

SIMPLIFYING TRANSFER PLANNING

UPSILON PI CHAPTER JOHN A. LOGAN COLLEGE

Briefly describe your College Project and how it directly supported your college's mission/current priorities.

The chapter's College Project aimed to simplify for students the complex process of transferring from John A. Logan College to a four-year institution. Members collaborated with the college's administration (President, Provost, and Chief Financial Officer) and other administrators to explore how to ensure a smoother transition to universities so students could make well-informed decisions regarding their educational journeys.

Among the college's documents that the chapter reviewed before the first meeting with the administration was



the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. The college president stressed that the importance of the SEM Plan was to encourage students' persistence and program completion toward their eventual educational and professional goals. Through student survey data and discussions with college administration, the chapter determined that many students face confusion with prerequisites, degree requirements, transfer options, and integration of prior coursework into

their academic plans. Then, the chapter examined the transfer process among institutions that hold articulation agreements with the college. It became clear that there was a need for an outline to simplify the transfer process.

“Follow the Yellow Brick Pathway to Transfer” was a series of step-by-step infographics using a Wizard of Oz theme to streamline students’ transitions to universities. The chapter selected this cinematic theme to bring an approachable lightheartedness to the topic and help students feel comfortable moving forward in their next academic journey, similar to Dorothy’s quest to find her way home.



Each infographic in the series presented simplified transfer

information connected to a QR code. Inspired by the characters from The Wizard of Oz, the chapter’s version of Dorothy represented a student, and the chapter’s Glinda the Good represented an academic advisor. These characters traveled along the yellow brick road, eventually arriving at the Emerald City, depicting the student’s complete transfer to a university.

The goal of the chapter’s college project was to strengthen the chapter’s relationship with the college administration by collaborating with them to solve a problem impacting the student body – in this case, clarifying transfer processes and opportunities for students in all programs at the college. Through the project, the chapter and administration empowered students to navigate their academic transfer process with confidence so they could achieve their ongoing educational goals.

Describe the planning process in detail including who was involved in determining the project.

Chapter members reviewed the college's mission, vision, institutional goals, and SEM Plan to prepare for the first meeting with the administration. Among other challenges the

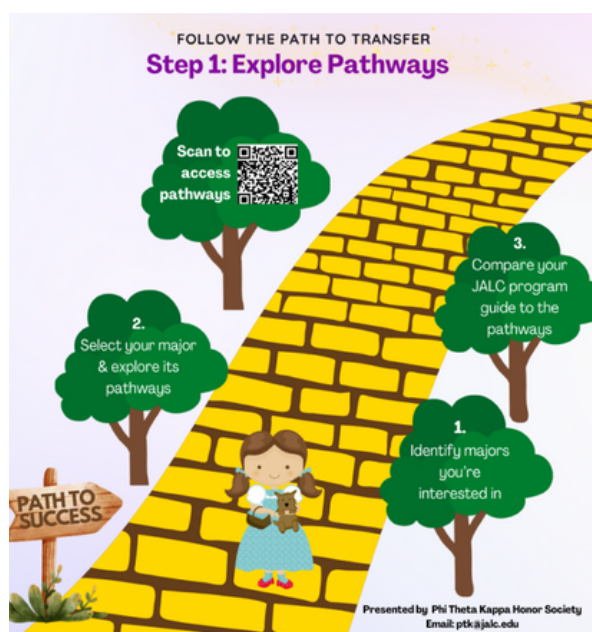
administration discussed with the chapter, clarifying transfer planning particularly piqued the chapter's interest. After selecting academic transfer as the project's focus, the chapter revisited the SEM Plan, specifically Tactic 3.5: Implementation of Student Plans and Pathways to contribute to the college's desire to "assist students in being able to visualize their full academic plan."

The administration wanted to ensure the needs of students of various ages taking face-to-face, online, and hybrid classes were adequately addressed, so the chapter began gathering student input with help from the Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research. Feedback from five student clubs provided information for the content and design of each transfer-themed infographic, guaranteeing the project would be helpful for all students at the college.

After sharing student insights with the administration, they added the Curriculum Manager, Assistant Manager of Academic Advisement, and Student Transitions Manager to the collaboration team.

To learn about Phi Theta Kappa's (PTK) transfer resources and gather other

advice, the chapter consulted PTK's Senior Director of Student Leadership as well as Southern Illinois University's (SIU) Assistant Director of Transfer Relations to include a four-year university's perspective on the transfer process.



After the collaboration team approved the chapter's direction, members volunteered to work in groups of two or three to create each of the eight infographics dedicated to each step in transfer planning.

Members reviewed each completed infographic at chapter meetings before final drafts were sent to the administration for feedback and approval. With help from the Digital Communications Manager, Assistant Vice President of Marketing, and



Associate Dean of Educational Technology, one infographic was displayed each week for eight weeks on the college's online learning management system (Desire2Learn) and announcement boards throughout campus to promote clear transfer processes to students. Transfer awareness extended beyond campus by posting them on the college's social media platforms.



What knowledge, skills and abilities did members need to successfully implement this College Project? How did members strengthen these areas before implementing the project?

Chapter members developed leadership and project implementation skills through strategic planning, immersive

experiences, and collaborative exercises that enhanced decision-making and adaptability. These skills aided the chapter when working alongside college administration while also challenging members to view project obstacles as opportunities for innovation and character development.

A tool that benefited the chapter's preparation process was PTK Edge. Three members completed Transfer Edge to not only enhance their own transfer planning skills, but also to help equip their fellow members to access proper content for the project. This step was necessary for the chapter to successfully create accurate transfer infographics.

Additionally, members enhanced technical and strategic communication skills by utilizing external resources, such as a book on communicating visual data that helped them make good use of creative software. As a result, chapter members gained practical experience in graphic design, producing impactful transfer planning infographics that maximized outreach effectiveness.

Participation in PTK Catalyst further expanded members' teamwork skills. Workshops on community

engagement and visual storytelling provided applicable strategies, while networking led to mentorships that enriched the chapter’s long-term planning and execution. Finally, after a workshop on active listening held before the first meeting with the administration, chapter officers effectively managed meetings by preparing agendas, facilitating discussions, and summarizing decisions and next steps.

How did the chapter carry out the project and communicate with all collaborators?

Chapter members met with the college President, Provost, and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to brainstorm project topics and then narrow the focus to simplifying the complexity of transfer planning.

The administration’s involvement was valuable throughout the project at three chapter meetings and email reviews of each infographic before they were published. Administrators quickly added other staff to the project, including the Curriculum Manager, Assistant Manager of Advisement, and Student Transitions Manager who provided content and resources for the infographic series.

To enhance the overall impact of the project, the chapter sought external perspectives. A virtual meeting with PTK’s Senior Director of Student Leadership provided advice about effective communication to strengthen chapter relations with the administration and other collaborators. She also gave guidance on the project, tips for selecting tools to create compelling infographics, and connections to PTK transfer and scholarship resources.

Most students from the college who transfer choose SIU. The college has many articulation agreements with SIU, which is the public university nearest to the college.



Members conducted a phone interview with SIU’s Assistant Director



of Transfer Relations to discuss the transfer process, successful transfer practices, and challenges students encounter when transferring there.



Later in the project, the chapter consulted the college’s Digital Assistant Vice President of Marketing, and Associate Dean of Educational Technology to approve and publish each infographic. The Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research gave suggestions for the chapter’s preliminary student input as they created the graphics and the student feedback survey to assess the impact of the infographic series. Internal chapter communication included 30-minute sessions immediately following each weekly chapter meeting where members documented progress using the College Project

rubric as a framework. Infographic drafts were available on a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel for chapter input and progress transparency between meetings.

The chapter also updated the administration on the team’s progress throughout and after the project. Each completed infographic was sent to the President, Provost, and CFO for final feedback before they were released to the public. In addition, the administration attended a final chapter meeting after the project was completed, and the chapter provided them with the Hallmark Award entry as a final written report.

What were the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of this project, including the project's impact on members?

Seventeen students responded to the chapter’s survey requesting feedback on the published infographics. The graphics simplified the transfer process for 82% of respondents, and 59% said they served as beneficial future references. Interestingly, 82% intended to transfer, which indicated to the chapter and administration that the infographic series served students as a type of transfer toolkit. The administration wanted the project to

reach students of various ages who were taking a variety of course modalities. Survey respondents' ages were 18-20 years old (35%), 21-24 (18%), 25-40 (29%), and 41 or older (18%), and their course modalities were face-to-face (53%), online (41%), and hybrid (6%).

Through conversations, approximately ten students told the chapter that the series helped them with transfer planning. For instance, the student government president said the guidance and resources transformed the process from intimidating to feasible and added, "I was overwhelmed at first, but the infographics showed me what to do, and now I'm confident I can handle it."

To ensure the college can access the project for future use, the chapter archived the final infographics along with related QR codes, URLs, and captions using Microsoft Teams. At the administration's request, the chapter provided full access to the Curriculum Manager and Student Transitions Manager so they could reissue the full series or selected infographics as desired.

Finally, the project helped nurture chapter members' professionalism and teamwork skills as scholar-servant

leaders. It prompted them to step outside their comfort zones and take on new roles, ultimately preparing them for their future educational, professional, and personal endeavors.



Describe how this project helped develop and/or hone your chapter's relationship with the college administration.

At the final project meeting, the President applauded the chapter for taking on "an issue that no one else was working on," and the Provost praised the chapter as an "asset to the college." At the same meeting, the CFO expressed pleasure with the chapter's ability to "simplify the chaos" that students often assume transferring will be. The chapter and administration mutually agreed that

their relationship strengthened, and both groups look forward to future collaborations.

