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MCCCD: 1 process for its 10 colleges

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by [Mary Beth Falter](#) - Sept. 9, 2011 12:00 AM

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Maricopa Community [Colleges](#) 10 schools are moving toward creating one registration and financial-aid procedure for students who attend more than one college.

Paul Dale and Ernest Lara, presidents of Paradise Valley and Estrella Mountain community colleges, respectively, are heading the committee that is trying to make it easier for students to sign up and move among the 10 separate colleges.

About 10.6 percent of students attended more than one college in 2009-10, the most recent figures available, said Tom Gariepy, spokesman for the Maricopa County [Community College](#) District office.

Most of those students attend classes on a campus and also take a class online through Rio Salado Community College, he said.

That represents about 22,000 students who had to apply separately, have financial-aid documents vetted separately and request transcripts separately from each college.

Many have expressed frustration, Dale said.

"I think we've made huge improvements over the last several years, but our younger students are used to online experiences that are so easy, like Amazon or Netflix, that the bar has been raised in terms of how easy things should be," he said.

Some procedures will likely be changed fairly soon, Dale said.

For example, when a student brings transfer credit from a community college or university, the community-college admissions office evaluates the transcript.

If the student switches to a different community college, that college's admissions office evaluates it again. Under the new procedure, only one evaluation will be needed.

Other updates, such as a single registration procedure for multiple colleges, may be a year away, Lara said.

Changing the system is a huge undertaking involving technology, business operations and staff, Lara said.

The 10 colleges, which serve more than 260,000 students a year, are in one system but operate independently.

The colleges have committed to reassigning full-time staff to speed the changes, he said.

The cost of making the changes is unknown, but Lara said administrators think that increased efficiency will make up for it.



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"Part of what we want to do is affect staff time, so their time can be targeted to working with students, where before maybe they had to spend a lot of time behind the scenes," Lara said.

The change is part of the district's One Maricopa initiative to improve student success and streamline procedures.

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