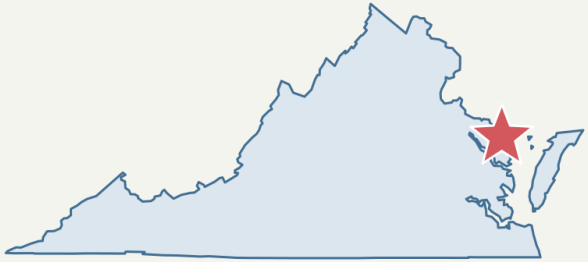
The Transfer Behind Transfer

Rural Pathways Project Institute 4 · Transfer Session

Patricia Parker

I get rural

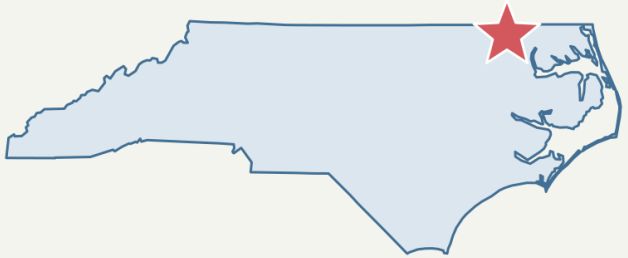
Callao, Virginia



~80 high school graduates a year

3,200 community college students in a region larger than Delaware

George, North Carolina



~1,000 population of George, NC

56% of residents ages 25–44 with no post-secondary credential

Is “transfer” in your strategic plan?



Why or why not?

Why did it take as long as it did?

What has it changed?

Table talk — real questions like these are what make change happen.

What is different now?

Transfer isn’t new. The conversations were real, but the data needle didn’t move. Now institutions are taking action.

Senior leaders

Presidents and cabinets are asking about transfer

Enrollment cliff

Opened our eyes to a “new” pool of students who were there all along

Completion

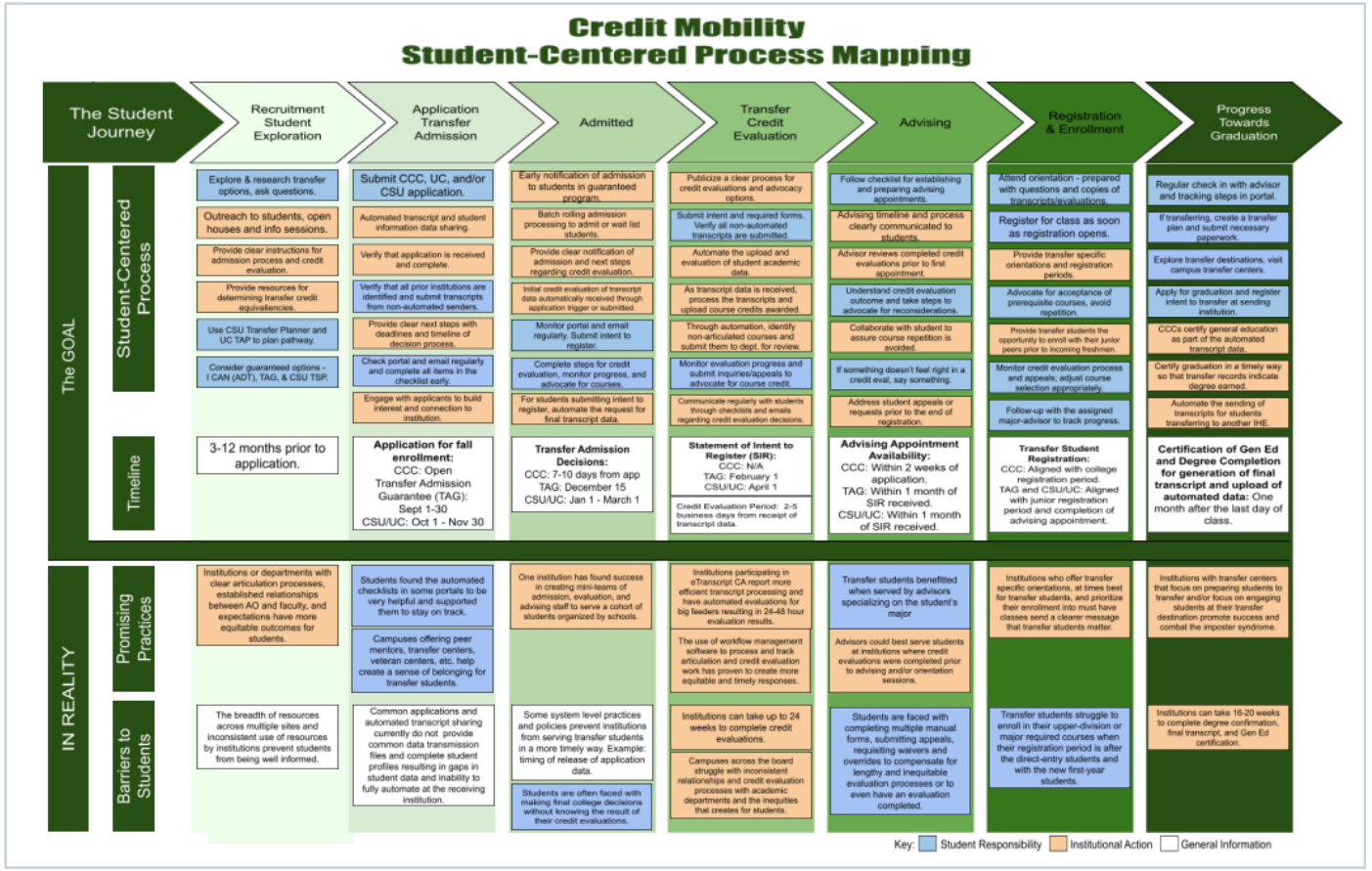
Has taken on a deeper meaning

Credits, no degree

The volume of students with credits and no degree is overwhelming states

Urgency is here. Solutions take time, patience and persistence — and rural colleges face added challenges of access, resources and volume.

What is the Transfer Behind Transfer?



SOVA White Paper: Credit Evaluation (May 2025)



Best Bets

for Transfer & Learning Mobility

SOVA

Lara K. Couturier and Patricia Parker
2026

Read Best Bets for Transfer & Learning Mobility (PDF) — Lara K. Couturier and Patricia Parker, 2026

Why We Are Placing Our "Best Bets"...

In the transfer & learning mobility space, there is a **troubling dearth of definitive evidence** about what works.

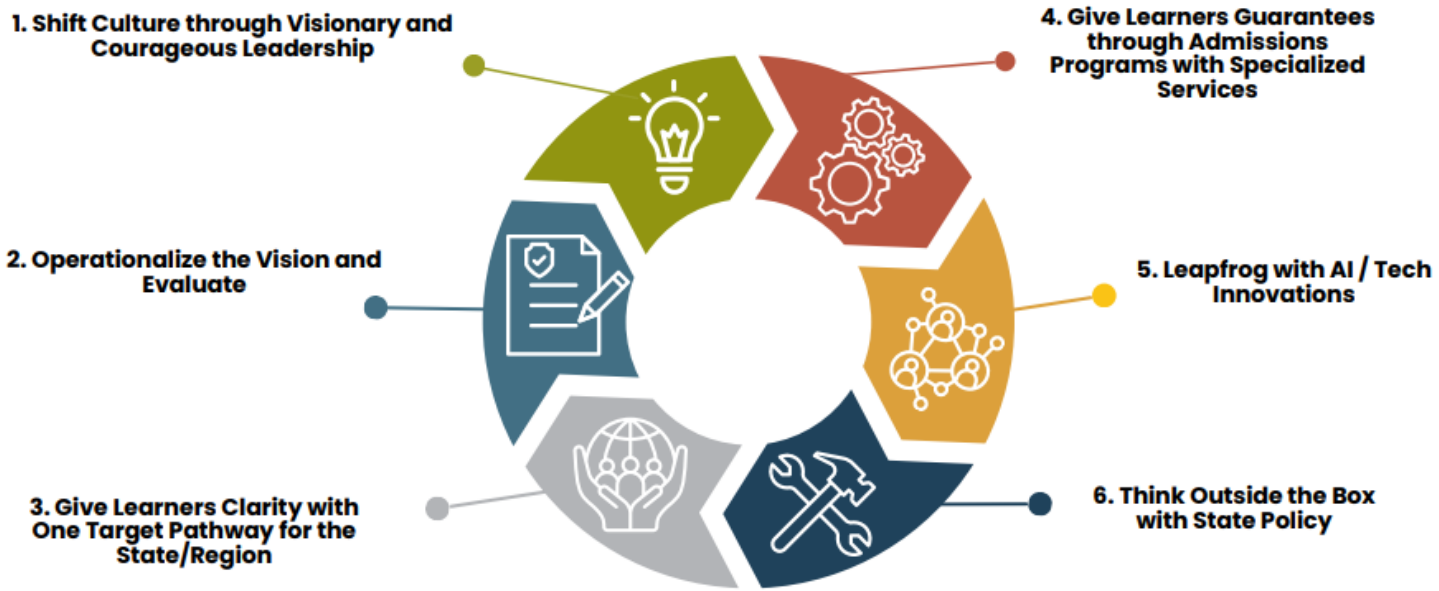
Transfer and learning mobility **touch so many different parts of institutions and the postsecondary ecosystem**.

It is therefore difficult to pinpoint exactly which interventions make the most difference.

Under these conditions, it is **necessary to draw on** the best-available research and on-the-ground experience generated from working alongside institutions, systems, and expert practitioners to articulate our "best bets."

"Best bets"--the things that, **taken together, can have the biggest positive impact** for learners and help us evolve higher education and learning mobility.

Six Areas of Focus



A framework for critical discussion

Best Bets

- Goal: raise the tough questions and drive change
- Conversations are now action-oriented, not philosophical
- Built to drive discussion as institutions develop transfer-focused plans
- Six topics to hold each other accountable

Coming in the new year

CCC–CSU Collaborative Aspirational Transfer Standards

- Written by transfer practitioners
- Based on student experiences
- Standards for institutions aspiring to do transfer really well
- A rubric to assess your own practices

Where should you focus first?

Think about the journey map, the six Best Bets and the future aspirational standards

Journey map | **6 Best Bets** | **Aspirational standards**

Which of these should receive attention when you return to campus?

What do you want to learn more about?

Let’s dive deeper

1. Rural consortiums
2. Dual enrollment & adult learners
3. The Transfer VA portal

Case 1: Rural consortiums in Virginia



Case 1: Rural consortiums in Virginia

The What

- 3+ rural community colleges plus a transfer destination
- Engaged regional workforce and created experiential learning opportunities
- Shared faculty to increase access to learning; faculty shared class strategies and worked to align content
- Planned pre-transfer students' engagement with post-transfer students in the major
- Scholarships pre- and post-transfer, plus wrap-around services
- Collaborative retreates to build the idea and write the proposal

Table talk

- What are the benefits of connecting with other rural institutions?
- What might focused retreats uncover?
- What questions will your team consider back on campus?

Case 2: Dual enrollment & adult learners

Why It Matters

- Dual enrollment is the majority of enrollment at many CCs
- Adult learners are a growing population
- Are DE courses aligned with CC and university courses?
- Is adult learners' prior learning valued?

Rhode Island Example

- Started with state licensure; critical care-provider shortage
- Licensure → certificate → associate → bachelor's
- Joint admission; prior-learning credit honored throughout
- Multiple on- and off-ramps
- State agencies and workforce partners

Table talk

- What about this idea makes your heart beat?
- What would be your first three steps toward a similar idea?
- What would you want it to achieve for your students?

Case 3: The Transfer VA portal

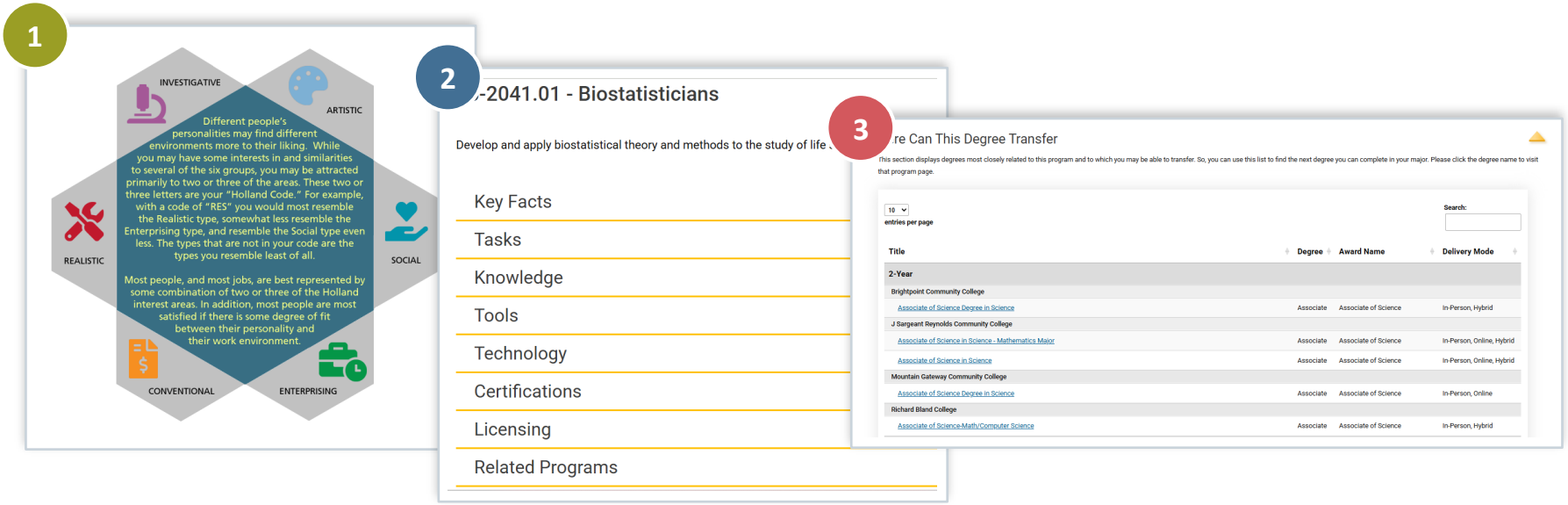
Clear & transparent

- Guiding principle: the same clear information for all students
- Goal: close equity gaps in access to information and opportunities

Explore any direction

- Start from careers → find the degree → learn how to transfer
- Reduces bias in advising
- Broadens opportunities accessible to all students

Transfer VA: explore from any direction

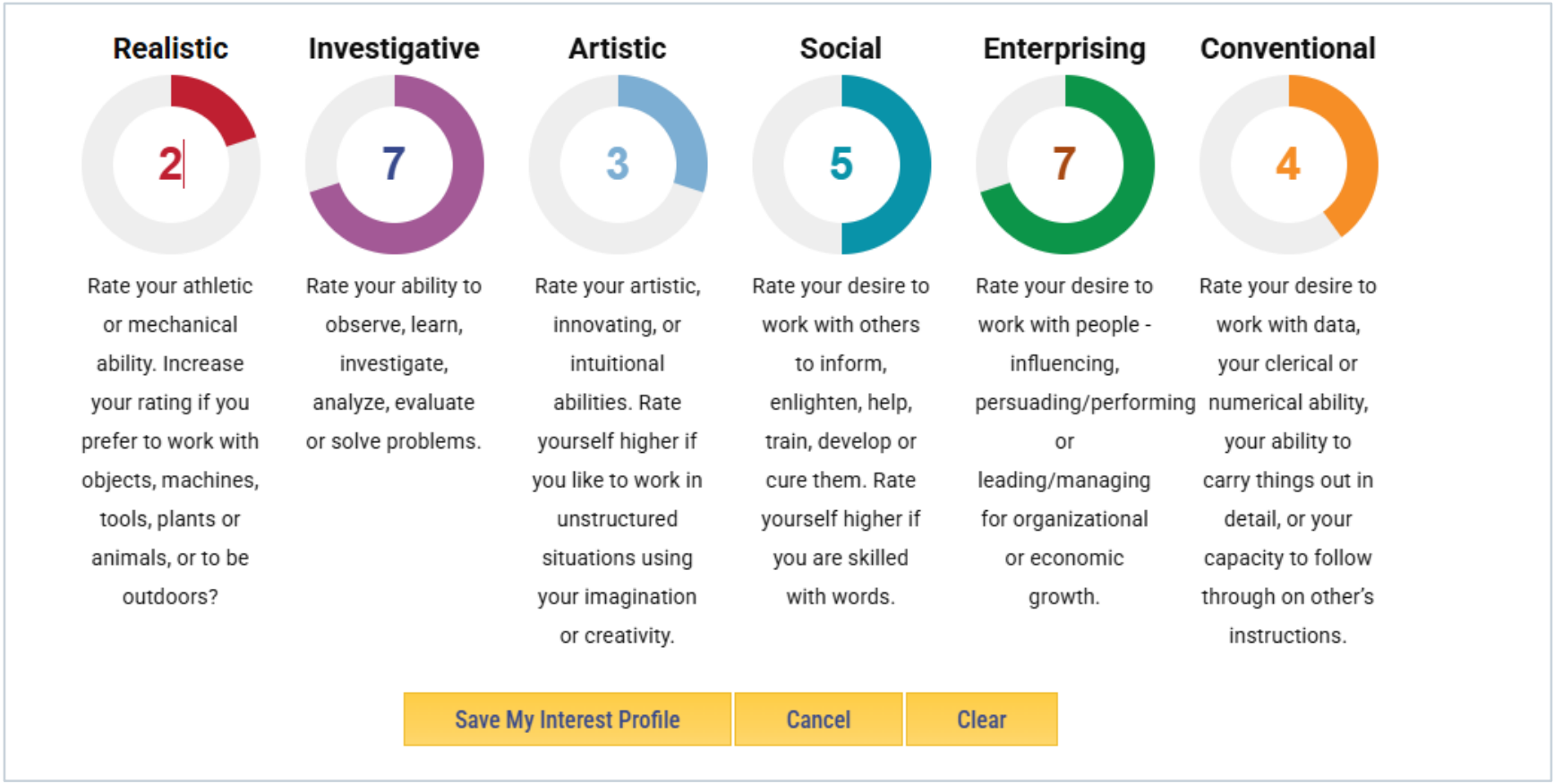


1 Explore careers

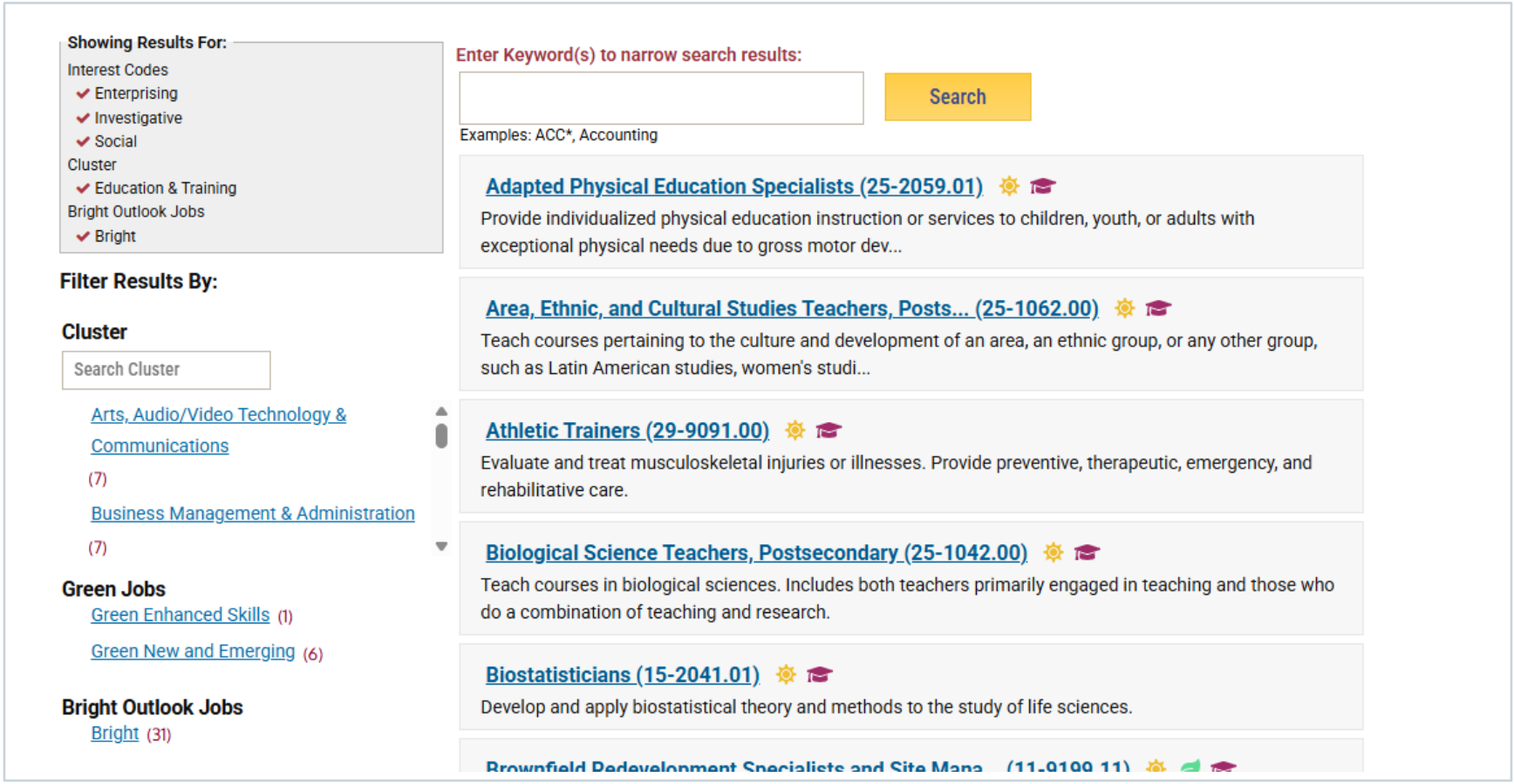
2 Find the degree

3 Find the transfer path


INVESTIGATIVE
ARTISTIC
Different people's personalities may find different environments more to their liking. While you may have some interests in and similarities to several of the six groups, you may be attracted primarily to two or three of the areas. These two or three letters are your "Holland Code." For example, with a code of "RES" you would most resemble the Realistic type, somewhat less resemble the Enterprising type, and resemble the Social type even less. The types that are not in your code are the types you resemble least of all.
Most people, and most jobs, are best represented by some combination of two or three of the Holland interest areas. In addition, most people are most satisfied if there is some degree of fit between their personality and their work environment.
REALISTIC
SOCIAL
CONVENTIONAL
ENTERPRISING



Transfer VA portal — rate your interests across the six types



Transfer VA portal — career search results, filtered by interest and cluster

15-2041.01 - Biostatisticians

Develop and apply biostatistical theory and methods to the study of life sciences.

- Key Facts
- Tasks
- Knowledge
- Tools
- Technology
- Certifications
- Licensing
- Related Programs

Related Programs

Programs related to this career, offered by participating institution(s), are listed below.

Clicking on the Degree programs in the list below will take you away from the Careers page.

INSTITUTION	PROGRAMS
Appalachian College of Pharmacy	Programs
Batten University	Programs
Bridgewater College	Programs
Brightpoint Community College	Programs
Christopher Newport University	Programs
Emory & Henry University	Programs
Ferrum College	Programs
George Mason University	Programs
Hollins University	Programs
J Sargeant Reynolds Community College	Programs
James Madison University	Programs

Bachelor of Science, Major in Mathematics
Bachelor of Science

Where Can This Degree Transfer

This section displays degrees most closely related to this program and to which you may be able to transfer. So, you can use this list to find the next degree you can complete in your major. Please click the degree name to visit that program page.

10 entries per page

Search:

Title	Degree	Award Name	Delivery Mode
2-Year			
Brightpoint Community College			
Associate of Science Degree in Science	Associate	Associate of Science	In-Person, Hybrid
J Sargeant Reynolds Community College			
Associate of Science in Science - Mathematics Major	Associate	Associate of Science	In-Person, Online, Hybrid
Associate of Science in Science	Associate	Associate of Science	In-Person, Online, Hybrid
Mountain Gateway Community College			
Associate of Science Degree in Science	Associate	Associate of Science	In-Person, Online
Richard Bland College			
Associate of Science-Math/Computer Science	Associate	Associate of Science	In-Person, Hybrid

Case 3: The Transfer VA portal

Clear & transparent

- Guiding principle: the same clear information for all students
- Goal: close equity gaps in access to information and opportunities
- Eastern Shore CC (smallest) and Northern VA CC (largest): students get the same

Explore any direction

- Start from careers → find the degree → learn how to transfer
- Reduces bias in advising
- Broadens access to opportunities for all students.

Table talk

- What is your current student experience exploring transfer and degrees, starting with jobs first?
- How can this level of transparency and exploration happen in your paradigm — even locally, even without technology?

Peel the layers, one question at a time

Ask the tough questions and work collectively to find the answers — remembering that answers may differ depending on who you ask.

- **Academically**
- **Data & processes**
- **Added value**
- **Student voice**

The Transfer Behind Transfer: Academically

- Are our students transfer-ready AND major-ready?
- Do we have major-specific transfer pathways — and are they enforced for all students, including DE?

- **Are pathway maps alphabetical, by semester, or sequenced? What does each say to students?**
- Does a single major pathway lead to many destinations in the same major?

The Transfer Behind Transfer: Data & processes

- How do we use data to find transfer gaps — and then close them?
- Do we know what question our data answers? Do we ask “why” five times?

- **Who engages with data at our institution, and when?**
- Do our processes — transcripts, credit evaluation, first-semester enrollment — support or hinder students?

The Transfer Behind Transfer: Added value

- What are our transfer values? Do partners share them?
- How are transfer students valued here — and at their destination?
- **What do our students deserve in partner agreements?**
- What standards do we aspire to reach?

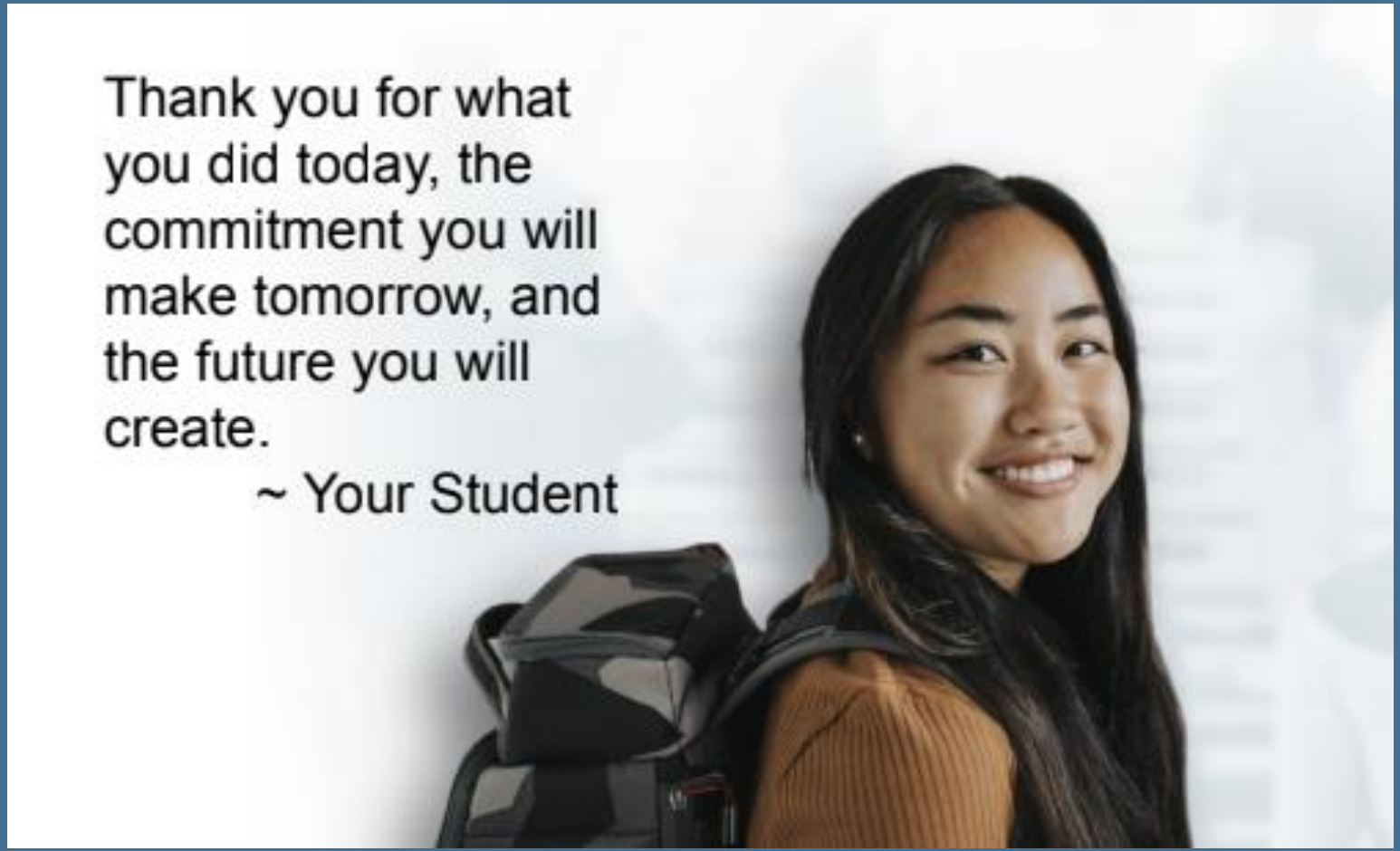
- **Can transfer students enroll in the junior-year "BUS 301" course — a seat at the table?**
- Do they have equal access to aid and scholarships?
- How are they supported in the move from CC to university?
- What early connections and wrap-around supports build belonging — and do they work?

The Transfer Behind Transfer: Student voice

- How do we gather student feedback — and how is it used?
- When are faculty, staff and students at the same table talking about transfer?

- When and how do students receive follow-up?
- What do we really do with the surveys and data we collect?

Do we value the voice of our students?


Thank you for what you did today, the commitment you will make tomorrow, and the future you will create.
~ Your Student