
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1769 (Ramos) - Student transfer: tribal colleges

Version: July 6, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill requires the California State University (CSU) and California Community Colleges (CCCs) that offer a baccalaureate degree, and requests the University of California (UC), to develop and implement transfer and articulation pathways for students attending California tribal colleges and universities (TCUs).

Fiscal Impact:

- The UC estimates one-time General Fund costs of \$500,000 and ongoing costs of \$450,000 each year to bring in the California Indian Nations College and future tribal colleges into Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer (ASSIST) which is the official course transfer and articulation systems that the CCCs use for transfer, and staff time to develop and implement transfer agreements.
- The CSU estimates additional General Fund costs possibly in the low millions of dollars for major preparation articulation, including one-time costs for campuses to evaluate and create major-course articulation for each AA degree offered by participating tribal colleges, mapping degree and course requirements to CSU major preparation and transfer admission expectations. This estimate also includes ongoing costs in the mid to high hundreds of thousands of dollars pertaining to student support services and outreach.
- The Chancellor's Office estimates Proposition 98 General Fund costs of \$600,000 to \$1.4 million each year for the 49 colleges that offer a baccalaureate degree program to implement and maintain transfer agreement and articulation programs including coordinated counseling, financial aid and transfer services, and concurrent enrollment. This estimate assumes a cost of \$15,000 to \$29,000 for each of these colleges. However, the costs could be lower to the extent that the program is integrated within existing resources. The Chancellor's Office also estimates one-time workload costs of between \$13,000 and \$59,000 to assess the Common Course Numbering system, the California Education General Education Transfer Curriculum, and ASSIST to facilitate student transfers from the TCUs. These costs could be higher to the extent this assessment results in updates to these systems to ensure integration.

Background: Existing federal law defines "Indian tribal government" as the governing body of any tribe, band, community, or group of Indians, or (if applicable) Alaska Natives, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior, to exercise governmental functions.

Existing state law establishes the Donahoe Higher Education Act, setting forth the mission of the UC, the CSU, and the CCC; and defines “independent institutions of higher education” as nonpublic higher education institutions that grant undergraduate degrees, graduate degrees, or both, and that are formed as nonprofit corporations in California and are accredited by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. For purposes of any code or statute, a national or regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education as of January 1, 2025, shall retain that recognition until July 1, 2029, provided that the accrediting agency continues to operate in substantially the same manner as it did on January 1, 2025.

Proposed Law: This bill requires the CSU Trustees and the CCC Board of Governors, and requests the UC Regents, to develop and implement transfer agreements and articulation programs that include general education and transfer curricula to support and enhance the transfer of students attending TCUs to UC, CSU, and CCCs. In developing a transfer agreement or articulation program, the bill requires them to work collaboratively with participating TCUs to identify opportunities to align coursework with the California General Education Transfer Curriculum, where appropriate.

This bill requires that a transfer agreement and articulation program include all of the following: enrollment and resource planning, intersegmental faculty curricular efforts, coordinated counseling, financial aid and transfer services, specific efforts to improve diversity, early outreach activities, concurrent enrollment opportunities, and support centers.

This bill requires the CSU Trustees, the CCC Board of Governors, and requests UC Regents to develop and implement, to the extent capacity is available, concurrent enrollment programs that allow students attending TCUs to enroll in courses offered at UC, CSU or CCC for purposes of expanding opportunities for students attending TCUs to potentially transfer to UC, CSU or CCC.

This bill requires the CSU and CCCs and requests UC in consultation with faculty and other institutional representatives, as appropriate, assess tools, systems, or curricula designed to facilitate student transfer for purposes of building upon those that are most effective in communicating articulation for students attending TCUs that must include the California Articulation Number system, the Intersegmental Major Preparation Articulated Curriculum, the California General Education Transfer Curriculum, and the Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer.

This bill provides that nothing in the bill requires the UC, CSU, or CCC to articulate coursework completed at a TCU that is not institutionally accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.

This bill defines “TCU” to mean tribal colleges and universities geographically located in California that are operated by an Indian tribal government, as defined in Section 7701(a)(40) of Title 26 of the United States Code. “TCU” includes, but is not limited to, California Indian Nations College, California Tribal College, and Kumeyaay Community College.

Related Legislation: AB 1641 (Jackson and Ramos, 2026) expands the definition of California's public higher education system to formally include TCUs located in California and operated by a federally recognized tribal government. AB 1641 is pending in this committee.

Staff Comments: The bill requires the CSU and CCCs and requests the UC to develop transfer agreements, articulation programs, and concurrent enrollment opportunities for students attending TCUs. The transfer agreement and articulation program shall include specific elements such as enrollment and resource planning and intersegmental faculty curricular efforts. The bill also requires the segments to work collaboratively with participating TCUs to identify opportunities to align coursework with the California General Education Transfer Curriculum. According to the author, "Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) offer culturally relevant education and serves to bridge the gap in postsecondary education for Native American students. When students who are enrolled at a TCU decide to transfer to one of California's higher education institutions, they may be met with the challenge of ensuring courses they have taken are accepted at their new university. To ensure these students are not burdened by duplicative courses if they decide to transfer, we must work to establish transfer agreements. This would offer a helpful tool when it comes to transferring and aim to ensure effective and efficient progression for these students as they continue their pursuit in higher education."

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