

PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM ARTICULATION AGREEMENT FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Introduction

The articulation agreement for foreign language learning at the college level presented herein is based on two important initiatives introduced by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): The ACTFL National Standards and the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. These documents have reshaped the teaching of foreign languages and have also guided the assessment of language proficiency.

Efforts to introduce the ACTFL National Standards into the foreign language landscape began with financial aid from the Department of Education and the collaboration of ACTFL and its affiliated professional organizations. A working team put together the National Standards that were initially presented for review at a conference in Baltimore in 1994 (Brown, 1995) and finally released in 1996 (LeLoup & Ponteiro, 1997).

According to ACTFL (1996), the National Standards are ideal parameters to be used in combination with locally developed criteria to gauge foreign language gains over time. On the other hand, the Proficiency Guidelines are broad descriptions based largely on the linguistic levels implemented by the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) and have been adjusted for academic purposes (Breiner-Sanders, Swender, & Terry, 2002).

Both the National Standards and the Proficiency Guidelines have influenced the way foreign language professionals view language learning and assessment. With course objectives and clear-cut measures of improvement in mind, instructional and assessment procedures may be created to achieve the ACTFL Standards in weaker curricular areas (LeLoup & Ponteiro, 1997).

The underlying purpose of the ACTFL Standards is to measure what the students know and can do with the foreign language (ACTFL, 1996) and the fundamental purpose of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines is to describe how well students should perform in the language they are learning (ACTFL, 2012, 2001). The ACTFL National Standards are presented in Appendix A and the Proficiency Guidelines for the Intermediate Level are in Appendix B. For a complete list of the Proficiency Guidelines, visit www.actfl.org.

Assumptions

This articulation agreement is also based on the following assumptions:

1. The foreign language curriculum at the Community Colleges and at the Four-Year Institutions in Pennsylvania is framed around the ACTFL National Standards and the Proficiency Guidelines.
2. The assessments of language proficiency are performance-based.
3. Oral proficiency, along with reading, and writing proficiencies are at the heart of foreign language programs at the Community Colleges and the Four-Year Institutions.
4. Students pursuing an Associate of Arts in a foreign language at a Community College may not have taken any language courses in high school.
5. The minimum level of language proficiency of a Community College graduate (60 credits) with an Associate of Arts degree in a foreign (Romance) language is Intermediate-Low as described by the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.

Foreign Language Competencies and Foundations

In accordance with Article XX-C of the Public School Code of 1949, a student with an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree in a foreign (Romance) language from an associate degree-granting institution in Pennsylvania who wants to pursue a parallel bachelor degree in a foreign (Romance) language at a bachelor degree-granting institution must be able to perform the following

learning outcomes at the Intermediate-Low level minimum in speaking, reading and writing. (See description of the Intermediate-Low level in Appendix B.)

1. Ask simple questions about *familiar topics using a variety of question words. (ACTFL 1.1 Communication)
2. Answer simple questions about familiar topics using sentence level discourse. (ACTFL 1.1 Communication)
3. Write ideas about familiar topics using simple sentences in the present tense. (ACTFL 1.3 Communication)
4. Engage orally in a simple transaction (i.e., order from a menu, request information, give directions, etc). (ACTFL 5.1 Communities & 3.1 Connections)
5. Demonstrate basic understanding of key products, practices and perspectives of the target culture. (ACTFL 2.1, 2.2 Cultures)
6. Identify main ideas from authentic materials presented for viewing, reading or listening. (ACTFL 1.2 Communication & 3.1 Connections)
7. Create new ideas orally or in writing based on previous information. (ACTFL 1.3 Communication)
8. Produce oral language clearly enough that a sympathetic listener is able to understand.
*self, hobbies, family, school, food, health, community (PSMLA, 2011)

Other Foundations

As a result of the General Education studies (Core studies), the student must be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of cultures other than the student's own culture. (ACTFL 2.1, 2.2 Culture; Comparisons 4.1, 4.2)
2. Present ideas in writing using specific protocols (i.e., MLA writing standards). (ACTFL 1.3 Communications)
3. Present information orally using effective communication strategies. (1.3 Communication)
4. Implement critical thinking strategies to solve problems and/or to create new ideas.
5. Demonstrate an interest in lifelong learning of the target language and its culture. (ACTFL Communities 5.2)

Appendix A: ACTFL STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING



COMMUNICATION

Communicate in Languages Other Than English

- **Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions
- **Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics
- **Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

CULTURES

Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

- **Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied
- **Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

CONNECTIONS

Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information

- **Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language
- **Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

COMPARISONS

Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

- **Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own
- **Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

COMMUNITIES

Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World

- **Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting
- **Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Appendix B: ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for the Intermediate Level

SPEAKING

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Intermediate-High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully many uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, particular interests and areas of competence, though hesitation and errors may be evident.

Intermediate-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance at that level over a variety of topics. With some consistency, speakers at the Intermediate High level narrate and describe in major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length. However, their performance of these Advanced-level tasks will exhibit one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to maintain the narration or description semantically or syntactically in the appropriate major time frame, the disintegration of connected discourse, the misuse of cohesive devices, a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary, the failure to successfully circumlocute, or a significant amount of hesitation.

Intermediate-High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although the dominant language is still evident (e.g. use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translations, etc.), and gaps in communication may occur.

INTERMEDIATE MID

Speakers at the Intermediate-Mid level are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture; these include personal information covering self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel and lodging.

Intermediate-Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions or requests for information. However, they are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs, such as directions, prices and services.

When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution.

Intermediate-Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to make utterances of sentence length and some strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. Because of inaccuracies in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, misunderstandings can occur, but Intermediate-Mid speakers are generally understood by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Speakers at the Intermediate-Low level are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information covering, for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, as well as to some immediate needs, such as ordering food and making simple purchases. At the Intermediate-Low level, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or requests for information, but they are also able to ask a few appropriate questions.

Intermediate-Low speakers express personal meaning by combining and recombining into short statements what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors. Their utterances are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech is characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Their pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are strongly influenced by their first language but, in spite of frequent misunderstandings that require repetition or rephrasing, Intermediate-Low speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, particularly by those accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

WRITING

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Writers at the Intermediate High sublevel are able to meet all practical writing needs of the Intermediate level. Additionally, they can write compositions and simple summaries related to work and/or school experiences. They can narrate and describe in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations. These narrations and descriptions are often but not always of paragraph length, and they typically contain some evidence of breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. For example, these writers may be inconsistent in the use of appropriate major time markers, resulting in a loss of clarity. The vocabulary, grammar, and style of Intermediate High writers essentially correspond to those of the spoken language. Intermediate High writing, even with numerous and perhaps significant errors, is generally comprehensible to natives not used to the writing of non-natives, but there are likely to be gaps in comprehension.

INTERMEDIATE MID

Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel are able to meet a number of practical writing needs. They can write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information in loosely connected texts about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. Their writing is framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. The writing style closely resembles oral discourse. Writers at the Intermediate Mid sublevel show evidence of control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. This writing is best defined as a collection of discrete sentences and/or questions loosely strung together. There is little evidence of deliberate organization. Intermediate Mid writers can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. When Intermediate Mid writers attempt Advanced-level writing tasks, the quality and/or quantity of their writing declines and the message may be unclear.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Writers at the Intermediate Low sublevel are able to meet some limited practical writing needs. They can create statements and formulate questions based on familiar material. Most sentences are recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures. These are short and simple conversational-style sentences with basic word order. They are written almost exclusively in present time. Writing tends to consist of a few simple sentences, often with repetitive structure. Topics are tied to highly predictable content areas and personal information. Vocabulary is adequate to express elementary needs. There may be basic errors in grammar, word choice, punctuation, spelling, and in the formation and use of non-alphabetic symbols. Their writing is understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives, although additional effort may be required. When Intermediate Low writers attempt to perform writing tasks at the Advanced level, their writing will deteriorate significantly and their message may be left incomplete.

READING

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

At the Intermediate High sublevel, readers are able to understand fully and with ease short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with personal and social topics to which the reader brings

personal interest or knowledge. These readers are also able to understand some connected texts featuring description and narration although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.

INTERMEDIATE MID

At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with basic personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge, although some misunderstandings may occur. Readers at this level may get some meaning from short connected texts featuring description and narration, dealing with familiar topics.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

At the Intermediate Low sublevel, readers are able to understand some information from the simplest connected texts dealing with a limited number of personal and social needs, although there may be frequent misunderstandings. Readers at this level will be challenged to derive meaning from connected texts of any length.

Retrieved from http://www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf on 12/01/2011

References

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- ACTFL (2001). Preliminary proficiency guidelines-writing. Yonkers, NY: ACTFL Inc.
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- LeLoup, J. W., & Ponteiro, R. (1997). *Meeting the national standards: Now what do I do?*. New York: New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED460610)
- PSMLA (2011), PSMLA Standards and Guide to Assessment: What to Teach and How to Test it! PA: Pennsylvania State Modern Languages Association, Inc.

APPENDIX C: Program Articulation Committee (PAC) Members

The following individuals served on the statewide Program Articulation Committee for this agreement:

- Anna Borger-Greco-Millersville University of Pennsylvania
- Georgina Elortegui-Montgomery County Community College
- José Francisco Moreno (co-Chair)-Delaware County Community College
- Norma George-Cheyney University of Pennsylvania
- Yolanda Hively-Harrisburg Area Community College
- Barbara Lyman (Provost; PAC TAOC Rep)-Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania
- Margaret Morales-Saint Francis University
- Joanne Michel (Provost)-Community College Allegheny County
- José Ricardo-Osorio (co-Chair)-Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

Appendix D: 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

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.PAcollege-transfer.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.PAcollege-transfer.com. PDE will maintain this database through program information provided to TAOC by the individual participating institutions.
6. **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.

7. 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.

8. 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.¹

- 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.

9. 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.PAcollege-transfer.com.

10. Institutional Resolution of Disputes

- 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.

¹ Approved by TAOC and added to agreement on August 18, 2011.

- 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.

11. **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 2013.²

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.

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.

² 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.