

**STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM
ARTICULATION AGREEMENT in PENNSYLVANIA**

[DRAFT Last Updated: March 21, 2011]

**INTRODUCTION
TO BE WRITTEN**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted Act 114 of 2006, which added to the Public School Code of 1949, Article XX-C entitled “Transfers of Credits Between Institutions of Higher Education” (referred to in this Agreement as the “Statewide Transfer System”);

WHEREAS, Act 114 of 2006 requires all Pennsylvania community colleges and institutions that are part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) to participate in the Statewide Transfer System;

WHEREAS, Act 114 of 2006 permits independent and state-related institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania, as each is defined in Article XX-C, to elect to participate in the Statewide Transfer System;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted Act 50 of 2009, which requires institutions participating in the Statewide Transfer System to accept the transfer of Associate of Arts and Associate Science degrees into parallel baccalaureate programs and recognize all competencies attained within the associate degree program;

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 defines an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree containing a minimum of 60 college-level credits and designed primarily for transfer to a baccalaureate institution;

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 requires the Transfer Articulation Oversight Committee (TAOC), as established in section 2004-C of the Public School Code of 1949, to identify Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs for transfer with full junior standing into parallel baccalaureate degrees annually; and,

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 requires members of the Transfer Articulation Oversight Committee established in section 2004-C of the Public School Code of 1949, to identify modifications that may be required in existing associate or baccalaureate degrees to satisfy external accreditation or licensure requirement;

All Institutions participating in the Statewide Transfer System enter into this Articulation Agreement and mutually agree as follows:

1. The statewide program-to-program articulation agreement ensures that students who complete an AA or AS degree from a participating institution will have their coursework and credits transfer into a parallel baccalaureate program with full junior standing and without the need for a ~~course-by-course evaluation~~ for course-by-course equivalency.

Comment: The TAOC Steering Committee recommends this wording change. . See Jan. 27, 2011 Meeting notes.

2. ~~This agreement does not guarantee admission to a particular major college or university nor does it guarantee admission into a particular major at a participating college or university. A list of participating colleges and universities can be found at www.PAcollege-transfer.com.~~ Students are subject to the admissions and transfer credit policies of the participating institutions. The admissions and transfer credit policies for all of the institutions participating in Pennsylvania's college credit transfer system can be found at www.PAcollege-transfer.com.

Comment: The TAOC Steering Committee recommends this wording replace the previous statement in black. See Jan. 27, 2011 Meeting notes.

3. The AA or AS degree must include a minimum of 60 college-level credits designed and acceptable for transfer, not including developmental or remedial courses or career, technical or applied courses.

4. The transfer of coursework with a grade less than a C (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) in the AA or AS will be consistent with the policies of native students at the participating college or university.

5. Students and institutional personnel will be able to find out which institutions offer articulated programs by accessing a searchable database located at www.PAcollege-transfer.com. PDE will maintain this database through program information provided to TAOC by the individual participating institutions.

Comment: Proposed language as a result of the January 27, 2011 TAOC Steering Committee.

6. **Responsibilities of Associate Degree Institutions**

a. The AA or AS degree leading to a parallel bachelor degree will include the minimum number of credits and competencies of major-specific coursework as defined by the Agreement.

b. The AA or AS degree will meet the minimum requirements of the Commonwealth's Transfer Credit Framework ("Framework"), as defined by the Statewide Transfer System.

c. Any remaining AA or AS degree requirements will be accepted from arts and sciences electives designed and acceptable for transfer, not including developmental, remedial, career, technical or applied courses.

d. By awarding the AA or AS, the Associate Degree Institution is validating that the student has met the competency requirements outlined in the Agreement.

~~e. The Associate Degree Institution will note on the student's transcript that the associate degree earned qualifies for transfer under the Agreement.~~

Comment: The TAOC Steering Committee recommends striking this statement. See Jan. 27, 2011 Meeting notes.

7. **Responsibilities of Bachelor Degree Institutions**

a. The Bachelor Degree Institution will recognize all competencies attained within the AA or AS degree and accept a transfer student who has earned the associate degree with full junior standing into a parallel baccalaureate degree program.

b. All decisions made with respect to the transfer process shall be based on the principle of equivalence of expectations and requirements for native and transfer students.

c. A transfer student's admission into the parallel baccalaureate degree will be subject to the Bachelor Degree Institution's specific requirements for admission to that major and be consistent with such requirements for native students.

8. **Assessment**

a. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the TAOC will exercise responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreement and its implementation.

- b. PDE shall collect data annually from the participating institutions that will enable the Department and TAOC to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Agreement in fostering a seamless transfer process and the academic success of transfer students at the senior institutions.

9. Transfer Appeal Process

- a. In accordance with Statewide Transfer System, each Bachelor Degree Institution shall have a procedure through which a transfer student can appeal a decision that he/she believes is not consistent with this Agreement.
- b. The Transfer Appeal Process shall be published, at minimum, in the institution's catalog and posted to the Commonwealth's official website of the Statewide Transfer System, www.PAcollegetransfer.com.

10. Institutional Resolution of Disputes

- a. In the event that an Associate Degree Institution considers the decision of a Bachelor Degree Institution to be inconsistent with this Agreement, the Associate Degree Institution shall consult directly with the Bachelor Degree Institution and attempt to resolve the matter.
- b. If the institutions are unable to resolve the issue, the Associate Degree Institution may submit their concern to PDE for consideration by the TAOC Dispute Resolution Committee. The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will act according to the policies and procedures developed by TAOC as part of the Statewide Transfer System. The determination made by the Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will be binding upon the parties.

11. Implementation Date and Applicability

Having fulfilled the requirements outlined in the Program-to-Program Articulation Agreement, students transferring with an AA or AS degree from a participating institution will be considered by the receiving baccalaureate degree institution to have received adequate preparation in the field of study at the foundation level and therefore eligible to transfer as a junior into advanced major coursework.

Participating institutions will enact the Agreement in accordance to the timeline outlined by the TAOC, but no later Fall 2013.

Continuation of the agreement remains in effect until such time as all cooperating institutions of the Statewide Transfer System formally approve any revisions.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Articulation: The systematic coordination between institutions of higher education to ensure the efficient and effective movement of students among those institutions, while guaranteeing the students' continuous advancement in learning.

Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) Degree: A degree consisting of at least 60 college-level credits and designed for transfer into a baccalaureate degree program.

Foundation Coursework: Courses at a level of comprehension usually associated with freshman and sophomore students and typically offered during the first half of a baccalaureate degree program are referred to as foundation coursework. Such coursework typically does not have course prerequisites.

Native Student: A student who entered a given college or university without first matriculating at another college.

Parallel Baccalaureate Degree: A bachelor degree program in the same field of study and with similar foundation-level major-specific competencies as an associate degree program.

Receiving Institution: The college or university where a transfer student plans to enroll and to apply previously earned credit toward a degree program.

Transfer Credit: The credit granted by a college or university for college-level courses or other academic work completed at another institution.

Transfer Student: A student who enters a participating college or university after earning college-level credit at another college or university.

Transfer: The mechanics of credit, course, and curriculum exchange.

Advanced Coursework: Courses with advanced depth of content knowledge in the field of study and carry the expectation of more complex competencies identified in the expected student learning outcomes is referred to as advanced coursework. These courses often have prerequisites and are usually beyond the "Introduction to..." level.