

An Agreement on Policies
for Students Transferring from Associate
in Arts and Associate in Science Degree Programs
in Technical Colleges to Public Senior
Colleges and Universities in South Carolina

Introduction

This agreement was written in response to a need to address problems of transfer from Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs in technical colleges to public senior colleges and universities. It is divided into two major sections. The first section, General Principles, focuses on broad responsibilities of sending institutions and receiving institutions which are basic to the transfer process, regardless of the students, degrees, or institutions involved. The second section, Policies, lists and describes policies which specifically apply to the transfer of AA and AS degree students from technical colleges to baccalaureate degree programs in public senior institutions. These policies do not apply to students in other degree or diploma programs in technical colleges. Except when a senior college indicates otherwise, such students who choose to transfer should expect to find that many or all credits earned in programs leading to other than the AA or AS degrees are not applicable to baccalaureate degree programs. Non AA or AS degree programs are designed with immediate employment rather than continuation into a baccalaureate program as their primary goal.

General Principles

Transfer policies should reflect a concern for both the welfare of students and the maintenance of institutional standards, and should be aimed toward the elimination of arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to the acceptance of legitimate course credits. The extent of a student's knowledge is more significant than the method by which it has been learned. However, credit for experiential education or for courses given by non-collegiate agencies should be awarded

only under firm guidelines and safeguards. Additionally, transfer credit should be awarded for courses taken at college level institutions that are not accredited only after fair and reasonable validation procedures have been followed.

Institutions which prepare students for transfer have the following obligations:

- 1) to assure a high quality of course content and instruction.
- 2) to assure that each faculty member meets standards of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- 3) to maintain accurate records, and to insure that grades, course content, and other pertinent matters are fully explained in catalogs and other materials which may be used to evaluate transcripts.
- 4) to provide a strong program of advising and counseling services which will assist students to select courses which will fulfill their transfer goals or, alternatively, to inform students that certain courses which may fulfill other needs are unlikely to receive credit in transfer.
- 5) to limit their course offerings to those appropriate to the programs, purposes, levels, and missions for which they are approved and accredited.

Institutions that accept transfer students have the following obligations:

- 1) to fully and accurately explain transfer policies in catalogs and related documents.
- 2) to be fair and consistent in the evaluation and acceptance of transfer credit.
- 3) to provide reasonable and definitive policies and procedures for determining a student's knowledge in required subject areas. Students at receiving institutions generally should not be required to duplicate material covered in courses at sending institutions. In cases where courses clearly are not equivalent but overlap, competency examinations should be available to

facilitate transferability.

4) to provide each transfer student with a written and signed statement in a timely manner indicating which courses will receive transfer credit and which courses will apply toward graduation in that student's intended program.

5) to provide orientation to assist transfer students in making the transition from the sending to the receiving institution.

Policies

While the "General Principles" provide meaningful and important universal transfer guidelines, the following specific policies are applicable to transfer from Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs in technical colleges to the public senior colleges and universities.

1) Prior to implementation of this agreement, the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education will rewrite the statewide models for Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs with sufficient specificity to assure that any student receiving either of these degrees will have completed a core of 54 quarter hours (36 semester hours) in courses in the arts and sciences. The core will be built around the various general education requirements of the public senior colleges and universities in South Carolina, and shall have sufficient flexibility so that, with appropriate counseling, any student will be able to successfully complete those requirements in the technical college. AA and AS degree requirements will include an appropriate distribution of courses among the humanities (including English composition and literature), social sciences, physical or biological sciences, and mathematics to insure that recipients of degrees have a breadth of basic knowledge upon which to build the remainder of their programs.

The SBTCE will prepare two lists of courses — one will designate those which are acceptable for inclusion in the core, and the other will designate additional courses which are designed for transfer to fulfill freshman or sophomore major requirements or to serve as electives. The contents of these courses shall be explicit and, to the extent possible, the course objectives will be defined.

Both lists of courses will be subject to the unanimous approval of the senior institutions by procedures appropriate to each institution. Each senior institution is encouraged to prepare a third list of courses which are not included on the approved lists for which it will accept transfer credit, and to make this list available to technical colleges with Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs.

2) The public senior colleges and universities will give full transfer credit to all students from approved Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degree programs in the technical colleges for courses included on the approved lists, assuming that such courses were completed with grades acceptable to the receiving institution. Acceptance of credit for courses not included on the lists will be dependent on their applicability to the program and institution into which the student is transferring, and will be at the discretion of the receiving institution. Acceptance of the listed courses will be without regard to the student's major; however, the receiving institution may require the student to fulfill all degree and major requirements, even if this means that he/she must complete more than the minimum number of total hours normally required for graduation.

3) Subject to completion of the AA or AS degree within 2½ years and immediate transfer thereafter, transfer students shall be given the option of satisfying freshman and sophomore requirements which were in effect at the receiving institution at the time they enrolled as freshmen at sending institutions.

4) Credit earned in or transferred from a technical college shall normally be limited to approximately half the baccalaureate degree program requirement, and to the first two years of the undergraduate educational experience.

5) Each public senior college and university shall include in its official catalog of undergraduate courses information clearly stating all prerequisite requirements for each major program. If a general institution wide common core is required for admission to all upper division work without regard to specialization or major, this core shall be clearly and separately stated to avoid ambiguity.

6) Each public institution of higher education shall designate a person responsible for coordinating transferability to assist in accomplishing the policies and procedures outlined in this agreement.

7) The Advisory Committee on Academic Programs will serve as the committee to periodically evaluate these policies and to formulate and recommend new policies as needed.

Endorsed by the Commission on Higher Education - 4/1/82