

PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM ARTICULATION AGREEMENT IN PSYCHOLOGY

In accordance with Act 50 of 2009, institutions participating in Pennsylvania's statewide college credit transfer system agree to the following policies governing the transfer of credit earned at a participating associate degree granting institution into a Psychology degree program offered at participating four-year colleges and universities with parallel bachelor degrees in Psychology.

Specifically, this Agreement ensures that a student who successfully completes an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree at a participating institution can transfer the full degree into a parallel Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree program in Psychology at a participating four-year college or university.

Full junior-standing will be granted to students who have successfully completed an AA or AS degree provided that:

- The associate's degree includes, at minimum, 15 credits of major-specific coursework as outlined under Major Requirements in this Agreement;
- The maximum number of major-specific coursework in the associate's degree does not exceed 50% of the major-specific coursework required by the parallel bachelor degree program offered by the four-year institution;

Students meeting these criteria will be considered by the four-year institutions to have received adequate preparation in the first two years of the parallel bachelor degree and to be eligible to transfer into advanced coursework in Psychology.

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

Psychology as a discipline has a number of diverse specialty areas. Despite this Agreement, the lack of a common curricular foundation for the major poses a challenge when coordinating curricula across a large number of independent institutions of higher education. Save for a very few areas of study (e.g., introductory coursework that exposes students to the major theoretical perspectives, coursework in research design and analysis, etc.), no other topics in the field are universally agreed upon as 'required' coursework for the major. What is agreed upon, however, is that at the undergraduate level the curriculum for a Psychology major should be a balance between exposure to a broad range of content areas and in-depth exploration of a small number of content areas or even a single content area.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has published Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (APA, 2007). In these guidelines APA addresses this balance of both breadth and

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

depth of knowledge. This articulation Agreement proposes a general structure based on the APA Guidelines that will provide a common baseline to allow students at associate degree granting institutions covered by this Agreement to transfer their associate degree programs easily to the participating four-year institutions. At the same time, this model provides four-year institutions the flexibility to identify the remaining requirements for the parallel bachelor degree programs at their individual campuses.

Critical to this model is an understanding that APA has identified three levels of competency within any given content area: Beginning, Developing and Advanced. See Appendix A. APA defines these areas as follows:

- *Basic-level Competencies* include “skills that students should acquire in introductory-level psychology courses such as general psychology and psychology of adjustment.”
- *Developing-level Competencies* are marked by “skills that should emerge as students progress through lower- and upper-division courses in an undergraduate psychology curriculum.”
- *Advanced-level Competencies* are “skill levels expected of students completing capstone educational experiences and nearing the end of a psychology major.”

To further clarify: “*basic* represents ‘retention and comprehension’, *developing* represents ‘application and analysis’ and *advanced* is associated with ‘evaluation and creation’.” (APA, 2008, p. 9.)

By completing an associate’s degree that contains a minimum of 15 credits as defined in this Agreement, in combination with at least 30 credits of foundation-level coursework from the Transfer Credit Framework (see Appendix B), students will possess the knowledge, skills and abilities required to enter a parallel bachelor degree program as a junior at a participating four-year institution.

Using the model provided by APA, students transferring under this Agreement will be expected to have earned an associate’s degree that includes a minimum of 15 credits in the content categories defined below:

1. **General Survey of Psychology** – 3 credits
2. **Major Content Categories** – 6 credits in at least two of four Major Content Categories
 - a. Human Development
 - b. Individual Processes
 - c. Learning and Cognition
 - d. Biological Basis of Behavior and Mental Process
3. **Research Design and Analysis** – 6-9 credits

Major-Specific Competency Requirements

1. General Survey of Psychology – 3 credits

Students shall attain Basic-level competency across all major subfields of Psychology.

Comparable coursework will include, at minimum, the following content areas:

- Survey of the major principles of psychology
- Research results
- Applications of contemporary psychology

2. Major Content Categories – 6 Credits

Students shall attain Developing-level competencies in at least two of the four Major Content Categories as defined by APA.

While the specific content may vary from one category to another, the following competencies have been identified as essential for Developing-level competency in a general content domain:

- Apply and analyze concepts, theories, and research in the general content domains;
- Describe the general experimental and/or non-experimental paradigms used to investigate behavior in the general content domain;
- Analyze how psychological research reflects scientific principles;
- Identify antecedents and consequences of behavior and mental processes;
- Predict likely patterns of behavior from context;
- Compare and contrast historical perspectives;
- Compare and contrast the assumptions, methods, and other elements of the major contemporary perspectives (Behavioral, Biological, Cognitive, Evolutionary, Humanistic, Psychodynamic, Sociocultural) in the specific subfield of study;
- Apply the overarching themes of Psychology to explain specific behaviors;
 - Interaction of heredity and environment
 - Variability and continuity of behavioral and mental processes within and across species
 - Free-will vs. determinism
 - Subjectivism vs. objectivism
 - Interaction of mind and body
 - Applicability of theories and measures across societal and cultural groups
- Debate the merits of each side of the overarching themes of Psychology;
- Apply relevant ethical principles, as addressed by the APA code of ethics;
- Detect and reject claims arising from myths, stereotypes, common fallacies, and poorly supported assertions regarding behavior; and,
- Apply a psychological principle to facilitate positive change in a personal, social or organizational behavior.

The four Major Content Categories are defined as follows:

a. Human Development

The study of Human Development is the study of continuity and/or change in psychological phenomena across the life-span. Within the broader field of Psychology, the study of human development has its own history, includes a specific set of methodologies, traditions, and perspectives, and approaches the study of any psychological phenomenon with a focus on understanding the ongoing interactions between an individual and his/her world.

The study of Human Development involves the examination and comparison of multiple theories (both within and across developmental time periods) and a focus on mutually influential (i.e., bidirectional) relationships between biological and ecological (e.g., cultural, historical, and environmental, both physical and social) factors.

Coursework in this category is linked not by specific content but by a focus on understanding the ongoing interactions between an individual and his/her world and the role of those interactions in the continuing development of the individual.

Coursework might focus on specific developmental time periods (e.g., childhood, adolescence, adulthood, etc.) or on specific areas of human development (e.g., cognitive development across the lifespan, social and emotional development).

b. Individual and Sociocultural Differences

Coursework in this area focuses on how the Person, Situation, or Person-in-Situation factors contribute to human behavior, cognitions and/or emotions. This includes coursework that focus on the broader social and cultural context of behavior.

Individual differences can also include an examination of Psychopathology, its etiology, classification, and treatment.

Examples of courses that might include such competencies are Personality, Psychometrics, Social Psychology, Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Abnormal Psychology and Cross-Cultural Psychology.

c. Learning and Cognition

Study in the areas of learning and cognition focuses on understanding the methodologies, traditions and perspectives within the traditional behavioral approach (classical and operant conditioning), and/or cognitive approaches to understanding learning, memory, higher-order memory processes (for example, problem solving and decision-making), and behavior.

Coursework in these areas will generally highlight the experimental underpinnings of the relevant theories and related research including the translation to practical applications and experiences.

Examples of courses that might include such competencies are Learning, Memory, Cognition and Introduction to Behavioral Analysis.

d. Biological Basis of Behavior and Mental Processes

Study in the area of biological psychology focuses on how biological events (such as physiology, genetics, and evolution) affect behavior and mental processes.

Coursework in this area would highlight the relationship between the biological and psychological processes by examining nerve system anatomy and physiology as it relates to problems of emotion, motivation, cognition, perception and mental illness.

Other topics typically addressed within this area would include the sensory systems, motor systems, memory and language.

Examples of courses that might include such competencies are Physiological Psychology, Biological Psychology, Behavioral Neuroscience and Sensation and Perception.

3. Research Design and Analysis — 6-9 credits

Students shall attain Basic- and Developing-level competency in Research Design and Analysis. The competencies described below are divided into two content areas:

a. Statistics

b. Research Methods

Institutions are at liberty to embed competencies from these two areas into the associate degree program however they choose. For example, one institution may develop two or more individual courses that meet the competencies outlined in each area. Another institution may decide to embed the statistical competencies in a statistics course taught by a faculty member in the Math Department and to embed the research methods competencies into a course(s) taught by a member of the Psychology Department. The specific course structures are not as important as making sure that upon completion of the associate's degree, a student has achieved the competencies listed below and is prepared to enter junior-level coursework in the parallel bachelor degree program at the four-year institution.

a. Statistics

The following competencies have been identified as essential for comparable coursework in this content area:

- Understanding the relationship between samples and populations
- Identification of levels of measurement
- Using frequency distributions to summarize data
- Identification and computation of appropriate measures of central tendency
- Identification and computation of appropriate measures of dispersion
- Computation and interpretation of z-scores
- Understanding and uses of the standard normal curve
- Identification, computation, and interpretation of appropriate correlation coefficients
- Interpretation of the proportion of variance accounted for
- Basic understanding of elementary probability
- Understanding of The Null and Alternative Hypotheses and hypothesis testing
- Computation and interpretation of the z-test
- Identification and understanding of Type I and Type II Error
- Computation and interpretation of the single sample t-test
- Computation and interpretation of the independent samples t-test
- Computation and interpretation of the related samples t-test
- Computation and interpretation of effect size
- Graphing results of experiments
- Using Statistical Software Packages (e.g. SPSS, SAS, Excel) to analyze data
- Computation and interpretation of the One-Way Within Subjects ANOVA
- Computation and interpretation of the One-Way Between Subjects ANOVA
- Computation and interpretation of the post-hoc tests
- Computation and interpretation of the chi-square tests for nominal data
- Computation and interpretation of non-parametric tests for ordinal data

b. Research Methods

The following competencies have been identified as essential for comparable coursework in this content area:

- Experience conducting a literature review
- Experience generating ideas and hypotheses for research
- Understanding of the assumptions of scientific research
- Identification and understanding of descriptive designs (e.g. case studies, surveys, naturalistic observation)
- Definition and understanding of correlational studies
- Understanding the difference between correlation and causation when drawing conclusions from research
- Understanding the difference between experimental and quasi-experimental designs (e.g. time series, non-equivalent control group)
- Definition and understanding of the experimental research approach
- Identification and understanding of Single IV Designs
- Identification and understanding of Basic Factorial Designs
- Identification and understanding of Single Case Designs
- Understanding construct validity and how to establish it in research
- Understanding external validity and how to establish it in research
- Understanding internal validity and avoiding threats to internal validity
- Understanding of research ethics/IRB
- Knowledge of various methods for manipulating the independent variable
- Understanding techniques for maintaining experimental control (e.g. randomization, matching, double-blind techniques)
- Understanding the difference between random and systematic error and the implications of each
- Knowledge of various methods for measuring the dependent variable
- Understanding the reliability of measures and how to establish it in research
- Experience running 'live' participants
- Experience conducting a post-experimental interview (debriefing)
- Knowledge of and experience with writing a research proposal
- Knowledge of and experience with writing a research report/APA format

Transfer Credit Framework

In accordance to Article XX-C of the Public School Code of 1949, the Commonwealth's statewide college credit transfer system includes an advising tool called the "Transfer Credit Framework". The Framework allows students to transfer up to 30 credits of foundation courses from one participating college or university to another and have those courses count toward graduation.

The Framework consists of six categories which include courses in English, public speaking, math, science, art, humanities, history and the behavioral and social sciences. To fully benefit from the Framework, students are advised to select a range of courses from all six categories as designated in the Transfer Credit Framework Policy noted in Appendix B.

Recommended Framework Courses for Students Majoring in Psychology

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.

Through the Transfer Credit Framework, the commonwealth's Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee has identified six categories of foundation-level coursework that is common among the participating institutions. Each category consists of multiple course options. However, some Framework courses are more relevant to the field of psychology than others. A list of highly recommended courses in each category is included below.

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 could enhance a student's academic frame of reference as a Psychology major.

With the assistance of an academic advisor, students are recommended to select the following Framework courses as part of their transferable associate degree program:

Framework Category	Framework Requires Students to Take...*	Psychology Majors Are RECOMMENDED to Take...
Category 1	1 course (3-4 credits)	1. English Composition
Category 2	1 course (3-4 credits)	1. Public Speaking
Category 3	2 courses (6-8 credits)	1. College Algebra or higher math 2. One additional math course
Category 4	2 courses (6-8 credits)	1. At least one biology course w/ a lab that focuses on human/animal biology 2. One additional science course w/ lab
Category 5	2 courses (6-8 credits)	1. One course outside of the area of Psychology 2. A second course outside of the area of Psychology
Category 6	2 courses (6-8 credits)	1. Ethics 2. One additional course

*Students are advised not to exceed the credit number indicated in each Framework Category. Credit requirements are presented as a range since actual credit number may vary by specific course and institution.

References

American Psychological Association. (2007). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from www.apa.org/ed/resources.html

American Psychological Association. (2008). *Teaching, learning, and assessing in a developmentally coherent curriculum*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, Board of Educational Affairs. Retrieved from www.apa.org/ed/resources.html

APPENDIX A

TABLE A1

Goal 1: Knowledge Base of Psychology

Demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

Outcome Areas	BASIC <i>retention and comprehension</i>	DEVELOPING <i>analysis and application</i>	ADVANCED <i>evaluation and creation</i>
Nature of psychology	Define psychology as the science that studies behavior and mental processes and the profession that applies that science	Distinguish the similarities and differences between the professional and scientific communities in psychology	Evaluate the influence of context in the evolving definition of psychology
Relationship of psychology to science	Explain how psychology meets the criteria of science	Analyze how psychological research reflects scientific principles	Evaluate psychological science as a means of understanding behavior and mental processes
Role of behavior in psychology	Describe behavior and mental processes empirically, including operational definitions Distinguish behavior from inferences about behavior	Identify antecedents and consequences of behavior and mental processes Predict likely patterns of behavior from context	Interpret behavior and mental processes at an appropriate level of complexity
Structure of psychology	List and explain the major research and applied subfields of psychology	Differentiate appropriate subfields to address specific research areas and/or assist in addressing specific behavioral concerns	Speculate about psychology's continuing evolution and refinement of subfields
Relationship of psychology to other disciplines	Identify the connections between psychology and other disciplines	Compare and contrast the assumptions, methods, and choice of problems of psychology with those of other disciplines	Integrate knowledge derived from psychological science with that of other disciplines
Objectives of psychology (Describing, understanding, predicting, and controlling behavior and mental processes)	Identify and explain the primary objectives of psychology	Compare and contrast the primary objectives of psychology	Evaluate the strengths and limitations of the primary objectives of psychology
Historical perspectives in psychology	Describe the key eras of the major schools of thought in the history of psychology (including their founders, assumptions, explanatory concepts, and methods)	Compare and contrast historical perspectives	Assess the relative importance of the major schools of thought in the history of psychology Defend a historical perspective

Table A1 (continued)

<p>Contemporary perspectives in psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral • Biological • Cognitive • Evolutionary • Humanistic • Psychodynamic • Sociocultural 	<p>Identify and describe the major contemporary perspectives of psychology</p>	<p>Compare and contrast the assumptions, methods, and other elements of the major contemporary perspectives in psychology</p>	<p>Evaluate the utility and effectiveness of contemporary psychological perspectives</p> <p>Describe how each perspective applies its findings to promote human welfare</p>
<p>Overarching themes of psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction of heredity and environment • Variability and continuity of behavior and mental processes within and across species • Free will vs. determinism • Subjectivism vs. objectivism • Interaction of mind and body • Applicability of theories and measures across societal and cultural groups 	<p>Identify the overarching themes of psychology</p>	<p>Apply the overarching themes of psychology to explain specific behaviors</p> <p>Debate the merits of each side of the overarching themes of psychology</p>	<p>Evaluate the appropriateness of scientific explanations of behavior and mental processes from the standpoint of psychology's overarching themes</p>
<p>General content domains of psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and cognition • Individual and sociocultural differences • Biological bases of behavior and mental processes • Development across the life span 	<p>Identify and explain basic concepts, theories, and research represented in the general content domains</p>	<p>Apply and analyze concepts, theories, and research in the general content domains</p>	<p>Evaluate and synthesize concepts, theories, and research in the general content domains</p>
<p>Role of ethics</p>	<p>Describe relevant ethical issues, as addressed by the APA code of ethics</p>	<p>Apply relevant ethical principles, as addressed by the APA code of ethics</p>	<p>Evaluate policies and procedures related to behavior and mental processes using relevant ethical principles, as addressed by the APA code of ethics</p>
<p>Career opportunities</p>	<p>Identify broad career opportunities associated with psychology at the bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels</p>	<p>Compare and contrast the credentials, skills, and experiences required for a career in psychology</p>	<p>Create an appropriate career plan related to a specialized goal</p>

TABLE A2

Goal 2: Research Methods in Psychology

Understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.

Outcome Areas	BASIC <i>retention and comprehension</i>	DEVELOPING <i>analysis and application</i>	ADVANCED <i>evaluation and creation</i>
Scientific method	Describe the basic characteristics of the scientific method in psychology	Analyze how primary behavioral research adheres to scientific principles	Design research that adheres to the principles of the scientific method
General research methods • Descriptive • Correlational • Experimental	Describe various general research methods, including advantages and disadvantages of use Distinguish the nature of designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not	Select and apply general research methods to address appropriate kinds of research questions Categorize research articles that employ methods permitting causal and noncausal inferences	Evaluate the effectiveness of a general research method in addressing a research question
Correlation	Define correlation	Interpret the meaning of correlational findings	Speculate about and evaluate the significance of correlational findings
Correlation vs. causation	Explain the difference between correlation and causation	Match research questions to appropriate method	Evaluate whether a specific research method warrants a cause-effect conclusion
Controlled comparison	Describe the role of controlled comparison in justifying a cause-effect claim	Analyze research claims to identify legitimacy of cause-effect claims	Develop research strategies that appropriately address controlled comparison
Research elements	Define hypotheses, variables, and operational definitions	Formulate hypotheses, variables, and operational definitions from research articles and scenarios	Deduce testable research hypotheses, based on operational definitions of variables
Experimental design	Describe experimental design strategies to address research questions	Compare and contrast different research methods used by psychologists Design basic experiments	Design appropriate experiments to maximize internal and external validity and reduce the existence of alternative explanations
Participant selection and assignment	Describe random sampling and assignment	Analyze the potential influence of participant variables	Design appropriate controlled conditions to minimize their effects, including random assignment to conditions
Design quality (internal validity)	Define validity and describe conditions that enhance valid findings	Analyze conditions that will enhance or detract from the validity of conclusions	Evaluate the validity of conclusions derived from psychological research

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Table A2 (continued)

Generalization (external validity)	Describe the relationship of research design to generalizability of results	Analyze the generalizability of research findings based on strengths or weaknesses of research design	Generalize research conclusions appropriately based on the parameters of particular research methods Recognize that individual differences and sociocultural contexts may influence the applicability of research findings
Reporting research findings	Apply basic APA standards and style in writing about research	Explain (in writing) the methods, results, and conclusions of a data collection project	Write all sections of a research report applying APA writing standards
Research ethics	Describe the basic principles of the APA code of ethics for research with human and animal participants, including the role of an institutional review board (IRB)	Adhere to the APA code of ethics in the treatment of human and nonhuman participants in the design, data collection, interpretation, and reporting of psychological research	Evaluate the contributions and constraints entailed in adherence to the APA code of ethics and appropriately adjust the research design Complete an IRB application
Body of evidence	Articulate how an individual research study addresses a behavioral question	Analyze differences across related research studies	Integrate findings from several studies to produce a coherent set of conclusions
Sociocultural context	Identify variations in behavior related to sociocultural differences	Apply sociocultural framework to research strategies and conclusions	Incorporate sociocultural factors in the development of research questions, design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation
Database skills	Identify and locate relevant journals and databases in psychology	Develop and adjust search strategies to represent adequate range of research	Create efficient and effective search strategies to address research questions
Statistical skills	Describe the differences between descriptive and inferential statistical analysis	Conduct and interpret simple statistics from research results and in journal articles	Evaluate statistical power in results by addressing effect size and confidence intervals
Statistical significance	Define statistical significance and its role in interpreting research findings	Distinguish between statistical and practical significance	Speculate about the implications of using the conventions of statistical significance in interpreting results
Limits of scientific reasoning and evidence	State how evidence is contextual and tentative	Discuss the reasons why empirical findings and conclusions may change or require adjustment	Justify the evolving nature of scientific findings

Appendix B: Transfer Credit 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 (Select 1 course)	Category 2 (Select 1 course)	Category 3 (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 4 Must include lab (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 5 (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 6 (Select no more than 2 courses)
English Composition	Public Speaking	Calculus I	General Chemistry I (majors & non-majors courses)	General Psychology	Introduction to Music
		Precalculus	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
		College Algebra	General Biology II (majors & non-majors courses)	Educational Psychology	Elementary Spanish II
		Foundations of Mathematics	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 can 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.PAcollegetransfer.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.PAcollegetransfer.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.²

² Adopted by TAOC and added to the agreement on April 11, 2012.

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.³

- 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

- 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.

³ Approved by TAOC and added to agreement on August 18, 2011.

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 2013.⁴

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.

⁴ 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.