

POLICY ON INTERCOLLEGE TRANSFER AND ARTICULATION AMONG WASHINGTON PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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The “Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation among Washington Public Colleges and Universities” (a.k.a. [Umbrella Policy](#)) was prepared in response to substitute [House Bill 790](#), passed in 1983. The document was developed by representatives of Washington’s public baccalaureate institutions, the State Board for Community College Education (SBCCE), and the Council for Postsecondary Education (CPE).

The policy was adopted by the CPE on December 4, 1984 and was endorsed by the public four-year Inter-institutional Committee of Academic Officers (ICAO) and adopted by the SBCCE (now the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges). The policy was adopted on February 18, 1986, by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB), successor to the CPE. WSAC replaced the HECB in July 2012 and now WSAC.

It is the policy of WSAC that the procedures involving the transfer of students and the credits they have earned will be governed by the statewide transfer policy and agreement titled “Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation among Washington Public Colleges and Universities.” The policy will be implemented and maintained through the cooperative efforts of the state institutions of higher education, SBCTC, COP, ICW and WSAC.

I. Introduction and Purpose

A. Intercollege Transfer

The colleges and universities of Washington have long recognized the importance of facilitating travel for students moving from one institution to another in pursuit of their educational goals. Working both directly, institution-to-institution, and through voluntary associations such as the Intercollege Relations Commission, the state’s publicly supported institutions and participating private institutions have established mutually acceptable guidelines and procedures to assist students in transition from institution to institution. The colleges and universities work constantly, moreover, to obtain appropriate articulation between educational programs, to monitor transfer practices, and to improve the agreements, guidelines, and procedures that govern transfer.

The public colleges and universities in Washington, and participating private institutions, recorded a formal agreement among themselves to establish and maintain the following policy on inter-college transfer and articulation. The statements which follow establishes the policies and procedures for improving articulation between institutions and facilitating the transfer of students from one college or university to another. This agreement is an expression of the mutual respect and cooperation which prevails among the institutions of higher education in Washington.

It is important to acknowledge that Washington has a higher education structure composed of public and private colleges and universities. A significant number of community and technical college students complete their studies for the bachelor's degree in the higher education private sector. Although the provisions of this statement apply only to transfer from a community or technical college to a public four-year institution, it should be noted that private participating institutions work closely and in similar ways to facilitate transfer from community and technical colleges to these institutions. The private participating institutions, including those represented by Independent Colleges of Washington, are commended for their sensitivity and efforts in this regard and are encouraged to continue in this pattern in the future.

B. Intercollege Relations Commission

A permanent interinstitutional committee on articulation and transfer has been established in Washington, titled the ICRC, a commission of WCHSCR. This Commission is composed of representatives appointed by their respective institutional vice president of instruction, provost or chief academic officer and representatives from WSAC, SBCTC, COP and ICW. It exists to develop sound recommendations for inter-college practices which directly affect students transferring between institutions of higher education in Washington.

The Intercollege Relations Commission has the following responsibilities:

1. Facilitating the transfer of students and credits between and among community and technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions.
2. Providing continuous evaluation and review of transfer degrees, programs, policies, procedures, and inter-institutional relationships which affect transfer of students.
3. Providing ways to resolve disputes regarding degrees, course equivalencies, and other transfer-related problems between or among member institutions.
4. Promoting articulation among the programs and curricula of member institutions

The Commission fulfills its responsibilities in the following ways:

1. By establishing and maintaining Associate Degree Guidelines for interinstitutional agreements under which community and technical college transfer degrees may be used to satisfy lower division general education requirements of baccalaureate institutions in Washington.
2. By reviewing policies and procedures affecting intercollege transfer and recommending changes when appropriate.
3. By sponsoring conferences, seminars and other activities that promote intercollege cooperation and articulation.

The Intercollege Relations Commission is convened at least twice during the academic year. Minutes of Commission meetings are distributed to higher education institutions and represented state agencies.

C. Definition of Terms

Academic Credit for Prior Learning: Is an umbrella term that includes credit granted for non-traditional learning experiences that can be shown through various means of assessment to be equivalent to learning gained through formal collegiate instruction. This includes non-traditional modes of learning and credit including on-campus course challenges, extra-institutional learning, prior experiential learning and credit by testing not defined as dual credit.

College Preparatory Programs with Exams: High school courses for which students may earn college credit through recognized standardized exams, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate Higher and Standard Levels, and Cambridge International A- and AS -Levels.

Concurrent Enrollment: A partnership between K-12 schools and postsecondary education institutions through which credit-bearing college courses offered by a public or private institution of higher education and taught by higher education faculty or appropriately qualified high school teachers, are taken by high school students who have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high school diploma. Courses may be offered either in high school or at a public or private institution of higher education, and earned credits are recorded on a college or university transcript, with the exception of career technical education dual credit. Career technical education dual credit is a concurrent enrollment program, however, credits earned through career technical education dual credit may not be recorded on a college transcript until a student enrolls in a public or private institution of higher education. Concurrent enrollment dual credit programs offered in Washington are running start, college in the high school (CiHS), and career and technical education dual credit (CTE Dual Credit).

Credit-by-Testing: Course credit earned through an on-campus test that is generally not associated with any formal preparatory curriculum. Examples include CLEP and DANTES

Current Institution Credit: Credit granted by a college or university for completion of its own courses and other academic work.

Sending Institution: College or university attended by a transfer student before transfer.

Dual Credit: Credit awarded through one of the six dual credit programs in Washington. These include Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge International (CI), College in the High School (CiHS), Career and Technical Education (CTE) Dual Credit, International Baccalaureate (IB), and Running Start.

Dual Enrollment: A student concurrently enrolled in two different colleges or universities.

Extra-institutional learning: Knowledge and skills acquired outside the institution and objectively verified through third-party certifications, industry-recognized testing/training and crosswalks. Examples include ACE training, industry certification and occupational crosswalks.

First-Year Student: A student who enters an institution of higher education with no college coursework completed after leaving high school. Note, a student that completes courses during the summer term immediately following high school graduation is still considered a first-year student.

On-Campus Course Challenges: Challenge examinations are sufficiently comprehensive to determine that the student has the same knowledge and skills as those students who enroll in, and successfully complete, the course. Credits are awarded and transcribed after successful completion of a course challenge exam. A student should have previous training, private study, work experience or other bona fide qualifications indicating the student has knowledge or abilities equivalent to course completers.

Prior Experiential Learning: Learning acquired from work and life experiences, mass media, and independent reading and study. Examples include life experience and portfolio

Receiving Institution. College or university to which a student has transferred.

Transfer Credit. Credit granted by a college or university for courses or other academic work completed at another institution.

Transfer Student. A student seeking their first bachelor's degree who enters a college or university with college level coursework completed at another college or university after leaving high school.

II. Transfer

A. Institutional Requirements

Each college and university have the responsibility and the authority to determine the requirements and course offerings of its programs in accordance with its institutional mission. These requirements and course offerings shall be published and communicated to students and the public. Colleges and universities shall treat transfer students and first-year students on an equitable basis. All students shall be expected to meet equivalent standards for regular admission to programs and to satisfy comparable program requirements.

Baccalaureate institutions shall notify community and technical colleges of changes in lower division course requirements for baccalaureate degrees two years prior to their implementation for transfer students and shall consult with community and technical college academic officers when significant changes are under consideration.

Once changes in lower division baccalaureate degree course requirements have been adopted and published, baccalaureate institutions shall allow a grace period of two years before the changes become effective for transfer students. This policy applies to lower division course requirements of all subdivisions of an institution (schools, colleges, departments, etc.).

B. Transfer Admission

Admission policies and specific program requirements shall be clearly stated in official documents. Transfer student admission will be determined following an assessment on the same basis as non-transfer students.

C. Transfer of Courses

College-level courses offered by regionally accredited colleges and universities in Washington shall generally be accepted in transfer by the receiving institution. In addition, some courses not generally transferable will be accepted as part of the DTA Associate degree. Information about the transferability of college courses shall be provided by all institutions through regular advising of prospective students and through college publications.

D. Transfer of Credits

The numerical value of credits shall be maintained in transfer. When a course is acceptable in transfer, the receiving institution shall grant to the student the same number of credits as originally assigned to the course. When translation is required between semester and quarter credits, the conversion to be used is 1.5 quarter credits for each semester credit, or 2/3 of one semester credit for each quarter credit.

Credit earned in transferable courses shall be granted without regard to the date at which the course was completed. In some degree programs, especially in scientific and professional subjects, students may be required to acquire current knowledge or to refresh their knowledge by repeating courses taken at a prior date. Credit will not be granted a second time for such repeated courses. This policy applies equally to current institution credit and to transfer credit.

E. Transfer of Degrees

The public community and technical colleges and baccalaureate colleges and universities in Washington have adopted an interinstitutional transfer agreement based on the Direct Transfer Agreement Associate Degree Guidelines. Under this agreement, DTA Associate degrees shall be accepted as satisfying lower division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree at the receiving institution. Students who complete a DTA Associate degree shall be granted junior standing upon admission to a public baccalaureate institution according to [RCW 28B.10.696](#) and shall generally be granted junior standing upon admission to a private participating baccalaureate institution.

This agreement is designed to facilitate transfer between community and technical colleges and baccalaureate colleges and universities. Students who enter community and technical colleges with clear intentions regarding transfer to a particular baccalaureate college, with or without a DTA Associate degree, are urged to plan their course of study by reference to the specific degree requirements of the college, university or academic program in which they intend to earn the Bachelor's degree. Program planning information shall be supplied to intended transfer students by all colleges and universities.

F. Transfer of Grades

The grades assigned in transferable courses by the sending institution shall not be altered by the receiving institution. Courses completed with a grade of 'D' or above shall normally be accepted in transfer, except at The Evergreen State College, where a minimum of 2.0 or 'C' is required for transfer. Grades below 'D' or 1.0 generally do not transfer. To clarify, a grade of D- or below does not generally transfer. Non-traditional grading practices require special handling, depending on the nature and circumstances of the program from which and to which a student is transferring, but receiving institutions shall take steps to assure all students equitable treatment.

G. Transfer of Professional Technical Courses and Programs

Professional Technical courses offered by community and technical colleges that are comparable to courses in baccalaureate programs or applicable to baccalaureate degrees as determined by the receiving institution shall be granted transfer credit. Up to 15 credits of coursework at the 100 level or above, that are otherwise non-transferable professional technical courses, may transfer as part of a DTA Associate degree. In addition, interinstitutional agreements have been developed which permit students in some two-year technical programs to apply their technical studies toward baccalaureate degrees. Information about such agreements and about the transfer of professional technical courses shall be provided by the institution in their catalogs or transfer guides. Professional technical program agreements among colleges and universities shall be encouraged.

H. Credit for Academic Credit for Prior Learning and Dual Credit

Academic Credit for Prior Learning credit is granted in accordance with a baccalaureate institution's mission and policies.

Credit by testing is limited by baccalaureate institutional maximum credit by examination policies and academic program requirements. CLEP and DANES are limited to the 15 restricted elective credit maximum in the DTA.

Credit for Prior-Experiential Learning is limited by baccalaureate institutional policies. Where credits are not regularly accepted, credit is limited to 15 restricted elective credit maximum in the DTA. Credit is awarded only for courses offered in the DTA granting institution's regular curricular offerings. All prior learning assessment HS21+ credits are awarded through prior experiential learning portfolio review and awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings.

Extra-Institutional Learning credit is limited by baccalaureate institutional policies. Where credits are not regularly accepted, credit is limited to 15 restricted elective credit maximum in the DTA. Credit is awarded for academic course credit. Credit for extra-institutional learning granted through standardized examinations or credit formula systems should be identified as such on the permanent record.

Course Challenges are limited by baccalaureate institutional policies. Where credits are not regularly accepted, credit is limited to 15 restricted elective credit maximum in the DTA.

Credit earned through College Preparatory Programs with Exams is limited by baccalaureate institutional maximum credit by examination policies and academic program requirements.

Credit for extra-institutional learning granted through standardized examinations or credit formula systems should be identified as such on the permanent record. An institution using such measurement techniques shall list the tests or formula systems in its college or university catalog along with the minimum score levels or credit formulas. Receiving institutions shall grant credit for extra-institutional learning on the same basis for transfer students as for first year students. The policies of receiving institutions on awarding such credit shall be stated in their official catalogs.

I. Limitations on Transfer of Courses or Credits

Transfer credit is not normally awarded for the following types of study or coursework: (1) courses taken at colleges or universities that are not regionally accredited, (2) non-credit courses and workshops, (3) remedial or college preparatory courses, and (4) sectarian religious studies.

Washington public baccalaureate institutions do not allow more than 135 transfer quarter credits or 90 transfer semester credits to apply toward bachelor degrees from all sources including credit transferring from another regionally accredited higher education institution, Running Start, and College in the High School and college preparatory programs with exams (e.g. AP, Cambridge, IB). However, each institution may also have institutional policies applicable to specific types of credit. This includes some institutional policies that state a maximum credit limit within the total transfer credit policy for academic credit for prior learning which may include but not be limited to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge International, CLEP, military credit through portfolio development and credit by testing.

III. Applicability of Transfer Credit

Acceptance of courses and credits in transfer means the credit is generally applicable to degree requirements of the receiving institution. When students transfer with a DTA Associate degree, general education courses taken in completion of that degree shall generally fulfill lower division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree. When students transfer without a DTA Associate degree, transferable courses will apply toward baccalaureate requirements in the same way as comparable receiving institution courses. All transfer students must satisfy the residence credit requirement of the degree-granting institution.

A. Course Comparability or Equivalency

1. Institutions shall identify, to the extent possible, transfer courses that are equivalent or parallel to receiving institution courses on a discipline-by-discipline basis. Information about course comparability shall be communicated to other institutions.

2. Transfer courses identified as comparable or equivalent to current institution courses shall be applicable toward baccalaureate prerequisites and requirements in the same way as the sending institutional courses.

B. Courses and Program Prerequisites and Degree Requirements

1. The determination of prerequisites and degree requirements, including minimum qualifying grades, is the responsibility of the institution awarding the degree. Each institution shall make public such prerequisites and requirements.
2. Provided students obtain minimum qualifying grades, transfer courses which have been identified as satisfying prerequisites or degree requirements shall be applicable toward those requirements upon transfer.

IV. Academic Records and Transcripts

Institutions shall keep a complete permanent record for each enrolled student. This record shall identify the student and include all courses in which the student was enrolled; the status in each course at the end of each term; grades earned; cumulative grade point averages; numbers of credits earned where applicable; the source of all credits granted; transfer credits; and any diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded by the current institution. Since The Evergreen State College uses a non-traditional evaluation and record system, its practices will vary somewhat from this description. Generally, a description of the grading system of the institution is included with each transcript.

V. Non-Discrimination Policy

All the colleges and universities of Washington maintain a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or use of a trained guide dog or service animal as published in official institutional catalogs/bulletins.

VI. Information Dissemination and Acquisition

Students have the right to expect fair and equitable treatment from Washington's public and private participating colleges and universities, both sending and receiving institutions. They have the right to expect reasonable efforts on the part of colleges and universities to make accurate and current information available. They have, in turn, the responsibility of seeking out current information pertaining to their educational objectives and for acquiring appropriate information when they change their academic plan. When a student changes a major or degree program, the student shall assume full responsibility for meeting the new requirements. Colleges and universities shall make every effort to help students make transitions as smooth as is feasible.

VII. Appeal Processes

A. Student Appeal Process

- Students who encounter transfer difficulties shall first seek resolution through the receiving institution’s transfer officer.
- In the event the transfer point of contact does not resolve the issue within two weeks, the matter will be referred to the Vice President for Instruction of the community and technical college(s) and the appropriate Academic Officer of the baccalaureate institution(s) involved. A decision must be determined within two weeks from receipt of the issue.
- Within two weeks. If the issue remains unresolved, then student may contact WSAC. The [role](#) of WSAC is to connect the student and institution(s) involved to reach a resolution. This work should focus within the framework of the *Student Rights and Responsibilities* document and *Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation among Washington Public Colleges and Universities* (a.k.a. *Umbrella Policy*) that reside in the *ICRC Handbook*.

B. Interinstitutional Dispute Process

In the event of interinstitutional transfer disagreements, institutions are strongly encouraged to engage with each other to determine a mutually agreed upon resolution. If the institutions involved are unable to reach a mutual resolution, the following steps should take place.

- If a mutually agreed upon solution cannot be reached within two weeks the dispute will be elevated to the Vice President of Instruction at the community and technical college(s) and the appropriate Academic Officer of the baccalaureate institution(s) involved for resolution.
- If the issue remains unresolved then the issue will be sent to an ad-hoc committee of sector representatives appointed by the ICRC Executive Committee. The Committee will draft a response and recommendations to the institutions involved upon completion of the committee’s deliberations.
- The institution(s) involved will respond to the committee within four weeks indicating actions taken in response to the committee’s recommendations.

VIII. Implementation and Revision of the Umbrella Policy

Specifications in this document are intended to be minimum standards for transferability to maintain institutional flexibility. This [policy](#) shall be implemented and maintained through the cooperative efforts of Washington’s public and private participating institutions of higher education through the leadership of ICRC and JTC.

IX. Publication of the Umbrella Policy

This policy shall be published and disseminated by ICRC, JTC, WSAC, COP, ICW, SBCTC, and Washington’s public and private signatory colleges and universities.

X. Evaluation of the Umbrella Policy

WSAC will monitor transfer issues referred to the committee appointed to review.