

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS, RECORDS, SCHEDULING AND STUDENT AID

Articulation Agreements

(Legislative)

[Implementation Date: Upon Passage by the Senate]

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, Penn State has entered into numerous articulation agreements, principally involving 3-2 programs in the College of Engineering. A summary of the current articulation agreements that are in effect is provided in [Table A](#). With the reorganization of the Commonwealth Educational System, new college units were formed and they were encouraged to explore establishing articulation agreements. [Table A](#) also lists those articulation agreements that are reported by colleges/campuses as being currently under consideration. There has not been, however, any Senate-advised policy to guide the development, implementation and maintenance of these articulation agreements. Due to this recent interest in exploring new articulation agreements throughout the University, the Committee on Admissions, Records, Scheduling and Student Aid (ARSSA) believes that there is a need for a uniform University-wide policy concerning articulation agreements.

DISCUSSION

Articulation agreements bypass normal admission procedures and are generally understood to involve agreements between some Penn State program and some non-Penn State educational program or location. Such agreements might be to admit students from the non-Penn State location if some pre-specified stipulations are met, to agree to transfer courses in a block, or otherwise to encourage movement from the other program to Penn State.

Articulation agreements should be viewed as a component of Penn State's academic advising system. There is a multitude of reasons for why a student might begin his/her college studies at some non-Penn State location and then complete them by earning a Penn State degree. The articulation agreement provides a procedure for these students, including an outline of the most appropriate courses to schedule, to pursue a plan to matriculate at Penn State and complete a Penn State degree program. It is one of the University's programs that provide access to a Penn State education at any stage of a student's post-secondary education.

At the same time, articulation agreements must also serve the best interests of all members of the University community. Most importantly, the agreements must acknowledge those students who chose to start their college studies at Penn State. Students admitted to one of the University's academic programs through an articulation agreement must be held to equivalent, if not higher, entrance and admission requirements as are in effect for Penn State matriculated students.

The following is proposed to guide the development of articulation agreements between Penn State and other colleges and universities that are consistent throughout the University and equitable to all the constituents, both within and outside the University.

RECOMMENDATION

The Senate Committee on Admissions, Records, Scheduling and Student Aid recommends that the following becomes the articulation agreement policy for The Pennsylvania State University.

1. The Executive Vice President and Provost is the University officer responsible for administratively authorizing, extending, or terminating articulation agreements with other academic institutions relating to the admission, curricular offerings, enrollments, or awarding of degrees for academic programs and students at all college and campus locations.
2. Academic deans may propose to enter into, extend, or terminate articulation agreements with external institutions and agencies or with graduate and professional units within the University.
3. Proposals are to be developed after consultations with appropriate academic and administrative officers within the University, including other deans and appropriate faculty.
4. When an agreement is proposed with an institution that is located within the geographic service area of a Penn State campus, the dean/CEO of that campus must be consulted before an agreement is finalized. An articulation agreement should not have a negative impact on any Penn State program or campus in terms of enrollment.
5. Whenever appropriate, articulation agreements shall include the provision for multiple campuses and colleges of the University to participate in the agreement.
6. All academic and administrative policies of the University will be honored in the proposed articulation agreement. This includes, but is not limited to, Policy 42-82, Credit by Transfer from Other Institutions-Accredited U.S. Institutions, which stipulates that course work completed at an accredited college or university may be evaluated for transfer credit if passed with a grade equivalent to A, B, or C at this University and useful to the candidate's program of study at this University. As such, if an articulation agreement is using a block grant approach, only courses with a C or better will become a part of the student's Penn State academic record. An articulation agreement should not have a negative impact on any Penn State program or campus in terms of academic quality.
7. When a student is admitted to the University through an articulation agreement, the entrance and admission requirements for enrollment in a college and entrance to a major will be no less than those in effect at the time for Penn State matriculated students.
8. The Undergraduate Admissions Office will evaluate the application and scholastic credentials for students seeking undergraduate entry to the University through an articulation agreement.
9. Articulation agreements involving undergraduate students shall be subject to a review by ARSSA before being authorized by the Executive Vice President and Provost. Articulation agreements involving graduate students shall be subject to a review by the Graduate Council before being authorized by the Executive Vice President and Provost.
10. Once established, articulation agreements should be reviewed periodically for viability by the sponsoring unit, approximately every five years.
11. A register of authorized articulation agreements will be maintained by the Vice Provost and Dean for Enrollment Management and Administration.
12. Articulation agreements authorized prior to the approval and implementation of these recommendations shall be reviewed and, if necessary, modified to ensure that they are in accord with this policy.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES

1. All requests for establishing, renewing, or terminating articulation agreements are forwarded to the Vice Provost and Dean for Enrollment Management and Administration. The Dean sponsoring the articulation agreement includes the proposal and supporting documentation, as well as recommendations resulting from consultations with other units of Penn State.

2. Proposals are reviewed in terms of:
 - a. Rationale for the proposed articulation agreement.
 - b. Description of how the agreement may be renewed or terminated.
 - c. Estimate of the number of students transferring to Penn State annually.
 - d. Admission requirements and transfer of academic credits.
 - e. Advising and special services at both the non-Penn State location and at Penn State, if appropriate.
 - f. Impact of the agreement, if any, on other programs, colleges and campuses of the University, including evidence of consultation within Penn State.
3. The Vice Provost and Dean for Enrollment Management and Administration forwards the proposal to ARSSA or the Graduate Council for a review and recommendation.
4. The Vice Provost and Dean for Enrollment Management and Administration forwards a recommendation to the Executive Vice President and Provost for final authorization.

RATIONALE

It seems prudent to develop a uniform articulation agreement policy for the multiple campuses and colleges of the University that seek to establish such agreements. The proposed policy assures, through an adequate consultation procedure, that the articulation agreement will serve the best interests of all campuses and colleges. An articulation agreement should not have a negative impact on any Penn State program or campus in terms of enrollment or academic quality but should be made from the perspective that it will enhance the University. A single articulation agreement policy will serve to ensure that such agreements are developed and administered in a consistent manner across the many academic units of the University.

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