**—students currently working toward their Bachelor of Science (BS) in engineering who traveled this path.

The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges conducted surveys and focus groups with nearly **180 successful community college transfer students now enrolled in a CSU and a UC engineering program**. These students offered the following advice for pre-transfer preparation and post-transfer action.

Pre-Transfer Advice

Take the right courses: see a counselor and develop a comprehensive educational plan that reflects your major and the university to which you plan to transfer. Meet with a counselor to review and update the plan at least once a year (even better, each semester). It is important to know which classes to take so that you complete as many general education (GE) and major preparation courses as possible while still at your community college. Also, become familiar with ASSIST.org as a useful information source regarding which classes at your community college articulate to engineering programs at universities you're considering. Be aware that two- to four-year college articulation agreements change periodically, so you must stay current. Next, see if some type of a transfer agreement has been set up between your college and the university for your major. Transfer agreements provide greater assurance that your courses will transfer. Finally, know the exact college to which you plan to transfer because your community college probably has somewhat different articulation agreements with different universities.

Visit the campus: don't transfer sight unseen or you may be disappointed with your selection. While there, be sure to visit the university's advising and/or transfer center.

Network with peers: try to network with other students who are in the same major and planning to transfer to the same university. Consider joining a club where you can meet other students. These groups will help you learn about different careers, academic success strategies, etc.

Be proactive: when it comes to applying to transfer, be proactive. Take the time to ensure that the university has received your transcripts, application, information, etc. Stay on top of things, follow-up and verify. Don't let anything fall through the cracks.

Be certain of your major: make sure you are satisfied with your major because it is a waste of time and money if you switch majors after arriving at the university.

Post-Transfer Advice

Meet an advisor: once you transfer, meet with a program advisor/counselor right away to review the types of courses you need to take. Meet with an advisor immediately after transferring and continuing to meet with him or her while attending the university.

Prepare to work hard: the pace is faster and the coursework requires more rigor and focus. The professors won't be as flexible or forgiving. You must do what's expected and meet the deadlines.

Join study groups and use tutors: make sure you have time to invest in studying because you have to make an effort to succeed. The university is not as easy as community college. Make sure you spend more time reading and studying than on personal time with friends. Do not leave things for the last minute; just cramming the night before will not work well for learning or test performance.