

PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM ARTICULATION AGREEMENT IN COMMUNICATION

In accordance with Article XX-C of the Public School Code of 1949, this Agreement ensures that a student who successfully completes an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree in pre-defined areas of the Communication Discipline at a participating institution can transfer the full associate degree into a parallel bachelor degree program in Communication at another participating college or university. The Communication Discipline includes the areas of Communication, Communication Studies, Human Communication and Mass Communication.

Full junior-standing will be granted to students who have successfully completed an associate's degree provided that:

- The associate's degree earned includes, at minimum, 12 credits of major-specific coursework as outlined under Major Requirements in this Agreement;
- The maximum number of major-specific coursework (credits) in the associate's degree does not exceed 50% of the major-specific coursework (credits) required by the parallel bachelor degree program offered by the four-year institution.

Students meeting these criteria will be considered by the receiving bachelor degree-granting institution to have received adequate preparation for a parallel bachelor degree and to be eligible to transfer into advanced coursework in Communication.

References to courses in all agreements designate competencies and are not to be construed as making a reference to a specific course at a specific institution. Course titles in the agreements are presented for guidance in advising students as to which coursework they should take even though the course at the student's college may not have the specific title mentioned in the agreement.¹

OVERVIEW

Communication as an academic discipline is a very broad area of study that includes specific academic concentrations including public speaking, interpersonal communication, small group communication, and intercultural communication as well as more applied concentrations in the areas of mass communication and media studies to name a few.

The National Communication Association (NCA) (www.natcom.org) describes the field of Communication as a discipline that focuses on how humans use verbal and nonverbal messages to create meaning in various contexts (from two person groups to mass audiences) across cultures using a variety of channels and media. The discipline is especially interested in the impact of those messages on human behavior.

Communication as a discipline includes:

- The study of communication in interpersonal relationships, groups, organizations and across cultures;
- Rhetorical theory and criticism;
- Performance studies;
- Argumentation and persuasion;
- Technologically mediated communication; and,
- Popular culture.

Areas of Concentration in the Communication Discipline

The study of communication can focus on a wide array of sub-disciplines. While areas of emphasis differ from one educational institution to another, some of the most common include:

¹ Adopted by TAOC and added to the agreement on April 11, 2012.

Classroom and Training Communication: The study of communication in the classroom and other pedagogical contexts.

Communication Theory: The study of principles that account for the impact of communication in human social interaction.

Electronic Media: The study of radio, television, media technology, and web design with streaming audio and video.

Family Communication: The study of communication unique to family systems.

Gender Communication: The study of gender and sex differences and similarities in communication and the unique characteristics of male-female communication.

Health Communication: The study of communication as it relates to health professionals and health education, including the study of provider-client interaction as well as the diffusion of health information through public health campaigns.

International and Intercultural Communication: The study of communication among individuals of different cultural backgrounds, including the study of similarities and differences across cultures.

Interpersonal Communication: The study of communication behaviors in pairs and the impact it has on personal relationships.

Language and Social Interaction: The study of the structure of verbal and nonverbal behaviors occurring in social interaction.

Legal Communication: The study of the role of communication as it relates to the legal system.

Mass Communication and Media Literacy: The study of the uses, processes, and effects of mediated communication.

Mediation and Dispute Resolution: The study of understanding, management, and resolution of conflict within intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup situations.

Organizational Communication: The study of processes used to analyze communication needs of organizations and social interaction, including the design of training to improve communication between supervisors and employees.

Performance Studies: The study of how performer(s), text, audience and context interact to create a performance.

Political Communication: The study of the role communication plays in political systems.

Public Address: The study of speakers and speeches, including the historical and social context of platforms, campaigns, and movements.

Public Relations: The study of the management of communication between an organization and its audiences.

Rhetorical Criticism: The study of principles that account for the impact of human communication between speaker and audience.

Risk and Crisis Communication: The study of how government agencies and organizations assess and manage risk and crisis situations, and how they communicate the nature of a crisis to stakeholders and members of the public.

Small Group Communication: The study of communication systems among three or more individuals who interact around a common purpose and who influence one another.

Visual Communication: The study of how visual data, such as architecture, photography, web, visual art, and the images of advertising, film, and television have an impact on audiences.

Given this broad range of potential areas of concentration, it is challenging to create an agreement that neatly captures the possible areas upon which individual students will focus their studies. Given the major areas of concentration offered at the colleges and universities that participate in the Commonwealth's statewide college credit transfer system, the most effective way to define this articulation agreement was to organize these sub-disciplines into two larger categories:

- Human Communication
- Mass Communication

It is understood the names of associate's and bachelor's degree programs in Communication at various Pennsylvania institutions of higher education may vary. The purpose of this agreement is to provide a clear common framework to allow students to transfer to an appropriate participating college or university where they can continue their education with full junior class standing and focus on their selected sub-discipline of Communication.

Not every participating college or university will offer an appropriate bachelor's degree in Communication for every student. Students will be responsible for investigating available options that best meet their unique needs, prior to completing the transfer from the 2-year to 4-year institution.

REQUIRED MAJOR-SPECIFIC CONTENT AREAS

Programs offered at associate degree-granting institutions will provide instruction that will allow students to acquire competency in the following Major-Specific Content Areas:

1. **Public Speaking – 3 credits**
2. **Major Content Categories – 9-12 credits**
 - a. **Human Communication**
 - b. **Mass Communication**

1. Public Speaking – 3 credits

Students should demonstrate a competency in public speaking as a foundational requirement across all major subfields of Communication.

Comparable coursework will reflect the following learning outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills by applying theory and the underlying principles of public speaking such as organization, evidence, and delivery in a public setting.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to assess audience and situation, and to appropriately adapt communication to both.
- Students will demonstrate the ethical use of rhetoric to inform and influence an audience.

2. Major Content Categories – 9-12 credits

Students should demonstrate an understanding of the foundational theories and principles associated with the study of human communication and/or develop skills associated with specific media related professions.

a. Human Communication

In the field of Communication Studies, the examination of human communication involves the study and/or analysis of the communication process within specific subfields of communication such as interpersonal, group, and intercultural communication.

Comparable coursework will reflect the following learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate a theoretical and practical understanding of the communication process.
- Understand the history and major disciplines in the field of communication.
- Demonstrate effective writing and research skills.
- Demonstrate critical thinking abilities by articulating an intellectual position through the spoken and written word.
- Demonstrate analysis skills through the application of theory to communication texts.
- Demonstrate communication competence within a culturally diverse society.
- Demonstrate the importance of ethical behavior.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills to be an informed citizen in a democratic society.

b. Mass Communication

Competencies in addition to those above are listed below. Additional competencies may be required for Pennsylvania colleges and universities that are accredited by a professional communication organization, such as the Accrediting Council of Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). Students are encouraged to seek counsel from their advisor when planning their transfer to these colleges and university programs. Some of the competencies below are based on the ACEJMC recommended skills.²

- Effective professional writing skills, including appropriate forms and styles.
- Effective creation of visual images, including appropriate forms and styles.
- Demonstrate basic proficiencies of tools and technology needed for their selected profession.
- Understand the history, theory and practical applications of mass communication.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the need for a commitment to on-going professional development in the rapidly changing in the world of communication.
- Understand the legal issues of communication: creating, distributing and consuming messages.
- Demonstrate the ability to use quantitative skills in a professional environment.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze and interpret media messages with the intent to build media literacy.

RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK COURSES

All of the participating institutions require students to earn credits outside of their major area of study. This coursework is often referred to as the General Education Curriculum or Distribution Requirements.

The Commonwealth's statewide college credit transfer system includes an advising tool called the "30-Credit Transfer Framework", or simply the "Transfer Framework". The Transfer Framework consists of six categories of foundation-level coursework that can be seamlessly transferred among the participating institutions. Students may transfer up to 30 credits from the Transfer Framework among the participating institutions and have those credits count toward graduation. See Appendix B or go to www.PAcollegetransfer.com.

The Framework categories consist of multiple course options. However, some Framework courses are

² Accrediting Council of Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) Principles of Accreditation can be found at <http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#top>.

more relevant to the field of Communication than others. Therefore, in addition to the Major-Specific requirements mentioned previously, students majoring in Communication would benefit greatly from completing the following coursework from the Transfer Framework:

- Category 1 – English Composition
- Category 2 – Public Speaking
- Category 3 – Elementary Statistics plus one additional math course
- Category 4 – Two Natural Science courses with a lab
- Category 5 – Two courses in Social Science
- Category 6 – Introduction to Literature plus one additional course in Humanities

Students are encouraged to complete the recommended courses in Framework Category 1 and Category 2. In Category 3, students should complete Elementary Statistics plus one additional math course from the Framework. In Category 4 students may complete up to two natural science courses with a lab.

The exploration of the Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities enhances students' academic frame of reference as a Communication major. Therefore, in Category 5 students are encouraged to work with an academic advisor to select appropriate Social Science coursework. In Category 6 students should complete Introduction to Literature and work with an advisor to select one additional course in the Humanities.

These courses are recommendations only. They are not required as part of the major or the articulation agreement. Students will not be penalized for not completing the recommended courses prior to transferring. The courses listed are merely suggestions that would complement and enhance the Communication major curriculum.

Table 1: Recommended Transfer Framework Courses for Communication Majors

Transfer Framework Category	Framework Allows Students to Take...	RECOMMENDED Framework Coursework for Communication Majors
Category 1	1 course (3-4 crs)	English Composition
Category 2	1 course (3-4 crs)	Public Speaking
Category 3	1-2 courses (no more than 8 crs)	1. Elementary Statistics 2. One additional math course chosen with an advisor
Category 4	1-2 courses (no more than 8 crs)	Two courses in Natural Sciences chosen with an advisor
Category 5	1-2 courses (no more than 8 crs)	Two courses in Social Science chosen with an advisor
Category 6	1-2 courses (no more than 8 crs)	1. Introduction to Literature 2. One additional course in Humanities chosen with an advisor

Appendix A: Program-to-Program Articulation Agreement for Communication

REQUIRED MAJOR-SPECIFIC CONTENT AREAS	Minimum Requirements
Public Speaking	3 credits
Major Content Categories 1. Human Communication 2. Mass Communication	9-12 credits
Minimum <u>Major-Specific</u> Credits = <u>12 Credits</u>	
RECOMMENDED TRANSFER CREDIT FRAMEWORK COURSES	Minimum Requirements
Category 1 (1 course)	English Composition
Category 2 (1 course)	Public Speaking
Category 3 (2 courses)	1. Elementary Statistics 2. One additional math course chosen with an advisor
Category 4 (2 courses)	Two courses in Natural Sciences chosen with an advisor
Category 5 (2 courses)	Two courses in Social Science chosen with an advisor
Category 6 (2 courses)	1. Introduction to Literature 2. One additional course in Humanities chosen with an advisor
Minimum <u>Transfer Framework</u> Credits = <u>30 Credits</u>	
<u>MINIMUM TOTAL FOUNDATION-LEVEL CREDITS = 39 Credits</u>	

Appendix B: 30-Credit Transfer Framework

Students who successfully complete courses from the approved categories below can have their credits transferred and counted towards graduation at any of the participating PA TRAC colleges and universities. Please be aware that certain majors may have specific requirements prescribed by external agencies. It is the student's responsibility to work with an advisor to select appropriate courses as they relate to the major.

Category 1 (3-4 credits)	Category 2 (3-4 credits)	Category 3 (min. 3-4 credits; max. 6-8 credits)	Category 4 Must include lab (min. 3-4 credits; max. 6-8 credits)	Category 5 (min. 3-4 credits; max. 6-8 credits)	Category 6 (min. 3-4 credits; max. 6-8 credits)
English Composition	Public Speaking	Foundations of Mathematics	General Chemistry I (majors & non-majors courses)	General Psychology	Introduction to Music
		College Algebra	General Chemistry II (majors & non-majors courses)	Introduction to Sociology	Introduction to Philosophy
		Elementary Statistics	General Biology I (majors & non-majors courses)	American National Government	Elementary Spanish I
		Precalculus	General Biology II (majors & non-majors courses)	Educational Psychology	Elementary Spanish II
		Calculus I	General Physics I (non- calculus)	History of Western Civilization II	Painting I
			General Physics II (non-calculus)	Principles of Macroeconomics	Elementary French I
			Anatomy & Physiology I	Principles of Microeconomics	Elementary French II
			Anatomy & Physiology II	U.S. History I	Drawing I
			Introduction to Astronomy	U.S. History II	Ethics
				History of Western Civilization I	Introduction to Art
				Contemporary Social Problems	German I
				Introduction to Anthropology	German II
				Human Growth & Development	Introduction to Literature (may also be known as Introduction to Poetry, Interpreting Literature, Reading Literature, Theses in Literature, Topics in Literature, Current Themes in Literature)
				Child Psychology	Survey of American Literature
					Literature of the Western World
					World Literature
					American Literature
					Survey of English Literature
					Introduction to Theatre

ADDENDUM
GENERAL STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM
ARTICULATION in PENNSYLVANIA
(Revised April 11, 2012)

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 community colleges in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) universities 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 course-by-course equivalency.
2. 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.PAcollgetransfer.com.
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.PAcollgetransfer.com. PDE will maintain this database through program information provided to TAOC by the individual participating institutions.
6. References to courses in all agreements designate competencies and are not to be construed as making a reference to a specific course at a specific institution. Course titles in the agreements are presented for guidance in advising students as to

which coursework they should take even though the course at the student's college may not have the specific title mentioned in the agreement.³

7. 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. 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.
- c. By awarding the AA or AS, the Associate Degree Institution is validating that the student has met the competency requirements outlined in the Agreement.

8. 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.

9. Agreement Revision and Assessment

- a. Once a statewide program-to-program articulation agreement has been approved by TAOC, no amendments to the agreement can be offered by any party within the initial six (6) months of the agreement. After that time, a TAOC member with a proposed amendment to an approved agreement should submit the change to PDE.

Amendments that are offered as clarifying or technical but do not alter the substantive portions or intent of the agreement must be forwarded to TAOC. TAOC representatives will have at least thirty (30) days to review, comment and approve or deny the proposed amendments.

Amendments that seek to alter the substantive nature or intent of the agreement in any part must be forwarded to the appropriate PAC for review and consideration. The PAC will then make a recommendation to the TAOC, and TAOC shall approve or deny the proposed amendments.⁴

- b. PDE and TAOC will exercise responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreement and its implementation.
- c. 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.

10. Transfer Appeal Process

- a. In accordance with Pennsylvania's 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.

11. Institutional Resolution of Disputes

³ Adopted by TAOC and added to the agreement on April 11, 2012.

⁴ Approved by TAOC and added to agreement on August 18, 2011.

- 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.

12. **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 2013.⁵

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 aligning of curriculum between institutions of higher education to ensure the efficient and effective movement of students among those institutions.

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. 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 a comparable 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 process by which a student moves from one postsecondary institution to another. Also refers to the mechanics of credit, course and curriculum exchange between institutions.

⁵ Agreements approved by TAOC prior to August 31, 2011 must be implemented by the institutions by Fall 2012. Agreements approved by TAOC after August 31, 2011 but before May 1, 2012 must be implemented by the institutions by Fall 2013.

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...” or “Foundation of...” level.