

## ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2236 (Berman)

As Amended May 18, 2026

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Requires the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges (CCC), known as ICAS, on or before July 1, 2027, to establish an agreement for implementing streamlined system-level articulation by utilizing the common course numbering (CCN) templates, rather than individual course review, as provided. Specifies that, if ICAS has not established an agreement on or before July 1, 2027, the respective administrative bodies of the segments, on or before December 31, 2027, will establish an agreement for implementing streamlined system-level articulation by utilizing the common course numbering templates, rather than individual course review, as provided.

**Major Provisions**

- 1) Requires, on or before July 1, 2027, ICAS to establish an agreement for implementing streamlined system-level articulation by utilizing the CCN templates, rather than individual course review, for determining credit mobility between the CCC, the CSU, and the UC, so all community college courses subject to the CCN system, as specified, articulate the same way across all CCC, CSU, and UC campuses.
- 2) Specifies that, if ICAS has not established an agreement pursuant to 1) above on or before July 1, 2027, the respective administrative bodies of the CCC, CSU, and UC, by December 31, 2027, will establish an agreement for implementing streamlined system-level articulation by utilizing the CCN templates, rather than individual course review, for determining credit mobility between the CCC, the CSU, and the UC, so all community college courses subject to the CCN system articulate the same way across the CCC, CSU, and the UC.
- 3) Requires, commencing with the spring term of the 2027–28 academic year, the streamlined system-level articulation agreement be the only articulation agreement used for CCC subject to the common course numbering system.
- 4) Specifies that the streamlined system-level articulation agreement established will include student protections to ensure students do not lose credits, have any removal of credits, or repeat courses already completed.
- 5) Specifies that the streamlined system-level articulation agreement requires no more than 70% content alignment in order to establish equivalency.
- 6) Requires, on or before June 1 of each year, the respective administrative bodies of the CCC and CSU, and requests that the UC, publicly post on their respective internet websites a report on all of the following for the previous school year:
  - a) How many CCN templates were submitted for review for articulation;
  - b) How many CCN templates were reviewed for articulation;

- c) How many CCN templates were approved or denied for articulation;
  - d) The rationale for any denials of CCN templates for articulation; and,
  - e) The resubmission timeline for any CCN templates denied articulation.
- 7) Specifies that the office of the Chancellor of the CCC, in consultation with the administrative bodies of the CSU and the UC, will identify a limited-term funding plan that would provide funding to the CSU and the UC to support the intersegmental implementation of the CCN system, as specified. The funding plan must identify limited-term costs supported by a clear justification demonstrating consistency with prior workload and implementation cost estimates.
- 8) Specifies that the funding plan pursuant to 7), above, will identify existing, previously allocated funding from one-time funding sources, including, but not limited to, Section 56 of Chapter 54 of the Statutes of 2022, to support implementation strategies, which may include any of the following:
- a) Faculty and staff workload associated with curriculum alignment, review, and approval processes.
  - b) Intersegmental coordination and governance activities; and,
  - c) Technology and data system upgrades to support common course numbering alignment and articulation.
- 9) Requires the funding identified to be reallocated from previously allocated funding for the common course numbering system or related funding, must not include any new funding from the General Fund, and will not be considered a new appropriation under the California Constitution, as specified
- 10) Specifies that "common course numbering template" means a template developed pursuant to the systemwide implementation plan recommended by the workgroup established in Item 6870-101-0001 of Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 2021.
- 11) Requires, on or before June 1 of each year, each campus of the CCC and the CSU, and requests each campus of the UC, to publicly post, in a clearly visible and easily accessible manner, on the ASSIST.org internet website, or its successor, the name and contact information of the articulation lead or individual responsible for managing the course articulation process at the campus.

## COMMENTS

*Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) Initiative.* AB 1415 (Brulte), Chapter 737, Statutes of 2004, established the existing requirement for the CCC and CSU to establish and utilize a common course numbering system.

According to SB 1415 Senate Floor analysis in 2004, SB 1415 sought "... to facilitate the seamless integration of California's postsecondary education institutions by requiring the

adoption and incorporation of a common course numbering system among community college and California State University (CSU) campuses and requesting adoption and incorporation among the University of California (UC) and independent colleges and universities. This promotes the effective and efficient progression of students within and among the higher education segments and will minimize duplication of coursework. Reducing the duplication of coursework will save students unnecessary expenses and encourage more efficient use of resources within higher education institutions."

The requirements of SB 1415 are carried out within the C-ID initiative, which is a collaborative faculty effort involving the CCC and the CSU intended to improve seamless articulation for students both intersegmentally (CCC to CSU) and intrasegmentally (among CCCs). Articulation is the process of developing a formal, written agreement that identifies courses (or sequences of courses) on a 'sending' campus that are comparable to, or acceptable in lieu of, specific course requirements at a 'receiving' campus. Developed by intersegmental faculty, the C-ID improves course portability, articulation, and plays a key role in developing Transfer Model Curricula.

Colleges participate in the C-ID system by submitting their courses for review to determine alignment with established C-ID descriptors. Once approved, these courses receive a C-ID designation, signaling their comparability to similarly designated courses at other institutions. This process supports the development of Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT), which guarantees admission to a CSU campus for community college students who meet specified criteria.

There are currently 496 active C-ID descriptors, with nearly 30,000 CCC courses with approved alignment.

*Common Course Numbering (CCN).* AB 1111 (Berman), Chapter 568, Statutes of 2021, required the CCCs to adopt, at all community colleges and for each community college campus catalog, a CCN system. A key element differentiating the CCN system from the C-ID Initiative is that this numbering system is required to be student-facing, and is intended to ensure that comparable courses across all community colleges have the same course number.

The CCN system was approved to be rolled in phases, which include:

- 1) Phase I, which included six templates, was released and became student-facing in the Fall of 2025
- 2) Phase II, which includes 24 templates, has eight templates that will become student-facing in Fall 2026, and 16 templates that will become student-facing in Fall 2027
- 3) Phase III includes 55 templates. These templates underwent informal CSU and UC system office review for content and transferability alignment. Phase III templates will become student-facing in Fall 2027.

*CCN Task Force.* The CCC Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) formed the CCN Task Force to make recommendations for a systemwide plan. The CCN Task Force proposed a CCN Council to lead CCN efforts across California's systems of higher education. The council informs strategic

direction and goals; identifies policy barriers; and creates workgroups as needed in areas like development, transfer, and technology processes as common course numbering is integrated.

In their fourth quarter 2025 CCN update, CCC noted that significant progress has been made in building the CCN system for CCC, and attention is now shifting toward shared responsibility for articulation across all public higher education systems.

The update noted that in December 2025 the "...CCN Council received positive feedback from a UC faculty representative regarding the evolution of the CCN template design, particularly its ability to document increased instructional rigor and its potential application within transferability processes. The CCN Council discussed the immediate need for system-wide transferability and articulation agreements prior to moving beyond CCN implementation. CCCs have expressed concern about the potential loss of existing agreements without clarity regarding CSU and UC articulation. Proceeding with CCN implementation without a defined pathway to system-to-system articulation may negatively impact students to gain maximum credit mobility."

### **According to the Author**

According to the author, "Many students take courses at multiple community colleges within a district or even across districts. As a result, differences in course numbers can unintentionally set students back and has been a barrier to timely transfer. Without a student-facing common course numbering (CCN) system – meaning comparable courses have the same course number at all community colleges – students struggle to transfer credits between institutions and to plan out a coherent roadmap to earning their degree. In response, my previous legislation, AB 1111, which was signed into law in 2021, requires the California Community Colleges to adopt a student-facing CCN system for general education requirement courses and transfer pathway courses. CCN at all community colleges will reduce unnecessary confusion, ease advising, streamline transfer, and reduce excess credit accumulation."

The author continues that, "as community college students take CCN courses, articulation of these courses at the CSU and UC is critical. Course articulation is a vital function for transfer students and dual enrollment students, who earn college credits at a community college and need those courses to count toward their bachelor's degree. To protect students and ensure implementation of CCN, AB 2236 would set a target date for the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates to establish an agreement for implementing streamlined system-level articulation of those community college courses. This would ensure that students receive credit for these courses and would not be required to take them again after they transfer. AB 2236 is a necessary step to fulfill the promise of CCN – saving students both time and money."

### **Arguments in Support**

The Campaign for College Opportunity wrote in support, noting that "students presume that when they take a college-level course at a community college that leads to them successfully transferring to a university, that the credit from that course will count toward their degree. Unfortunately, that is not the case and students then have to retake courses that they have already successfully completed at a community college. This costs students time that they don't have to waste. In addition to time, it is costly for both the student and the state when courses don't articulate properly for students."

The Campaign for College Opportunity also noted that "a recent report from the RPK Group found that California transfer students pay an average of \$5,860 in extra tuition when previously earned credits are not accepted or applied after transfer and California taxpayers contribute over \$147 million per cohort of transfer students for courses they are forced to retake. This bill will help address this issue by making sure that when students take a course that is a part of the common course numbering system whether for transfer or as a dual enrollment student, that the course articulates properly and that they receive the credit they already have earned."

The Cal State Student Association (CSSA) also wrote in support, pointing out that "Many CSU students rely heavily on transfer pathways from the [CCC], yet inconsistent and complex articulation processes create unnecessary barriers. When course equivalencies require campus-by-campus review, students often accumulate excess units or repeat coursework, delaying progress toward their degrees. AB 2236 addresses these challenges by requiring a streamlined, system-level articulation agreement that utilizes common course numbering templates rather than individual course review. By ensuring that comparable community college courses articulate consistently across CSU and other segments, the bill creates a more predictable and transparent transfer pathway for students."

CSSA continues that "this change is especially significant for CSU transfer students, who make up a substantial portion of the system and are disproportionately first-generation and low-income. When articulation is inconsistent, these students bear the greatest burden through lost time, increased costs, and reduced likelihood of completion. Establishing a single, systemwide articulation framework will reduce these inefficiencies and improve student outcomes."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

The Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) wrote in opposition to AB 2236 (Berman), arguing that while the bill's goal of easing transfer is laudable, its mechanisms would harm the very students it aims to help. ASCSU contends that requiring articulation decisions to rely solely on CCN templates—and barring faculty from consulting the more detailed Course Outlines of Record when templates are too vague—would send transfer students into upper-division coursework without the preparation they need. ASCSU argues this risk is greatest in highly sequenced majors, particularly in STEM and in programs tied to regional workforce needs, where the specific content of lower-division courses directly determines whether students succeed. ASCSU also warns that because CCN created new courses rather than overlaying existing ones, every Associate Degree for Transfer would need to be revised, potentially destabilizing pathways that took over a decade to establish.

ASCSU further objects to the bill's requirement that courses be articulated whenever they share 70% content similarity. ASCSU argues this misapplies a national best practice meant to compare two actual courses—not a course against an abstract template—and one that explicitly allows exceptions for accreditation and discipline-specific requirements. Under AB 2236, a 70% topic overlap would force articulation regardless of what falls in the missing 30% or how deeply each topic was covered. ASCSU offers examples in which transfer students would arrive missing the trigonometry needed for physics, the foundational number sense needed for elementary teaching, or the integration needed for the science calculus sequence. ASCSU adds that the bill's prohibition on requiring students to repeat similar coursework—sound in principle—would, combined with the template-only and 70% rules, remove faculty's last-resort option of directing underprepared transfers into a catch-up course.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

The bill requires the CCCCCO, in consultation with the CSU and UC, to create a funding plan to identify existing resources to support implementation and prohibits the use of any new General Fund or an appropriation for this purpose and therefore entails no new state costs.

**VOTES****ASM HIGHER EDUCATION: 9-0-1**

**YES:** Fong, DeMaio, Boerner, Jeff Gonzalez, Jackson, Muratsuchi, Patel, Sharp-Collins, Tangipa

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Celeste Rodriguez

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4**

**YES:** Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

**UPDATED**

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