

**COMPREHENSIVE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
AND  
THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

**Approved by the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and  
the State Board of the North Carolina Community College System**

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This document contains the articulation agreement in sections I-IV. Supporting documentation is provided in the appendices.

## **I. ORIGINATING LEGISLATION OVERVIEW**

The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement fulfills the provisions of House Bill 739 and Senate Bill 1161 (1995 Session of the General Assembly). The original legislation is provided in Appendix A. Section 1 of HB 739 instructed the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and the State Board of Community Colleges to develop a plan for the transfer of credits between the institutions of the North Carolina Community College System and between them and the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. Section 3 of HB 739 instructed the State Board of Community Colleges to implement common course descriptions for all community college programs by June 1, 1997. Section 1 of SB 1161 directed The University of North Carolina Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges to develop a plan that ensures accurate and accessible academic counseling for students considering transfer between community colleges and between community colleges and the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. Section 2 of SB 1161 required the two Boards to establish a timetable for the development of guidelines and transfer agreements for program majors, professional specialization, and associate in applied science degrees. Section 3 of SB 1161 directed the State Board of Community Colleges to review its policies and rules and make any changes that are necessary to implement the plan for the transfer of credits.

## **II. ASSUMPTIONS AND INTENT**

The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System rests upon several assumptions common to successful statewide comprehensive articulation agreements. The primary assumption is that institutions recognize the professional integrity of other public post-secondary institutions that are regionally accredited for college transfer programs. All courses designated as approved for college transfer under this agreement will be taught by faculty who meet Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges credential requirements. A secondary assumption is that sufficient commonality exists in the lower-division general education requirements currently offered among all universities to develop a common general education component at the community colleges for the purpose of transfer.

The general education transfer core is similar to each institution's lower-division general education requirements but is not identical in that specific courses may differ. The underlying concept is that competencies and understandings developed by general education programs as a whole are more important than individual courses; therefore, the block transfer of a core is important. The general education requirements of the receiving institutions remain in effect for all students not participating in this comprehensive articulation agreement; any upper-division general education requirements and graduation requirements remain unaffected by this agreement. Institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements serve as the starting point for determining specific general education courses in each baccalaureate major. The specific lower-level courses required for each major are the subject of the pre-majors developed by joint discipline committees. The purpose and history are provided in Appendix B.

### III. POLICIES

The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) applies to all fifty-eight North Carolina community colleges and all sixteen constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. The CAA is applicable to all North Carolina community college students who have completed the 44-hour general education core or graduated with an A.A. or A.S. degree and transfer to a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina. The regulations for implementation of the CAA were originally approved by the Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges. The Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC) oversees refinements of the regulations and minor changes. Significant changes will be brought to the Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges for review at the discretion of the respective Presidents of The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System. The TAC Procedures are provided in Appendix C.

Since the CAA was first established, the state of North Carolina has encouraged high school students to maximize their time by taking college coursework under initiatives including, but not limited to: Huskins courses; Dual Enrollment; Learn and Earn high schools; and Learn and Earn Online. The CAA policies extend to high school students taking college coursework through the NC Community College System and/or the constituent universities of the University of North Carolina.

#### **A. Transfer Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Authority to interpret the CAA policy rests with the TAC. The TAC is an eight-member committee appointed by the Presidents of the North Carolina Community College System and The University of North Carolina. Questions concerning the CAA policy interpretations should be directed to the appropriate system's chief academic officer with an explanation of the institutional policy that may (appear to) be in conflict with CAA policy. The chief academic officer will forward unresolved questions to the TAC for interpretation.

Questions about the transferability of the course work under the CAA or any proposed changes to the policies, the general education core, or pre-majors must be addressed by the TAC. Changes to curriculum standards for the associate in arts, associate in science, and the associate in fine arts degree programs require the approval of the governing boards of both systems.

#### **B. Transfer Assured Admissions Policy (TAAP)**

The CAA addresses the admission of community college graduates to UNC institutions and the transfer of credits between institutions within the North Carolina Community College System and institutions within The University of North Carolina.

The CAA assures admission to one of the 16 UNC institutions with the following stipulations:

- Admission is not assured to a specific campus or specific program or major.
- Students must have graduated from a North Carolina community college with an associate in arts or associate in science degree.
- Students must meet all requirements of the CAA.
- Students must have an overall GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, as calculated by the college from which they graduated, and a grade of "C" or better in

all CAA courses.

- Students must be academically eligible for re-admission to the last institution attended.
- Students must meet judicial requirements of the institution to which they apply.
- Students must meet all application requirements at the receiving institution including the submission of all required documentation by stated deadlines.

If a student is denied admission to a UNC institution, then he or she will receive a letter from that institution directing the student to the College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC) website. At the CFNC website (CFNC.org), the student will be presented with the conditions of the TAAP (specified above), and if these conditions are met, the student will be given information regarding space availability and contacts within the UNC system. The student should contact those institutions to get specific information about admissions and available majors.

If the previous steps do not result in admission to a UNC institution, then the student should contact the CFNC Resource Center at 1-866-866-CFNC.

### **C. CAA Grievance Policy**

If a transfer student perceives that the terms of the CAA have not been honored, he or she may follow the CAA Grievance Procedure as outlined in Appendix E.

## **IV. REGULATIONS**

### **A. Transfer of Credits**

The CAA establishes the procedures governing the transfer of credits for students who transfer from a North Carolina Community College to a constituent institution of The University of North Carolina. The CAA does not address admission to a specific institution or to a specific major within an institution.

#### **1. Eligibility**

To be eligible for the transfer of credits under the CAA, the student must graduate from the community college with an Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree or have completed the 44-hour general education core as defined below and have an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale and a grade of "C" or better in all CAA courses.

#### **2. Definition of the 44-hour General Education Core**

The associate in arts and associate in science degree programs in the North Carolina Community College System require a total of 64-65 semester hours credit for graduation (see Appendix F). Within the overall total, the community college system and the university have developed a general education core component. This curriculum reflects the distribution of discipline areas commonly included in institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree.

The general education core includes study in the areas of English composition, humanities and fine arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences. Within the core, community colleges must include opportunities for the achievement of competence in reading, writing,

oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic computer use. Students must meet the receiving university's foreign language and/or health and physical education requirements, if applicable, prior to or after transfer to the senior institution. The semester hours credit (SHC) distribution of the general education core is as follows:

**English Composition (6 SHC)**

Two English composition courses are required.

**Humanities/Fine Arts (9-12 SHC)**

Four courses (AA) or three courses (AS) must be selected from at least three of the following discipline areas: art, dance, drama, foreign languages, interdisciplinary humanities, literature, music, philosophy, and religion. At least one course must be a literature course. (3 SHC in Speech/Communication may be substituted for 3 SHC in Humanities/Fine Arts. Speech/Communication may not substitute for the literature requirement.)

**Social/Behavioral Sciences (9-12 SHC)**

Four courses (AA) or three courses (AS) must be selected from at least three of the following discipline areas: anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. At least one course must be a history course.

**Natural Sciences/Mathematics (14-20 SHC)**

*Natural Sciences* (8 SHC): At least two courses, including accompanying laboratory work, must be selected from among the biological and physical science disciplines. (A minimum two-course sequence from general biology, general chemistry, or general physics is required for the AS.)

*Mathematics* (6 SHC): At least one introductory mathematics course (college algebra, trigonometry, calculus, etc.) must be selected; the other unit may be selected from among other quantitative subjects, such as computer science and statistics for the AA. The AS requires one course at the precalculus algebra level or above; the other course(s) must be higher level mathematics or may be selected from among other quantitative subjects such as computer science and statistics.

The specific number and distribution of courses used to fulfill the requirement in each of these areas will be identified by each community college as meeting its own general education requirements. The courses will be drawn from those courses designated in the North Carolina Community College Combined Course Library as being appropriate as part of a general education core. This will preserve the autonomy of each community college to develop its own general education program, including those aspects that make its program unique. Students are directed to the pre-majors for specifics regarding courses and distribution (see Appendix F).

The general education core component, if completed successfully by a student with a grade of "C" or better in each course, shall be portable and transferable as a block across the North Carolina Community College System and from that system to UNC institutions, whether or not the transferring student has earned the associate degree. Under special circumstances, a university may choose to accept additional credit hours.

### **3. Procedures for the Transfer of Credits**

#### **Transfer of associate in arts and associate in science degree programs in the community college system**

- a. The CAA enables North Carolina community college graduates of two-year associate in arts and associate in science degree programs who are admitted to constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina to transfer with junior status.
- b. Universities cannot place requirements on students transferring under the CAA that are not required of their native students.
- c. Transfer students will be considered to have satisfied the UNC Minimum Course Requirements (MCR) in effect at the time of their graduation from high school if they have:
  - 1) received the associate in arts, the associate in science, the associate in fine arts, the baccalaureate or any higher degree, or
  - 2) completed the 44-hour general education core, or
  - 3) completed at least six (6) semester hours in degree-credit in each of the following subjects: English, mathematics, the natural sciences, and social/behavioral sciences, and (for students who graduate from high school in 2003-04 and beyond) a second language.
- d. Community college students who have completed the general education core will be considered to have fulfilled the institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements of the receiving institution.
- e. Community college graduates of these programs who have earned 64 semester hours in approved transfer courses with a grade of “C” or better and an overall GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale will receive at least 64 semester hours of academic credit upon admission to a university.
- f. Requirements for admission to some major programs may require additional pre-specialty courses beyond the pre-major taken at the community college. Students entering such programs may need more than two academic years of course work to complete the baccalaureate degree, depending on requirements of the program.
- g. All courses approved for transfer in the CAA are designated as fulfilling general education, pre-major or elective requirements (see Appendix H). While general education and pre-major courses may also be used as electives, elective courses may not be used to fulfill general education requirements.
- h. CAA courses taken beyond the 64 SHC of credit in which the student received less than a “C” will not negate the provisions of the CAA.

#### **B. Procedures for the Transfer of Credit for Special Populations**

##### **1. Transfer of general education core courses for non-graduates**

Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a public university, students who have completed the general education core with the proper distribution of hours, but who have not completed the associate degree, will be considered to have fulfilled the institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements of the receiving institution. To be eligible for inclusion in this policy, a student must have an overall GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time of transfer and a grade of

"C" or better in all core courses. Upon transfer at the sophomore level, a non-graduate who has completed the general education core should be advised at the university to take pre-major or cognate courses based on his or her chosen major.

Certification of completion of the general education core for non-graduates is the responsibility of the community college at which the core is completed. The transcripts of students who transfer before completing the general education core will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis by the receiving university. The transferring student who has not completed the core must meet the receiving institution's general education requirements.

## **2. Transfer of pre-majors or professional specialty courses**

Beyond the general education core, a program of study leading to the associate degree contains courses related to a student's major or program emphasis. Joint academic discipline committees developed system-wide guidelines for community college curricula that will prepare students for intended majors or professional specializations at the baccalaureate level. Statewide pre-majors for AA and AS degree programs have been developed for specific major fields (see Appendix G). If a pre-major requires or recommends 64-65 SHC, then it becomes incumbent upon the community college to make appropriate adjustments in its local graduation requirements.

## **3. Transfer of Associate in Fine Arts degree course credits**

Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a public university, a community college student who was enrolled in an associate in fine arts degree program and who satisfactorily completed the courses with a grade of "C" or better in all courses that are designated for college transfer will receive credit for those courses. The receiving institution will determine whether the course will count as general education, major, or elective credit. Because the AFA curriculum standard includes only 28 SHC for general education (see Appendix G), AFA students who transfer must meet the general education requirements of the receiving institution.

## **4. Transfer of Associate in Applied Science degree course credits**

Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a public university, a community college student who was enrolled in an associate in applied science (AAS) degree program and who satisfactorily completed the courses with a grade of "C" or better in all courses that are designated for college transfer will receive credit for those courses.

Articulation of associate in applied science degree programs will be handled on a bilateral articulation agreement basis rather than on a statewide basis. Under bilateral agreements, individual universities and one or more community colleges may join in a collaborative effort to facilitate the transfer of students from AAS degree programs to baccalaureate degree programs.

The TAC will maintain a current inventory of bilateral articulation agreements for AAS degree programs. These agreements will serve as models to encourage the development of new articulation agreements among institutions.

## **5. Transfer of courses on a course-by-course basis**

Upon admission to another public two-year institution or to a public university, a community college student who was enrolled in a community college course and who satisfactorily completed the course with a grade of "C" or better in the courses that are designated for college transfer will receive credit for those courses. The receiving institution will determine whether the course will count as general education, major, or elective credit.

## **6. Transfer of courses not originated at North Carolina community colleges**

Transfer credit for courses that originate at a UNC institution or independent college or university that is part of the CAA is acceptable as part of a student's successfully completed general education core or associate in arts or associate in science program under the CAA.

Transfer courses that do not originate at a NC community college may be used under the CAA with the following stipulations:

- a. Courses must be from a regionally accredited (e.g., SACS) institution of higher education; and
- b. Courses must meet general education requirements; and
- c. Courses may total no more than 14 semester hours of credit of the general education core.
- d. For courses not originating at a NC community college, if the courses are used to complete the AA or AS or the 44-hour general education core, the courses will be taken as a complete package. Otherwise, if 14 hours or less are presented without completion of the core of AA or AS, then the receiving institution will consider the courses on a course-by-course basis.

Advanced Placement (AP) course credits, awarded for a score of three or higher, are acceptable as part of a student's successfully completed general education core under the CAA. Credit for two successive courses can only be awarded with a score of five. Only one course of credit (MAT 271 for four credit hours) may be awarded for the AP Calculus AB exam with a score of three, four, or five; two courses of credit (MAT 271 and 272 for eight credit hours) may be awarded for the AP Calculus BC exam with a score of three, four or five. Students who receive AP course credit at a community college but do not complete the general education core will have AP credit awarded on the basis of the receiving institution's AP policy. Transferred-in courses from institutions other than North Carolina community colleges are not a part of this agreement.

All College Level Examination Program (CLEP) credit will be evaluated on the basis of the receiving institution's policy.

## **C. Impact of the CAA on articulation agreements in effect prior to Fall 1997**

Effective Fall 1997, the CAA took precedence over bilateral articulation agreements established between constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System but did not necessarily preclude such agreements. Institution-to-institution articulation agreements that fall within the parameters of the CAA and enhance transferability of students from community colleges to senior institutions are encouraged. Institutional articulation agreements conflicting with the CAA are not permitted.