

Student Support Services Policies

ARTICULATION AND STUDENT TRANSFER

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RATIONALE

The community college serves as an important and cost-effective entry point into higher education for baccalaureate degree seeking students. These students have a right to information concerning which courses must be completed successfully in order complete their degree requirements, and which are transferable to senior level institutions. The College is committed to enhancing the portability of student qualifications through the use of agreements with four-year colleges and universities as a means of ensuring that students are admitted to, progress through, and exit from such institutions in an efficient manner, based on prior learning obtained through courses completed at the community college. In order to facilitate access, mobility and progression from one level of education to another, this policy sets out the purpose, scope and guidelines that underpin articulation agreements as pathways for student transfer from the College to four-year institutions.

DEFINITIONS

Articulation - a process that enables students to progress from one completed qualification or set of courses to another with admission and/or acceptance of course credit toward a defined educational or career pathway.

Course equivalence - Equivalence recognizes equal value, amount, importance, corresponding and having the same meaning or result. It is unlikely that a course or qualification offered at different institutions will be the same; at best, they could be comparable.

Articulation Agreement – a document that formalizes arrangements between the community college and a four-year degree granting institution that provides for granting of credits earned successfully for or toward completion of an Associate degree toward the courses and credit requirements for a Baccalaureate degree.

Credit – the value assigned for the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and /or qualifications that reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a more advanced qualification.

Credit transfer – a process that provides students with agreed and consistent credit outcomes for courses or other components of a qualification (e.g. an Associate degree) based on equivalence in content and learning outcomes between matched qualifications (e.g. an associate and baccalaureate degree).

General Education – The educational foundation of skills, knowledge, habits of mind and values that prepare students for success in their majors and in their personal and professional lives after graduation. At HLSCC, the goals for general education are to impart knowledge, skills and competency in effective oral and written communication skills, information literacy, application of technology, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, quantitative and scientific reasoning, intercultural understanding and the ability to function in a pluralistic society.

General Studies degree – For students who are undecided or prefer not to choose a major, and who wish to transfer to earn a baccalaureate degree, this option provides the breadth and flexibility to explore a variety of subjects through taking courses in a number of broad fields, along with several credits of electives. Students may also be able to choose an area of concentration for which they may need to complete additional credit hours not required to earn the degree.

Transfer Guides – information that is designed to provide answers to students concerning what is needed to transfer to universities. The transfer guide may include general information concerning the student's responsibility and documentation needed in applying to senior institutions, the transfer course evaluation process and types of transfer credit, the comparability of specific HLSCC courses to those at other institutions, particularly those with which the College has Articulation Agreements, and the standards of performance that are expected in order for courses to transfer.

THE POLICY

SELECTING FOUR YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Formal articulation agreements may be initiated by the College, on behalf of the Ministry of Education or by a four-year College or University with interest in recruiting graduates and students from the College.

The College has a responsibility to its students and to the Territory to assess the status, reputation and financial viability of a potential partner with which an articulation agreement may be made by investigating such matters as:

- Compatibility of educational offerings with the development and economic goals of the Territory;
- The reputation of the College or University; including its accreditation status and the reputation or accreditation status of particular instructional programme majors;
- The relative affordability of Universities to the Government (scholarships) and families of students in comparison to other institutions with programmes of like quality.

PLANNING ARTICULATED ARRANGEMENTS.

Articulation with senior institutions must be by design rather than by default. That is to say, in addition to the successful

transfer of students to four-year Colleges and Universities, Articulation Agreements must focus on student transfer and acceptance to specific programmes of interest.

Planning for the articulation of courses between the College and Universities represents an intervention that must be designed not merely to improve student access, but even more importantly, to improve the educational and career success for students. For this reason, consideration must be given to such factors as the availability of pre-transfer support services and financial assistance.

HELPING STUDENTS PREPARE TO TRANSFER

For students planning to transfer, it is important that the comparability of HLSCC courses with those of colleges and universities with which the College holds articulation agreements be available to students in the form of transfer guides, and that students be advised in a manner that minimizes their enrolment in courses that are not likely to be accepted by Universities in which they are interested, or by most senior institutions (i.e. courses that are not comparable, or that are beyond the 60 credit maximum of the 120 required to graduate from Universities)

PARTICIPATION OF FACULTY

Successful articulation requires the comparability of courses, the acceptance of a course in place of a course offered, or in place of a programme requirement by the receiving institution. It is important to identify and reach agreement on the specific community college courses or requirements and the corresponding University courses or requirements that are the basis for the acceptance of transfer credits.

PREPARING EFFECTIVE ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

For articulation to succeed, agreements with senior institutions must address such areas as the following:

- identify the specific curricular areas and awards that will be addressed in implementing the agreement. This will ensure that steps are taken to address (and if necessary) to modify curricula content and outcomes that will ensure the acceptance of courses prepare students for transfer to the receiving institution.
- duration of the Agreement, at the end of which it should be reviewed for changes in articulated courses and programme requirements; its effectiveness in facilitating student transfer.
- feedback from the receiving institution concerning the performance of the HLSCC group at the institution in such areas as credits accepted, performance in comparison to native students in relation to courses in majors and time to graduation.

MAINTAINING AND EVALUATING ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENTS

Monitoring and periodic review of the Articulation Agreement must be undertaken to ensure that Agreements are suitable, are being effectively implemented, and that the case for continuing each Agreement is appropriately considered. Periodic review of Articulation Agreements is the responsibility of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

Once signed and implemented, it is the responsibility of the College to ensure that articulated courses remain comparable to those of receiving institutions. Soliciting information and confirming the continued comparability or changes to articulated courses with which the College has Articulation Agreements is the responsibility of the Dean of

the programme or of courses to which the Agreement pertains.

Maintaining successful articulation of course and programme requirements requires the monitoring of transfer student performance, particularly their performance in relation to students native to the University, in order to assess the adequacy of their preparation for advancing and succeeding at senior levels of the receiving institution. Soliciting information and bi-annual reporting concerning transfer student performance is the responsibility of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.

SIGNATORIES AND ENDORSEMENTS

It is the responsibility of the President to sign all agreements between the College and external agencies. Because the articulation of courses and programme requirements require the careful and ongoing comparison of the content of curricula, Articulation Agreements, while they must be signed by the President, must also be fully endorsed by the Dean responsible for the programme or course requirements, and by the Vice President responsible for Academic and Student Affairs.

PROCEDURES

The request for an Articulation Agreement may be initiated by the College to another institution or vice versa. Whatever its origin, all such agreements are the executing and oversight responsibility of the Office of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. The following steps outline the procedures for development of an Articulation Agreement.

DEVELOPING THE ARTICULATION AGREEMENT

- Step 1: Contact the Vice President concerning the possible Agreement. The Vice President will establish a file for the request that includes the name of the programme (s) or areas suggested for transfer, the name of the institution with which the Agreement is proposed, rationale to support such an agreement, quality indicators of the programme at the receiving institution, and the date of the request.
- Step 2: The Vice President will meet with the appropriate Dean and Department Head(s) of the instructional area(s) in order to explore the benefits, hence the interest and feasibility of such an Agreement. This review may address such items as benefits to the country, availability of financial support to students, cost to the student and/or the Government etc. This will enable the determination concerning whether Agreement should be pursued.
- Step 3: The first draft Articulation Agreement is prepared by the Vice President and is shared with the Dean and faculty of the Department (s) as well as with the President's Cabinet for review. Care should be taken to ensure that the content and terms of the Agreement include the items described in the Policy under the section that describes "Effective Agreements."
- Step 4: Comments and concerns, revisions and modifications generated during the review process should be reviewed by the Dean and Department Head in preparation for a scheduled joint review between the College and the external institution. Subsequent drafts are reviewed until both parties are in agreement concerning the content and terms of the Agreement.
- Step 5: If the Agreement is deemed appropriate to the Vice President, the final Draft Agreement should be presented with a recommendation for approval by the Vice President to the President.
- Step 6: If necessary, the President may discuss elements of the Agreement with the President of the external institution in order to confirm needed expectations and commitment concerning particular areas before reaching a final decision.

- Step 7: Once the Agreement has been approved by the College and the external institution, two original Agreements should be prepared and provided to the President for signing.
- Step 8: If deemed appropriate the Director of Public Relations, Marketing and Public Relations may arrange a signing ceremony and/or appropriate press release for media distribution.

OFFICIAL FILING AND DISSEMINATION OF ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

One original signed agreement should be filed in the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The second original agreement should be held by the external institution. Copies of the agreement should be distributed to the following:

Registry	Student Success Centre
Appropriate Dean	Electronic Files – “O” Drive
Heads of Relevant Instructional Departments	

The name of the Institution with which the Agreement has been reached should be included in the appropriate place on the College Website and in the College Catalogue. If the agreement addresses a particular programme area, this provision should be noted.

New Articulation Agreement should be communicated, promoted and marketed to students in such ways as the following:

- Announcements on Bulletin Boards that are regularly viewed by students
- Faculty and Student Advisors at Faculty meetings
- Employees via the Employee Newsletter
- Other printed venues such as posters, programme brochures, etc.