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## BCTCblue+ Program: A Joint Enrollment/Joint Admissions Program Supporting Transfer Student Success at the University of Kentucky

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A University of Kentucky  
Division of Undergraduate Education  
White Paper



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**BCTCblue+ Program:  
A Joint Enrollment/Joint Admissions Program  
Supporting Transfer Student Success  
at the University of Kentucky**

*By Randolph Hollingsworth, Ph.D., Assistant Provost  
With the generous support of Nikki Glenos (UK Transfer Advisor),  
UKIT Business Intelligence, and UK Office of Institutional Research*

June 1, 2012

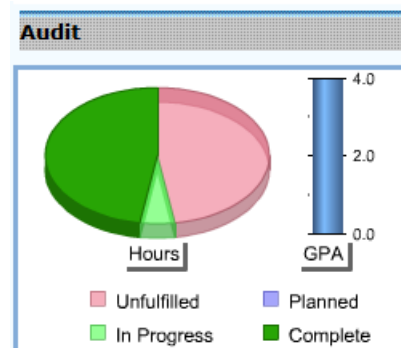
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## Introduction

Of all the states surveyed by Complete College America, Kentucky is shown to be the lowest in 2- to 4-year transfer rates.<sup>1</sup> The University of Kentucky, once the most popular 4-year destination for in-state transfer students, has lost its strong lead for transfers among the public institutions since 1997.<sup>2</sup> The BCTCblue+ Program, a joint admission/joint enrollment agreement between the University of Kentucky and the Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC), is one of several strategic efforts to increase the enrollment of and successful graduation by transfer students at the University of Kentucky.

*An ideal scenario that happens to be true: A BCTC student who had been going to school part-time off and on since her graduation from high school in 2008 took her first BCTCblue+ Program related course at UK in the spring of 2011. She earned an A. The following fall she earned her second A at UK, and she geared up for two courses in Spring 2012 that also were not offered at BCTC. She earned two more A's and now with a 4.0 GPA in required pre-major courses for a University of Kentucky degree, she decides to finish her AS degree at BCTC in the summer of 2012. She has pre-registered for a full-time load of upper-level courses to take in her UK major this fall. Her total costs for her college work so far – and her degree audit chart reproduced below – looks enviable to both 2-year transfer and UK native students alike.*

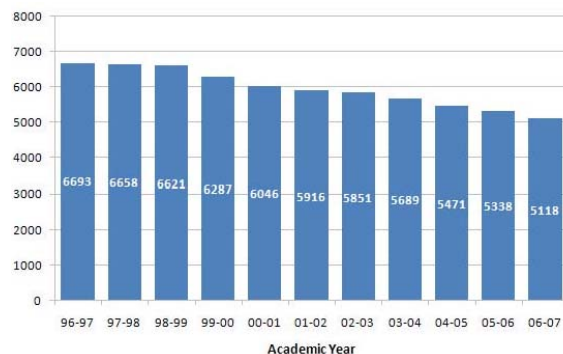


This paper outlines the purpose and goals of the BCTCblue+ Program, its impact on student success and how it relates to the University of Kentucky's mission.

### Problems with UK Transfer Students Enrollment and Graduation Numbers

The University of Kentucky has had declining numbers of students transferring in to UK since the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Reform Act of 1997. In the academic year 1996-97, first-time and continuing transfers accounted for 6,692 students (or 36% of the total undergraduate headcount). With the launch of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, the UK Community College System ended and its faculty removed from the UK academic governance structure. By 2006-07, first-time and continuing transfer students accounted for only 5,118 students (or 25% of all UK undergraduates).

**Figure 1: UK Transfer Students, New and Continuing, Unduplicated Annual Headcount**

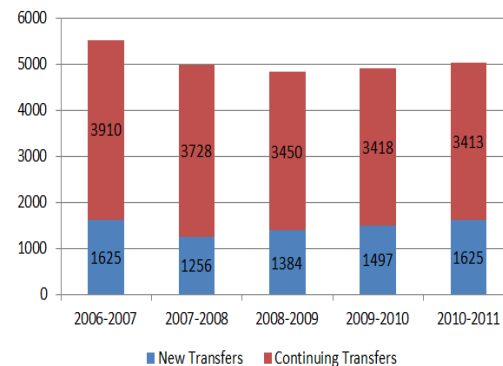


Source: [www.uky.edu/IRPE/students/transfer.html](http://www.uky.edu/IRPE/students/transfer.html)

Thus, UK saw a net loss of nearly 1,600 transfers (relative to the 1996-97 enrollment levels and representing a loss of \$10 million in tuition and fees a

decade later. Today, the unduplicated annual headcount of UK's new and continuing transfers has begun to hold steady, though slightly lower still from the 2006-07 academic year.

**Figure 2: UK Transfer Students Unduplicated Headcount**



Source: Office of Institutional Research, Feb 2012

When looking at degrees awarded by the University of Kentucky, the analysis by the UK Office of Institutional Research shows that much work in transfer student success still needs to be addressed. In the table below, the number of baccalaureate degrees earned at UK has remained relatively steady between 2006 and 2011, however the number of degrees earned by transfer students from the KCTCS institutions has decreased.

**Figure 3: UK Bachelors Degrees Awarded by Initial Registration Type**

Academic Year	KCTCS Transfer		Other Transfer		UK 1st Time Full-time		Total Degrees
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
2006-07	541	15.3%	481	13.6%	2505	71.1%	3527
2010-11	357	9.9%	524	14.6%	2714	74.5%	3595

Source: Office of Institutional Research, Feb 2012

For our colleges offering professional certifications such as Education or Engineering, this trend is more than alarming – it can become catastrophic. Our traditional channels for transfers, especially from the community colleges cannot be relied on. The only

exception is the numbers of transfer students coming from Bluegrass Community and Technical College, which has remained steady before and after a small drop in 2007.

### Other Considerations

Since 2004 the state’s higher education leaders have been working on identifying the barriers to transfer. In 2008 Governor Steven Beshear’s Higher Education Workgroup (which includes key legislators and business men) and the Council on Postsecondary Education’s Presidents Council spearheaded the updating of the 2004 General Education Transfer Agreement (also known as GETA) so to increase numbers of academically prepared transfer students and their respective graduation numbers at the receiving institutions. The overall goal of the Kentucky General Education Transfer Policy as expressed in KRS 164.2951,<sup>3</sup> is to promote the acceptability of general education credits among Kentucky two- and four-year public institutions and to incentivize the completion of the associate of arts or associate of science degree before transferring.

Knowing that an underprepared transfer student was costly to Kentucky’s postsecondary institutions, the stated goal of the revised statewide agreement<sup>4</sup> was to:

- (1) Develop strong baseline information about statewide transfer,
- (2) Find common ground on issues of transfer among the KY public institutions, and
- (3) Present from the academic leadership to key stakeholders in the state a

unified voice and common language about transfer and student mobility.

From 2009 to 2010, Council staff engaged campus leadership in discussions with their faculty across institutions to agree on common student learning outcomes since so many of the institutions were working toward the AAC&U LEAP Principles of Excellence<sup>5</sup> in reforming their general education programs.

In February 2010, the CPE staff shared a snapshot of how the state’s institutions fared in enrolling first time transfer students from the KCTCS in comparison to transfer from other postsecondary institutions. The University of Kentucky’s numbers were below the average of all of the public sector institutions.

**Figure 4: Statewide Scope of Transfer at Four Year Institutions, 2008-09**

Institution	Total # Entering Students	% from KCTCS	% Total Transfers
Eastern KY U	4,363	17.6%	20.7%
KY State U	992	4.1%	9.2%
Morehead St U	2,325	18.2%	12.1%
Murray State U	3,060	16.2%	14.1%
Northern KY U	3,613	5.1%	28.4%
U of Kentucky	5,752	8.9%	15.1%
U of Louisville	4,462	12.8%	22.6%
Western KY U	4,961	10.9%	16.1%
<b>Public Sector Total</b>	<b>29,528</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>
AIKCU Independents	8,698	10.4%	21.8%
<b>Statewide Total</b>	<b>38,226</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>

*Source: CPE Comprehensive Database, 2/16/2010*

You can find more details about this information on the chart in **Figure 5**. At the same time, many UK students transferred in additional credits from the KCTCS schools to UK (a whopping total of 1,363 students – unduplicated headcount – which was over a third of the total of all the additional credits transferred in to all Kentucky public and private four-year institutions in 2008-09).

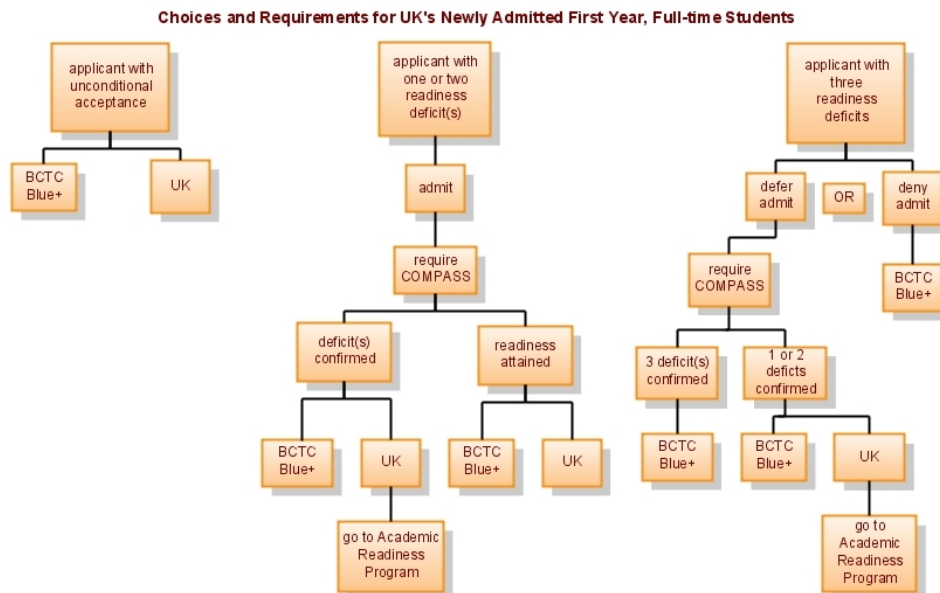
**Figure 5: CPE Statewide Chart for Statewide KCTCS Transfers, 2008-09**

**In-State KCTCS Transfer Students, 2008-09**

		First Time Transfers from KCTCS	First Time Transfers from Other	First Time Students (Not Transfers)	Total Entrants
<b>Sector Total</b>	<b>Public Four-Year</b>	<b>3,537</b>	<b>5,408</b>	<b>20,583</b>	<b>29,528</b>
	Eastern Kentucky University	766	902	2,695	4,363
	Kentucky State University	41	91	860	992
	Morehead State University	422	282	1,621	2,325
	Murray State University	496	431	2,133	3,060
	Northern Kentucky University	186	1,026	2,401	3,613
	University of Kentucky	510	866	4,376	5,752
	University of Louisville	573	1,009	2,880	4,462
	Western Kentucky University	543	801	3,617	4,961
<b>Sector Total</b>	<b>AIKCU Independents</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>1,897</b>	<b>5,893</b>	<b>8,698</b>
	Alice Lloyd College	19	27	192	238
	Asbury College	28	100	314	442
	Bellarmine University	24	80	576	680
	Berea College	5	21	416	442
	Brescia University	40	81	119	240
	Campbellsville University	76	154	457	687
	Centre College		7	336	343
	Georgetown College	6	39	383	428
	Ky Christian University	1	52	197	250
	Ky Wesleyan College	25	63	218	306
	Lindsey Wilson College	126	164	443	733
	MidContinent University	219	394	188	801
	Midway College	85	128	108	321
	Pikeville College	33	56	181	270
	Spalding University	98	177	137	412
	St. Catharine College	37	51	162	250
	Thomas More College	7	129	278	414
	Transylvania University	3	12	317	332
	Union College	61	96	432	589
	University of Cumberlands	15	66	439	520
<b>Statewide Total</b>		<b>4,445</b>	<b>7,305</b>	<b>26,476</b>	<b>38,226</b>

Includes the annual number of students who entered a four-year public, independent or proprietary postsecondary institution in Kentucky for the first time. Source for all tables unless stated otherwise: CPE Comprehensive Database February 17, 2010

**Figure 6: UK Admissions Flowchart, 2009**



A statewide technology agreement led to the upgrade of the old CAS (Course Applicability System) to the new College Source TES (Transfer Equivalency System)<sup>6</sup>. This shared system allows for greater transparency to the students, the sending institutions and the receiving institutions about decisions on transfer. It is also expected to create better opportunities for faculty oversight of program quality and accountability.

UK transfer students' success rates consistently show that while students coming from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System achieve retention/graduate and average GPA rates somewhat below those of UK's native students, their grades on average are acceptable. And, more importantly, students coming to UK from the KCTCS with an associate's degree tend to do better academically at UK than students who transfer in without a degree. This includes those students who had applied to UK but their college readiness scores (i.e., the statewide cutoff scores for ACT/SAT assessments in reading, writing and mathematics) were too low for admission. To see how the BCTCblue+ Program can support and enhance students' prospects in the long-term in the UK Admissions process, see the flowchart in **Figure 6**.

In addition, UK staff and administrators have redoubled their efforts to change the general attitude in the KCTCS community to envision transferring to UK and understanding this to be a positive step in their academic careers. Transfer recruiting staff in UK's Enrollment Management Office has also redoubled its efforts. The third Wednesday of each month is devoted to

Transfer Day with a general information session in the UK Visitor Center and a campus tour which can include meeting with a particular academic department in which the potential applicants are interested. Staff focus on monthly visits to the KCTCS campus, offering a "UK Day" celebration at UK's top KCTCS feeder schools (with transportation provided).

The academic advisors in Undergraduate Studies are cross-trained to address KCTCS transfer needs and are each assigned to a KCTCS institution so to communicate directly with student and faculty inquiries. A new position of UK Transfer Advisor was created in 2007, and today Ms. Nikki Glenos works three days onsite at Bluegrass Community and Technical College Transfer Center<sup>7</sup> to provide guidance in course selections best suited for UK degrees. The UK Transfer Advisor also orients all transfer students with special programming in K-Week, teaches and works on curriculum development for the UK201 Orientation course, and assesses the impact of UK's transfer orientation programming. The UK Transfer Advisor usually serves as the advisor of UK student organizations created to support the successful transition of all of UK's transfer students.<sup>8</sup>

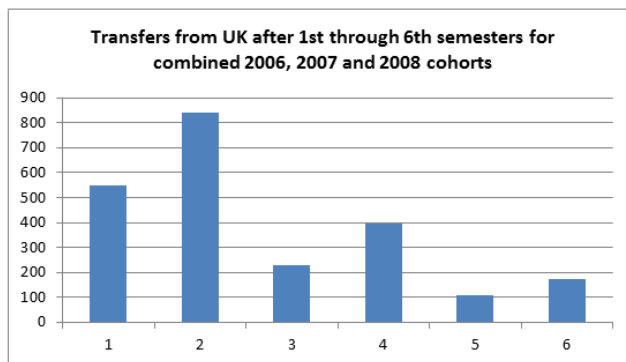
Another important role of the UK Transfer Advisor is to maintain contact with (and re-recruit) UK-native students who stepped out to BCTC for academic or financial reasons before graduating from UK. Out of all the most recent UK in-state transfers (i.e., those entered UK as first-time, first year students and who transferred from UK to another Kentucky institution), 47% were reverse transfers: enrolling in a 2-year institution.<sup>9</sup> More than half of those UK official cohort students who left to enroll in a Kentucky community college (25.88%) transferred to BCTC. By keeping a close tie with a UK advisor housed at BCTC,



these students should return to graduate from UK successfully.

The UK Office of Institutional Research has found that of the students who count in three of our official retention/graduation cohorts (for 2006, 2007, 2008), nearly twice as many of those who left UK - and have not yet returned as of May 2012 - left during or right after their first year at UK. There is not a big difference between choosing 2-year over 4-year schools but, as the student moves closer toward upper-classman levels, they tend to choose transferring to another 4-year school. When controlling for residency status, the students transferring out of UK do not tend to choose schools outside their residencies, i.e., nearly 90% of UK's Kentucky students chose to enroll in another Kentucky school. Out of all of UK's students from the official cohorts under study, those who transferred in-state had a slight overall preference for a 4-year institution.

We might infer from the above general numbers that students who transfer out of UK lack an effective "fit" with UK colleges, given the early stages in which these native students choose to transfer out of UK.



Source: Office of Institutional Research, May 2012

The bump up in numbers of students who choose to transfer out of UK after their fourth semester and attend another institution may be additional support for this supposition. Usually after four semesters, a student should be transitioning into more challenging requirements in a chosen major. Of the reverse transfers to Kentucky community colleges, it is highly likely that UK could re-recruit those students into selected UK majors, thus boosting the numbers of baccalaureate degrees. It is not likely however, that this re-recruitment could rescue a particular cohort's graduation rate since the transfer process trends too slowly for a successful path to graduation. In addition, UK's curricular infrastructure does not allow for much flexibility in degree completion for the nontraditional student.<sup>10</sup>

While the University's first-year retention and the official cohort graduation rates are not affected by the influx or success of those students who transfer to UK, it is important for us to think about their success. Not only does the successful transfer student's graduation at UK add to the Commonwealth's efforts to improve the number of baccalaureate degree-holders in the state, but it also helps maintain a positive climate for our native scholars and should provide an enriching diversity in our upper-level courses.

### **BCTCblue+ Program: Praxis and Solution**

The BCTCblue+ Program came into being after a year-long study by a large task force composed of student support staff and faculty from UK and Bluegrass Community and Technical College System. In October 2008, Presidents Todd and Julian signed a Memorandum of Agreement (see Appendix A) and held a press conference. Dr. Todd hoped that the new partnership would "eliminate



psychological and institutional roadblocks” to transferring to UK; and, Dr. Julian was just as hopeful when she stated that “BCTC students have all the capability, they just need the opportunity.”<sup>11</sup>

The program is designed primarily for new students enrolling in an Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree at Bluegrass Community and Technical College. BCTCblue+ eligibility begins after a student earns at least 15 (and in-progress) credit hours. Students are advised by BCTC faculty and the UK transfer advisor housed at BCTC to complete the AA or AS degree from BCTC before transferring full-time to UK. Those who earn an AA or AS degree transfer to UK as General Education certified. Students enrolled in the BCTCblue+ program are eligible to take courses at UK that are not offered at BCTC or online through KCTCS.

BCTC students who enroll in the program<sup>12</sup> must be degree-seeking at BCTC and maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average to remain eligible. The UK Transfer Advisor provides an enhanced advising experience for these students by using the UK Pathway to Transfer Guides<sup>13</sup> in deciding the academic trajectory toward a UK degree.

Students in the BCTCblue+ program may take up to 12 UK credit hours (no more than 4 courses) at the current BCTC tuition rate, plus associated part-time UK fees per credit hour and any course fees as applicable. 2011 tuition rates (per credit hour) at the two institutions compare as follows:

**Figure 7: Difference in 2011 Tuition Rates**

School	Tuition (Per Credit Hour) Ranges from In-State to Out-of-State Residency
BCTC	\$130 - \$445
UK (lower division)	\$365 - \$776

Students who choose to enroll at UK through the BCTCblue+ program can save as much as 50% on their bill from UK. Because of the UK-BCTC Financial Aid Consortium Agreement, any BCTCblue+ students seeking aid will not need to fill out forms at both institutions, but will work with their regular financial aid officer at BCTC.

If the credit hours being taken concurrently at BCTC and UK in a given semester total twelve (12) or more credit hours, the student is considered full-time at BCTC. Students are eligible to enroll in courses offered on the UK campus according to the following schedule:

- Eligible for one course after earned plus in-progress hours at BCTC = 15 credits
- Eligible for one course after earned plus in-progress hours at BCTC = 30 credits
- Eligible for two courses after earned plus in-progress hours at BCTC = 45 credits

BCTCblue+ students who are eligible to register for UK courses register online during the windows assigned for UK non-degree seeking students. Financial aid is available for those who qualify, however the student must work with the Financial Aid office at BCTC.

At the point in time when a student is completing BCTC work and is ready to transfer to UK as a degree-seeking student, the regular application process is followed, but the admission application fee is waived.

**Benefit 1**

Ultimately designed as a Dual Educational Program as defined by SACSCOC,<sup>14</sup> the partnership promotes “the successful undergraduate education of students who are admitted to and enrolled at both institutions.”<sup>15</sup> This program then serves an important role in encouraging college completion across institutions and ultimately improves the lives of many more citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

**Benefit 2**

Focusing on the academic planning of BCTC students coming to UK while still working on their associate’s degrees streamlines the transfer process. The University’s overall goal of increasing UK transfers from the KCTCS was announced by President Lee Todd at the UK Board of Trustees meeting in December 2008.<sup>16</sup>

**Benefit 3**

Many students have saved money by enrolling at UK through the BCTCblue+ Program. First of all, they pay a substantial discount for the courses they take, but they are also benefiting from the more efficient use of their scheduling of classes to fit into both BCTC associate and UK baccalaureate degree programs. Since 2007, UK tuition has risen from almost 140% higher to 170% higher than BCTC tuition, and traditionally, the BCTC student is more sensitive to the price of UK on average compared to UK native students. This Program can realize very real cost savings for Kentucky families. In addition, BCTCblue+ students have first priority in the list for UK housing and dining services that is reserved for selected BCTC students.

**Benefit 4**

Personalized attention to former UK native students during their transition from the community college back to UK helps assure success. Many students who had to stop out at UK due to academic or financial problems have returned to UK via BCTC. By “re-recruiting” students from our first-year, first-time cohorts, we improve our cohort graduation rate. The UK Transfer Advisor’s presence on the BCTC campus solidifies the connections into the receiving college, and provides professional academic advising support to that student whether or not the receiving UK college has professional staff for this purpose.

As of Spring 2012, there are 362 students at BCTC who have applied to and were accepted into the Program. However, rarely more than a third of those eligible have elected to take a course at UK. The following numbers of students have progressed through UK from the BCTCblue+ Program from its start in Fall 2009, for a total of 449 (duplicated headcount).

**Figure 7: Number of BCTCblue+ Students (unduplicated) Enrolled and the Number of Courses Completed at UK**

UK Semester	# of Students	Courses Completed
F2009	44	58
S2010	80	104
F2010	75	102
S2011	110	149
F2011	63	81
S2012	77	104

As the above table shows, nearly 600 courses have been completed at UK by students enrolled with a tuition discount through the BCTCblue+ Program from its inception in Fall 2009 through the Spring semester of 2012.

The UK Transfer Advisor meets with each of the BCTC students before they transfer to UK. In this “exit” session, the student is given specific information about what data is needed

by their new academic advisor at UK during the Summer Advising Conference. For example, students who have not yet submitted their final transcript (which would include the statewide General Education Transfer certification lists and the specific degree earned) – or the transfer equivalency office has not yet finished processing the transcript – might encounter difficulties with accessing the upper level courses for their UK degree. This scenario may be more prevalent than previously thought given the numbers in Spring 2012 of BCTCblue+ students who transferred to UK as many as two years ago who have not yet declared a major or show a degree-seeking status.

In the chart below, the number of students taking their first BCTCblue+ courses is described in the column labeled “First Fall.” These numbers represent those who are considered a visiting student and who has not yet fully transferred to UK.

**Figure 8: Progression of BCTCblue+ Students through UK, 2009-12**

UK Semester	First Fall	Earned AA/AS	Graduated from UK by S2012	S2012 Degree-seeking Status at UK
F2009	27	11	3	14 out of 14
S2010	47	21	2	26 out of 27
F2010	53	22	0	28 out of 30
S2011	61	38	0	35 out of 41
F2011	41	3	0	5 out of 27
S2012	36	0	0	na

Source: Undergraduate Studies, May 14, 2012

The above table shows that those students who enter UK as new, degree-

seeking students are beginning to reap the advantages of the dual degree program design, however, a significant majority of BCTC students are not completing the final few steps required to earn the AA/AS degree. In addition, those who retain non-degree-seeking status at UK without a clear academic plan are vulnerable to attrition. The precipitous drop of degree-seeking students between Spring 2011 and Fall 2011 still needs scrutiny.

### Evaluation and Future Improvements Planned

The Program’s overall purpose and success indicators were reviewed at a regular meeting on May 15, 2012, of the UK undergraduate colleges’ Academic Associate Deans/Directors with Dr. Mike Mullen, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. The meeting included three guests from the BCTC Leadership Executive Team and the BCTC Transfer Center: Dr. David Hellmich, Vice President for Academics; Dr. Palisa Williams Rushin, Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management; and Angel Clay, BCTC Transfer Director. The review included a discussion of the current data collection processes, the quality of advising as well as the mutual benefits to the two institutions and the students.

The BCTC administrators emphasized that the Program is very popular with BCTC students, including their dual credit seeking high schoolers. BCTC maintains a database for the program and studies have shown that nearly 2,000 students have applied to be admitted to the program but to date only 362 students are eligible. Clearly, the Program is a popular choice at BCTC, and there are several reasons for this disparity in eligibility:

- Applicants have not yet achieved the minimum number of earned credit hours

needed to take their first course at UK under the BCTCblue+ Program guidelines.

- Some students are not ready to take their first BCTCblue+ course at UK because they are still working on pre-requisite courses (e.g., to gain entry into UK's Organic Chemistry Lab, students must first take General College Chemistry and the accompanying lab – both of which are offered at BCTC).
- Some students have not declared an AA/AS degree at BCTC but are interested in a seamless transfer to UK.
- Some who have expressed interest in transferring to UK end up being able to take all of the courses they need to prepare for their UK major while at BCTC.

UK is the top choice for transfer students from BCTC, and the BCTC administrators believe the Program will continue to grow. Some of the most attractive components to the Program for BCTC students are:

- Student housing availability
- Personal academic advising during transition to UK including career counseling to choose the best fit for a UK degree
- Preferred majors at UK that BCTC students seek to declare are:
  - Engineering (highest number)
  - Business
  - Education
  - Nursing

Some of the issues for students that the BCTC administrators ask for UK to

consider improving are:

- Registration requirements – students who currently transfer in as degree-seeking students at the upper division levels are among the last to register and thus cannot get into the upper division classes they need
- Academic orientation and advising in the UK colleges – when a BCTCblue+ students make their final transition in to UK, there needs to be more consistency across all the colleges to support students transition successfully.
  - Additional data for advising support – the UK faculty advisor needs timely and additional information from the UK Transfer Advisor who advises the BCTC graduate moving forward into a UK college. This information may not have been entered yet into the UK enterprise system for a regular hand-off to the college advisor, so an alternative system of communication is needed internally among UK advisors to assure appropriate decision-making by those who are supporting the BCTCblue+ transfer students. For example, UK advisors in the receiving colleges could contact the incoming transfer students and request that they email unofficial transcripts from their current institutions. They could all ask the following questions during the Summer Advising session before making recommendations for UK courses to take:
    1. Have you or will you earn your AA/AS degree?
    2. Are you still currently enrolled in classes at your sending institution?
    3. Have you submitted the final transcript?
  - Personal contact – transfer students are similar to first year students in that they feel that UK's campus and classes are

too large and intimidating. More effort could be made at creating personal connections with peer and faculty mentors in the colleges.

- UK's Undergraduate Studies database – the BCTCblue+ students need to be tracked more efficiently; because students change majors before or after reaching UK, it is difficult to gather regular data to share with BCTC about who of their students went where at UK for what.
- UK's admissions classification – a new designation for BCTCblue+ transfer students who are on track to move into upper level classes would allow for priority registration to be more successful. Student perceptions about their financial difficulties in paying the higher UK tuition and fees can be ameliorated by personal contacts with the UK Financial Aid Ombud who is alerted to the new cohort of BCTCblue+ students transitioning to UK for graduation.

Some interesting comments by the UK academic leadership during the May meeting were:

- Dr. Sweigard (College of Engineering) indicated that the transfer students from the Program have a very good success rate in Engineering compared to UK's own freshmen.
- Dr. Burkhart (College of Nursing) raised concern about the TOEFL requirement at BCTC. The College of Nursing's requirements are higher than even UK's due to patient safety issues. However, English language learner students who transfer in from

BCTC tend not to have adequate communications skills and subsequently lose academic standing while attempting upper level nursing courses at UK.

These and the above items led to a good discussion about the future of the BCTCblue+ Program and the long-term relationship with BCTC in general.

### Summary

The BCTCblue+ Program is an important strategy for the University and its community as transfer becomes more and more of an issue among institutions of higher education. As stated in a research brief by the Southern Regional Educational Board, public higher education leaders must ensure a smooth transition of students from one institution to another. The high percentage of transfer students among the graduates in the 16 SREB states is statistically significant enough for education leaders to help students trim back the often inefficient accumulation of extra credit hours from their college careers. The SREB Educational Policy staff calls on states and institutions to examine their transfer-of-credit policies to support students' academic endeavors, offer useful transfer information websites, and create transfer advisor networks to help students intending to transfer into an institution.<sup>17</sup> This would improve the efficient use of an institution's resources, shorten the time to graduation and save students – and the state's taxpayers – money.

The UK undergraduate faculty leadership has affirmed that the BCTCblue+ Program is an effective and relevant partnership in keeping with UK's mission. Not only does the Program support a more intentional admissions and transfer process for incoming UK students, but it also addresses a critical role in transitioning UK's reverse transfer population back into a

baccalaureate degree program for successful graduation. In sum, this partnership addresses the University’s goals in enrolling “more high-ability students from all societal segments” and improving “student success with particular attention to attrition and time-to-degree.”<sup>18</sup>



## **APPENDIX A: Memorandum of Agreement**

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### **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

#### **JOINT ADMISSION/DUAL ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

**BETWEEN**

**BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

**AND**

**UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY**

This memorandum of agreement defines the arrangements between the University of Kentucky (UK or University) and Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC or College) to promote the successful undergraduate education of students who are admitted to and enrolled at both institutions. The parties are entering into this agreement to better serve students and to create a partnership of mutual benefit to both institutions. It is expected that this effort will increase public awareness of the benefits of a partnership between UK and BCTC. The following understandings will govern this effort from the date of signature until modified or amended.

#### **1. Definitions**

**Home School:** The higher education institution at which a student has declared his or her degree-seeking status.

**Partner School:** The higher education institution at which the student is enrolled in course work as a non-degree, or visiting, student.

**UK courses:** For the purposes of this Agreement, UK courses shall refer to those specific 100- and 200-level courses and all 300-level and above undergraduate courses offered at the University of Kentucky that are not also offered by Bluegrass Technical and Community College at one or more of its campuses.

**AA/AS degree:** The Associate in Arts or the Associate in Sciences degree offered at Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

**UK students:** Students admitted to and enrolled as degree-seeking at the University of Kentucky.

**BCTC students:** Students admitted to and enrolled as degree-seeking at Bluegrass Community and Technical College.



## 2. Purpose and Goals

UK and BCTC will cooperate to promote successful undergraduate educational experiences for students whose academic plans will involve enrollment at both institutions. This partnership will result in better service to students, more efficient and effective use of resources at both institutions, eliminate barriers for students in attaining their educational goals and will increase student success.

More specifically, the goals of this partnership are to make it possible for students to be jointly admitted to and enrolled at both institutions so that:

- BCTC students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program may take UK courses in their intended UK major and more seamlessly transfer to UK after achieving an AA or AS degree at BCTC; and,
- UK students identified as having developmental education needs can successfully address areas of academic deficiency in their first year of matriculation at UK under the terms of the UK Academic Readiness Program.

## 3. Recruitment and Admissions

Recruitment of students will be the responsibility of both institutions. As a condition of admission to the partner school, students will be required to agree that their student records from the home institution, in either paper or electronic format, may be shared between and available to the partner institution.

### BCTC students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program

BCTC students who participate in the BCTCblue+ Program will receive significant academic and cultural benefits, including the ability to pursue, as a dual enrolled student, up to a total of twelve (12) credit hours of UK course work over three (3) semesters at the BCTC tuition rate plus fees associated with part-time study at UK. BCTC students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program will be admitted to UK as non-degree (visiting) students. Furthermore, UK will waive all admissions-related application fees for BCTCblue+ students.

A BCTC student participating in the BCTCblue+ Program will be considered full-time at BCTC if the student is concurrently enrolled in twelve (12) or more total credit hours at UK and BCTC. They will be eligible for all services afforded to full-time BCTC students.

### UK First-Year Students Needing Developmental Education

In response to 13 KAR 2:020 on developmental education, UK has established an Academic Readiness Program to address the remediation needs of those full-time, first-year, degree-seeking UK students who have been identified as having one or more areas of academic deficiency. Students placed in the Academic Readiness Program whose area(s) of academic deficiency necessitates that they enroll in a developmental education course(s) offered only

through BCTC shall be required to apply for and be admitted to BCTC as a non-degree (visiting) student. The BCTC admission deadline for these UK first-year students will be three weeks before the first day of UK classes based on the University of Kentucky academic calendar. A joint application process, with admissions-related application fees waived, will be available for eligible students. After the last day to add a class, UK will provide BCTC with timely admissions and registration information on UK students who have enrolled in BCTC developmental classes associated with the Academic Readiness Program.

A UK student placed in the Academic Readiness Program will be considered full-time at the University of Kentucky if the student is concurrently enrolled in twelve (12) or more total credit hours at UK and BCTC. They will be eligible for all services afforded to full-time UK students.

#### **4. Tuition and Fees**

For a BCTCblue+ student, BCTC tuition and fees will be assessed for the BCTC portion of the student's enrollment and UK tuition and fees will be assessed for the UK enrollment. Each institution shall independently determine the residency status (resident or non-resident) of a BCTCblue+ student related to the assessment of tuition and fees at the respective institution.

Using a fee-for-instruction agreement, UK will contract with BCTC to teach the developmental education course(s) prescribed by the UK Academic Readiness Program for those UK students whose placement testing identify a need for remediation. The fee-for-instruction agreement shall be reviewed annually and continued by mutual agreement of both parties.

#### **5. Program Articulation, Advising and Payments**

The management of the Joint Admissions/Dual Enrollment Process between the two institutions will be coordinated through the University Office of Admissions and the BCTC Office of Admissions. Problems relating to articulation, class content, and chronology of content or course scheduling will be resolved by the persons or offices designated by the Chief Academic Officer of each institution. The two institutions will assume joint responsibility for academic advising, including the training of academic advisors and the ongoing dissemination of information.

##### BCTCblue+ Program

Using the Course Applicability System (CAS) and other transfer guides, authorized staff persons at BCTC and UK will maintain the transfer equivalencies of BCTC and UK courses to help ensure the seamless transfer of students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program. The UK transfer advisor embedded in the BCTC Transfer Center will coordinate efforts to maintain the accuracy of transfer materials and ensure the timely dissemination of updated materials. In addition, the UK Office of Undergraduate Education will regularly assess the effectiveness of the BCTCblue+ Program, as it contributes to the successful transition of students from BCTC to UK and thereafter to their ability to earn a baccalaureate degree in a timely manner.

##### Academic Readiness Program

At least three weeks prior to the first day of UK classes each semester, the UK Office of Undergraduate Education will notify the BCTC Registrar of the number of developmental education courses and sections needed. The class schedule for these developmental education courses shall follow the University of Kentucky academic calendar. The courses shall meet in classrooms provided by UK on its campus or online as distance learning courses. BCTC will appoint and pay the instructors of these developmental courses.

The BCTC instructors shall provide timely information on appropriate textbooks/supplies to the University Bookstore. Academic guidelines and policies, including but not limited to policies on academic cheating, shall adhere to the standards established by the faculty of Bluegrass Community and Technical College and/or the Faculty Senate of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. Course syllabi shall provide an accurate summary of those guidelines and policies and a reference to the source and location where definitive information on student academic affairs can be found. BCTC will provide any required disabilities counseling services particular to the developmental education courses to help retain students and enhance success. Adaptive technology needed in order to provide equal access to instruction will be provided by the University of Kentucky.

Midterm and final grades for the contracted BCTC developmental courses shall be entered in a timely manner into the BCTC student information system and shared electronically with UK, employing an electronic interface between the two student information systems.

On or before September 30<sup>th</sup> (fall term) and February 28<sup>th</sup> (spring term), and following the terms of the fee-for-instruction agreement in force for a given academic year, UK will pay BCTC the fee-for-instruction costs for the BCTC developmental education classes offered exclusively to UK students. Invoices for those targeted developmental education courses should be sufficient in detail for proper pre-audit and post-audit purposes.

#### **6. Registration and Student Records**

BCTC students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program will be eligible to participate in UK's Priority (advanced) Registration with the same registration priority for UK classes as a comparable UK student.

UK Academic Readiness students will register for all courses, including any prescribed developmental education courses, through the regular registration processes at UK.

Jointly admitted students will be coded and tracked in the student information systems at both institutions. University Office of the Registrar and BCTC Office of the Registrar will be responsible for maintaining student records for jointly admitted students for coursework taken at the respective institutions.

BCTCblue+ students will be limited to a total of twelve (12) credit hours of UK course work at the BCTC tuition rate plus fees associated with part-time study at UK. Furthermore, UK may



restrict the maximum per-semester credit hours a BCTCblue+ student may take at UK while participating in the BCTCblue+ Program.

The institutions will work together to develop a secure, efficient process of electronic information/data interchange.

#### **7. Financial Aid and Scholarships**

Financial aid will be available for qualified students who are jointly admitted. Students will receive financial aid only through their home institution. Financial aid can be used to pay for courses taken at the partner school that are required for the degree at the home school. Students will obtain a consortium agreement from the home school and submit the agreement to the partner school. The partner school will complete the agreement and return the agreement to the home school. Applications for University and BCTC scholarships will be available to jointly admitted students. BCTC students participating in the BCTCblue+ Program who are enrolled in twelve or more credit hours of course work at BCTC in a given semester may not be eligible for additional financial aid to cover the cost of tuition and fees associated with concurrent course work at UK.

The Home School is responsible for:

- granting the degree;
- determining the student's eligibility for and disbursing financial aid;
- monitoring the student's ongoing eligibility for financial aid;
- establishing the procedures for calculating financial awards, disbursing financial aid, monitoring satisfactory progress and other student eligibility requirements, maintaining records, and recovering funds, if applicable or required, in the event the student withdraws from a class or school.

The Partner School is responsible for:

- notifying the home school of the student's enrollment status;
- notifying the home school of the student's midterm and final grades;

#### **8. Student Grievances and Conduct**

BCTC agrees that no complaint or grievance by a student solely against or solely involving the University and/or its administration, faculty, staff, services or facilities will be addressed through BCTC grievance procedures and all such complaints or grievances shall be referred to the appropriate University institutional process or grievance procedures. The University agrees that students will not be allowed to use UK grievance procedures to pursue complaints solely involving BCTC.

Students participating in the Joint Admissions/Dual Enrollment Process will comply with the conduct standards at both institutions. Authorized officials at BCTC and UK may each intervene in cases of misconduct, particularly when cases involve health and safety. Students found in violation of conduct codes may receive sanctions from each institution. Authorized officials at BCTC and UK reserve the option to decide that only one institution will process a case of misconduct. BCTC and UK will create a process for reporting to the other when the institution has undertaken student conduct actions.

**9. Marketing**

Promotional plans and materials will be subject to approval by each party.

**10. Student Services**

Students in the Joint Admission Program will have access to student services at both institutional parties. Fee-based student services will be available to jointly admitted students who have paid the requisite fees.

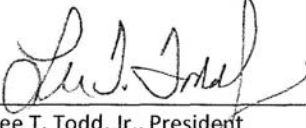
**11. Miscellaneous**

This agreement offers opportunities for more effective and efficient use of faculty, facilities, and support services by BCTC and UK. Faculty and staff will be encouraged to develop cooperative efforts related to the delivery of courses and support services.

This agreement shall be reviewed annually and amended upon mutual consent of the signors. This agreement does not create any rights in any third parties, specifically any students participating in the program. The only parties to this agreement are the University of Kentucky and Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

SIGNATURES:

  
Augusta A. Julian, President  
Bluegrass Community & Technical College

  
Lee T. Todd, Jr., President  
University of Kentucky

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> According to the Complete College America research, Kentucky is ranked lowest of all the states who reported data for the percentage of associate degree-seeking students who transferred out from 2-year to 4 year colleges (Fall 2004 cohort followed until August 31, 2008): 8.8% full-time status and 1.8% at part-time status. “Time is the Enemy,” Complete College America, Washington, D.C. (September 2011), p. 42.

[http://www.completecollege.org/docs/Time\\_Is\\_the\\_Enemy\\_Transfers.pdf](http://www.completecollege.org/docs/Time_Is_the_Enemy_Transfers.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See the Kentucky Council for Postsecondary Education’s Data Portal on transfer rates in Kentucky: <http://cpe.ky.gov/info/transfer>.

<sup>3</sup> See the full text of the legislation, KRS 164.2951, at <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/KRS/164-00/2951.PDF>.

<sup>4</sup> “The General Education Transfer Policy and Implementation Guidelines, Revised Policy 2012” (revised June 2011, effective Fall Semester 2012). Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. [http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/05DFC1FE-600D-4123-A1C2-134F7732598C/0/12\\_Gen\\_Ed\\_Transfer\\_Policy\\_Revisions.pdf](http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/05DFC1FE-600D-4123-A1C2-134F7732598C/0/12_Gen_Ed_Transfer_Policy_Revisions.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> “Liberal Education and America’s Promise [LEAP],” Association of American Colleges and Universities. [http://www.aacu.org/leap/principles\\_of\\_excellence.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/leap/principles_of_excellence.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> U.Select (*CollegeSource* Transfer Equivalency System), <http://www.transfer.org>. For more information on the Kentucky statewide approach to explaining the complexities

of transfer among its institutions, see the transfer portion of the KnowHow2GoKy.org information portal:

<http://knowhow2goky.org/transfer>.

<sup>7</sup> See more about the BCTC Transfer Center at their website:

[http://bluegrass.kctcs.edu/Transfer\\_Center/BCTCblue\\_plus.aspx](http://bluegrass.kctcs.edu/Transfer_Center/BCTCblue_plus.aspx).

<sup>8</sup> A general student organization called UKATS went defunct soon after it was started in 2008 and the current UK Transfer Advisor is working to get it re-established. Earlier efforts to establish a Tau Sigma National Honor Society have not yet been realized.

<sup>9</sup> The Office of Institutional Research conducted an *ad hoc* study of students from three of UK’s graduating cohorts (first-time first-year students): Fall 2006, Fall 2007 and Fall 2008. The data is derived from the National Student Clearinghouse (<http://www.studentclearinghouse.org/>) and includes only those cohort students who left UK during their first three years and attended another institution – as of May 2012.

<sup>10</sup> An analysis of UK’s climate, policies and procedures in 2008 by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) in partnership with a UK Provost-appointed task force found that UK academic programming tends to favor more traditional college students (high socio-economic status, white, not holding a job, full-time and living on campus). The study showed that UK has offered few options in flexibility or alternative formats for non-traditional students. See more detailed research on this topic in a paper by this author: "University of Kentucky Adult Learning Focused Institution (ALFI) Task Force: Findings and Recommendations" (2009). *Undergraduate Education White Papers*. Paper 6., [http://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge\\_reports/6/](http://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge_reports/6/).

<sup>11</sup> “UK Announces Transfer Partnership with BCTC,” WUKY Radio Station (October 30,

2008), <http://www.wuky.org/post/uk-announces-transfer-partnership-bctc>.

<sup>12</sup> Students must officially enroll in the BCTCblue+ program in order to receive any of the benefits of the program. See the online application at: [https://legacy.bluegrass.kctcs.edu/forms/transfer\\_center/bctc\\_blue\\_plus](https://legacy.bluegrass.kctcs.edu/forms/transfer_center/bctc_blue_plus).

<sup>13</sup> The UK Pathway to Transfer Guides were originally developed in 2007-08 by the UK Transfer Advisor in partnership with the professional academic advisors in each of UK's undergraduate colleges. In the spring of 2008 all the Deans of the undergraduate colleges approved the Pathway Guides which were then posted on the Undergraduate Studies website at <http://www.uky.edu/US/pathways.html>. The Guides are regularly updated by Undergraduate Studies advisors as new courses and programs are developed by the Faculty in both institutions.

<sup>14</sup> "Collaborative Academic Arrangements: Policy and Procedures, Policy Statement," Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/Collaborative%20Arrangements%20final.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> "Memorandum of Agreement: Joint Admission/Dual Enrollment Process between Bluegrass Community and Technical College and University of Kentucky" [October 29, 2008], p. 1. <http://academics.uky.edu/uge/guide/Files/haring/MOAOndualEnrollment-UK-BCTC-Oct2008.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> "Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky, Tuesday, December 9, 2008," p. 4.

<http://www.uky.edu/Trustees/minutes/2008/dec/minutes.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> "New Measures, New Perspectives: Graduates' Time- and Credits-to-Degree in SREB States," (2011). *SREB Research Brief 11E08*. [http://publications.sreb.org/2011/11E08\\_Res\\_Brief.pdf](http://publications.sreb.org/2011/11E08_Res_Brief.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> "2009-14 Strategic Plan," University of Kentucky, p. 2. [http://www.uky.edu/Provost/strategic\\_planning/files/plan.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/Provost/strategic_planning/files/plan.pdf)