

North Carolina Community College Systems -North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (ICAA)

The 2015 Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA) between Signatory Institutions of the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities (NCICU) and the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) is intended to provide smooth transfer for community college students who wish to continue their education at an NCICU Signatory Institution. The ultimate goal of this agreement is the seamless articulation from the community college to the NCICU institution with minimal loss of credit or repetition of work. The Signatory Institutions which adopt this agreement do so for the benefit of the transferring student. The Signatory Institutions include: Barton College, Belmont Abbey College, Bennett College, Brevard College, Campbell University, Chowan University, Gardner-Webb University, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Johnston C. Smith University, Lees-McRae College, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Livingstone College, Mars Hill University, Meredith College, Methodist University, Montreat College, North Carolina Wesleyan College, Pfeiffer University, Saint Augustine's University, Salem College, Shaw University, St. Andrews University, University of Mount Olive, William Peace University, and Wingate University.

The ICAA rests upon assumptions common to successful 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 approved for college transfer under this agreement will be taught by faculty who meet the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) credential requirements. Another assumption is that substantial commonality exists in the lower-division general education requirements and courses currently offered at senior institutions and community colleges for the purpose of transfer.

The general education requirements of the receiving institutions remain in effect for all students not participating in this articulation 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 at the senior institution are determined by the senior institution and outlined in the baccalaureate degree completion plans published by the senior institution. Upper-division general education requirements and graduation requirements at the senior institution are not affected by this agreement.

Transfer of Credits

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

Eligibility. To be eligible for the transfer of credits under the ICAA, the student must graduate from the community college with an Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree, 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 ICAA courses. Students who do not complete the degree are eligible to transfer credits on a course by course basis.

Definition of General Education Courses and Pre-Major Courses. The Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degree programs in the North Carolina Community College System require a total of sixty or sixty-one semester hours credit for graduation and are transferable to Signatory Institution of North Carolina

Independent Colleges and Universities. The degrees are comprised of both lower-division general education and pre-major courses. The curricula reflect the distribution of discipline areas commonly included in institution-wide, lower-division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree.

The Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degree programs include general education requirements that represent the fundamental foundation for success and include study in the areas of English composition, communications, humanities and fine arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences. Within these discipline areas, 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 senior institution's foreign language and/or health and physical education requirements, if applicable, prior to or after transfer to the senior institution.

The AA and AS degree programs of study are structured to include

- the **Universal General Education Transfer Component (UGETC)** which includes a minimum of 30 semester hours of credit, and
- **Additional general education, pre-major, and elective courses** that prepare students for successful transfer into selected majors at the senior institution and bring the total number of hours in the degree programs to 60-61 semester hours.

To ensure maximum transferability of credits, students should select a transfer major and preferred transfer institution before completing 30 semester hours of credit at the community college. Each receiving senior institution will identify community college course equivalencies and publicize an equivalency course crosswalk to ensure transfer of credit uniformity and transparency. Additional general education, pre-major, and elective courses in the associate degree should be selected based on a student's intended major and the baccalaureate degree plan published by the senior institution.

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 Universal General Education Transfer Component and Other Required General Education courses will be drawn from those courses designated in the North Carolina Community College Combined Course Library as being transferable general education. This will preserve the autonomy of each community college to develop its own general education program, including those aspects that make its program unique.

Transfer of Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs.

1. The ICAA enables North Carolina community college graduates of two-year associate in arts and associate in science degree programs who are admitted to signatory institutions of the NCICU to transfer with junior status if they follow the senior institution's published baccalaureate degree completion plans.
2. Senior institutions cannot place requirements on students transferring under the ICAA that are not required of their native students.
3. Students who completes the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree prior to transfer to the senior institution will have fulfilled the senior institution's lower-division general education requirements.
4. Due to degree requirements in some majors, additional courses at the senior institution may be required beyond the general education courses and pre-major courses taken at the community college. Community college graduates of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree programs who have earned 60 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 60 semester hours of academic credit upon admission to a Signatory Institution of the ICAA.

5. 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.
6. All courses approved for transfer in the ICAA are designated as fulfilling general education or pre-major/elective requirements. While general education and pre-major courses may also be used as electives, elective courses may not be used to fulfill general education requirements.
7. ICAA courses taken beyond the 60-61 SHC of credit in which the student received a grade of less than a "C" will not negate the provisions of the ICAA.

Students not completing the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees. A North Carolina community college student who satisfactorily completes, with a grade of "C" or better, courses identified in the Universal General Education Transfer Component will receive equivalency credit applied toward the senior institution's lower-division general education course requirements, subject to the following distribution limit: maximum of 6 hours in English Composition, 9 hours in Humanities/Fine Arts/Communications, 9 hours in Social/Behavioral Sciences, 8 hours in Mathematics, and 8 hours in the Natural Sciences.

A North Carolina community college student who satisfactorily completes a transfer course that is not designated as a Universal General Education Transfer Component course will receive transfer credit for the course. The receiving institution will determine whether the course will count as general education, pre-major, or elective credit.

Certificate of Universal General Education Transfer Component Courses, Associate in Arts Degree or Associate in Science Degree Completion. Certification of completion of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree is the responsibility of the community college at which the courses are successfully completed. Transcript identification of Universal General Education Transfer Component courses is also the responsibility of the community college at which the courses are completed. The transcripts of students who transfer before completing the degree will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis by the receiving university. The transferring student who has not completed the degree must meet the receiving institution's general education requirements.

Four-Year Degree Plan for Community College Transfer Students. Beyond the Universal General Education Transfer Component courses, a program of study leading to the associate degree contains courses related to a student's baccalaureate major or program emphasis. Each senior institution will develop, publish, and maintain four-year baccalaureate degree completion plans identifying community college courses that provide pathways leading to associate degree completion, admission into the major, and baccalaureate completion. Students who complete the AA or AS degree and the degree plan tracks published by the senior institution, and who are accepted into that institution and into that major within four years of initial enrollment at the community college, will continue into that major at the senior institution with all courses fulfilling lower division general education and other degree requirements .

Transfer of courses taken in other associate degree programs. Upon admission to a Signatory Institution of the ICAA, a community college student who was enrolled in an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) 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. Students completing courses designated Universal General Education Transfer Component will receive equivalent general education course credit for those courses at the receiving institution. For courses not designated as Universal General Education Transfer Component, the receiving institution will determine whether the course will count as general education or pre-major/elective credit. Students in these programs who transfer must meet the general education requirements of the receiving institution.

Articulation of Associate in Fine Arts or Associate in Applied Science degree programs may be handled through bilateral articulation agreements. Under bilateral agreements, individual senior institutions and one or more community colleges may join in a collaborative effort to facilitate the transfer of students from AFA or AAS degree programs to baccalaureate degree programs.

Transfer of courses not originated at North Carolina community colleges. Transfer courses that do not originate at a North Carolina community college may be used under the ICAA with the following stipulations:

1. Courses must be completed at a regionally accredited (e.g., SACSCOC) institution of higher education;
2. Courses must meet general education requirements; and
3. Courses may total no more than 14 semester hours of general education course credit.
4. For courses not originating at a NC community college, if the courses are used to complete the AA or AS, the courses will transfer as part of the degree. Otherwise, if 14 hours or less are presented without completion of the AA or AS, then the receiving institution will consider the courses on a course-by-course basis

Transfer of Advanced Placement (AP) course credit. Advanced Placement (AP) course credits, awarded for a score of three or higher, are acceptable as part of a student's successfully completed Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree under the ICAA. Students who receive AP course credit at a community college, but do not complete the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree will have AP credit awarded on the basis of the senior institution's AP policy.

Transfer Credit Appeal

If a transfer student perceives that the terms of the ICAA have not been honored, he or she may follow the Transfer Credit Appeal Procedure as outlined in Appendix C of the [Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement](#).

Students Enrolled Prior to Fall Semester 2014

The 2015 ICAA is based on the community college AA and AS degrees which were effective for students beginning their enrollment at a community college for Fall Semester 2014. Students enrolled at a North Carolina community college prior to Fall Semester 2014 are subject to the conditions and protections contained in the ICAA in place at the time of their initial community college enrollment as long as they have remained continuously enrolled.