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HIGHER EDUCATION ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER AGREEMENTS

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You asked about other states' approaches to higher education articulation and transfer agreements. Specifically, you wanted more information about the policies in Colorado, Kentucky, Maryland, and North Carolina.

SUMMARY

“Transfer” and “articulation” are often used interchangeably. In general, an articulation agreement enumerates how course credit earned at one institution is recognized when a student transfers to a different institution. Articulation agreements typically include a general education core of classes in multiple disciplines that the receiving institution will recognize as satisfying its own general education requirements. Additionally, they may provide for guaranteed transfer to a four-year institution for students who meet certain requirements (e.g., earning an associate degree with a certain grade point average). They may also assure certain students of junior status at the four-year institution.

Colorado, Kentucky, Maryland, and North Carolina have similarly structured core course requirements. Each state requires students to take classes in five discipline areas: English and communications, mathematics, arts and humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and physical and biological sciences.

Colorado, Kentucky, and North Carolina allow students who have completed their associate's degrees to transfer to a public four-year institution with junior standing. Maryland's policy does not explicitly state that an associate degree holder may transfer with junior standing, but it does allow students to transfer up to 70 credits, or two years of undergraduate educational experience to a public four-year institution. This policy implies that a Maryland associate degree holder may transfer to a public four-year institution with junior standing.

COLORADO

General Education Requirements

Colorado's state guaranteed general education courses enable students to transfer general education course credits from one Colorado public higher education institution to another. To complete the state guaranteed general education core, students must take 11 courses (35 to 37 semester credit hours) and earn a C grade or better in each course. The state's guaranteed general education curriculum includes courses in five disciplines:

1. communication, including one introductory writing course and one intermediate composition course (six credit hours);
2. mathematics (three to five credit hours);
3. arts and humanities, including courses from at least two different disciplines (six credit hours);
4. social and behavioral sciences, including at least one history course and courses from at least two different disciplines (nine credit hours); and
5. physical and life sciences, including two laboratory courses (eight credit hours).

Students may transfer completed general education credits from one public institution to another.

Associate Degree Transfer

A student who earns an associate degree at a Colorado public community college, including completion of the state guaranteed general education courses with a grade of C or better in all such courses, will transfer with junior standing into any arts and science degree program

offered by a Colorado public four-year institution. The associate degree transfer equates to a minimum of 35 general education credit hours and 25 additional credit hours, for a total of 60 transferable credit hours. Because all liberal arts and sciences degrees are designed to be completed in 120 credit hours, Colorado's transfer agreement allows a transfer student to complete his or her coursework and earn a bachelor's degree within four years.

Here is a link to Colorado's Statewide Transfer Policy:
<http://www.cccs.edu/edservices/transferpolicy.html>

KENTUCKY

General Education Requirements

Kentucky's Statewide General Education Core requires transfer students seeking a bachelor's degree to complete courses in five subject areas to satisfy the general education requirement:

1. communications (six to nine credit hours),
2. quantitative reasoning (three to six credit hours),
3. arts and humanities (six to nine credit hours),
4. natural sciences, including at least one course with a hands-on project using scientific principles (three to seven credit hours), and
5. social and behavioral sciences (six to nine credit hours).

Kentucky has three levels of general education certification. A student is:

1. general education category certified if he or she completed some but not all of the five categories in the core,
2. general education core certified if he or she completed all of the core categories with a minimum of 30 unduplicated credit hours, and
3. general education fully certified if he or she completed all of the core categories with a minimum of 30 unduplicated credit hours and any additional institution-specific general education courses.

The three certification levels are recognized by all Kentucky community colleges and public universities. Students can transfer the level they have attained to another community college or public university.

Associate Degree Transfer

Students who complete their associate degrees and complete all required transfer components are (1) certified to have met all general education requirements for transfer to a Kentucky public four-year university and (2) able to transfer in with junior standing.

Here is a link to Kentucky's General Education Transfer Policy and Implementation Guidelines:

http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6D7A8159-16D8-4810-A0B6-3D8161157D73/0/Revised_GE_Transfer_PolicyImp_Guidelines.pdf

MARYLAND

General Education Requirements

Maryland requires students seeking a bachelor's degree to complete the following general education requirements:

1. English composition (three credit hours);
2. mathematics, at or above college algebra level (three credit hours);
3. arts and humanities, from two different disciplines, including speech, foreign language, or composition and literature courses (six credit hours);
4. social and behavior sciences, from two different disciplines (six credit hours); and
5. biological and physical sciences, including one laboratory (six credit hours).

Additionally, each public college or university may assign between eight and 22 additional credits from the above disciplines that students must complete for the general education requirement.

The classes a student takes at a Maryland public college or university will transfer to another Maryland public institution without the need for a course-to-course match. Courses that are designated as general education by a sending institution will transfer as general education even if the receiving institution does not offer that specific course or has not designated that course as general education.

Associate Degree Transfer

Students who have completed (1) their associate degrees or (2) 56 semester hours of credit with a cumulative 2.0 GPA cannot be denied direct transfer to a Maryland public four-year institution. Students are limited to transferring a maximum of 70 credits, or the equivalent of the first two years of a bachelor's degree program, from community colleges to public universities.

Here is a link to Maryland's policies for transfer students:
<http://www.mhec.state.md.us/preparing/stuguide.asp>

NORTH CAROLINA

General Education Requirements

North Carolina's Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) requires students to complete a general education core curriculum including:

1. English composition, including two English composition courses (six credit hours);
2. humanities and fine arts, including at least one literature course and courses from at least two other discipline areas, including art, dance, drama, foreign languages, interdisciplinary humanities, music, philosophy, and religion (nine to twelve credit hours);
3. social and behavior sciences, from at least three different discipline areas, including anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology (nine to twelve credit hours);
4. natural sciences, including at least two courses from biological and physical science disciplines (eight credit hours); and

5. mathematics, including at least one introductory mathematics course (six credit hours).

Students who have not completed their associate's degree may transfer core classes from one public institution to another if the student has completed the core and has (1) an overall GPA of at least 2.0 at the time of transfer and (2) a grade of "C" or better in all core courses. Such students are considered to have fulfilled the receiving institution's institution-wide, lower division general education requirements.

Associate Degree Transfer

Under the CAA, North Carolina community college graduates of two-year associate in arts and associate in science degree programs who completed their coursework with a grade of "C" or better in all core courses are guaranteed admission to public universities with junior status. The CAA does not guarantee admission to a specific institution.

Here is a link to North Carolina's Comprehensive Articulation Agreement:

http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa/articulation/102.51CAA_Modified_September_2008_v3.pdf

OTHER STATES

Here is a link to an overview of statewide articulation and transfer systems in all 50 states:

<http://www.wiche.edu/info/publications/PromisingPracticesGuide.pdf>

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