



Nevada System of Higher Education

2006  
TRANSFER / ARTICULATION  
CAMPUS REVIEW

September 2006

Prepared by the  
Office of Academic and Student Affairs

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# NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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## Executive Summary

Under the direction of the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs, a review of transfer policies and institutional practices was conducted in an effort to ensure that transferring within the NSHE follows Board of Regent's policy and is as seamless as possible. The campus transfer review focused on two areas 1) the existence of major-to-major articulation agreements, and 2) institutional compliance with Board policy. Generally, institutions fared well and are largely compliant with Board of Regents' policies on articulation and transfer. However, there is room for improvement.

With respect to articulation agreements, each path of transfer to the universities or state college is missing some major-to-major articulation agreements. For students transferring from:

- CCSN to UNLV there were 12 majors missing agreements;
- CCSN to UNR there were 2 majors missing agreements;
- CCSN to NSC there were 22 majors missing agreements;
- GBC to UNLV there were 11 majors missing agreements;
- GBC to UNR there were 2 majors missing agreements;
- GBC to NSC there were 22 majors missing agreements;
- TMCC to UNLV there were 10 majors missing agreements;
- TMCC to UNR there were 2 majors missing agreements;
- TMCC to NSC there were 22 majors missing agreements;
- WNCC to UNLV there were 8 majors missing agreements;
- WNCC to UNR there were 2 missing agreements; and
- WNCC to NSC there were 22 missing agreements.

All of UNLV's articulation agreements with CCSN, GBC, TMCC, and WNCC were out of date. The agreements were last updated as of 2004. UNLV is in the process of updating the agreements and will disseminate them to CCSN, GBC, TMCC, and WNCC for publication by December 31, 2006. Ultimately, UNLV, UNR, and NSC are to work in close partnership with the other NSHE institutions and lead the process of updating articulation agreements.

With respect to compliance with Board articulation and transfer policies, the institutions fare differently. For the universities and state college, UNLV must comply with common course numbering by December 31, 2006. UNR must complete a prescribed year-by-year course of study for all majors by December 31, 2006. NSC must complete articulation agreements with the community colleges for all majors, fully implement the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS), and create a transfer center and Web site by Fall 2007.

Since the review took place, institutions have taken action to improve upon the findings of the review. The specific actions are noted immediately following the initial review findings.

## Introduction

In the *State of the System Address* delivered on November 17, 2005, Chancellor James E. Rogers declared that the process of transferring from one Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institution to another will be seamless.

In our desire and effort to ensure that every student has the opportunity to obtain the best education from our System, we will guarantee that qualified students at either the Community Colleges or Nevada State College will have the right to go on to a university. The System will guarantee a seamless transfer into one of our universities. There will be no more problems with transferring from one institution to another. I guarantee it.

Seamless transfer is an important step in providing access to quality education for students who begin their postsecondary education at a community college and who desire to continue their education at UNLV, UNR, or NSC. To this end, the Office of Academic and Student Affairs conducted a review of NSHE institutions to determine if institutions are in compliance with the transfer and articulation policies of the Board of Regents. Specifically, the review focused on the existence and publication of major-to-major articulation agreements (also known as two-plus-two agreements) between the universities, state college, and community colleges. Articulation agreements identify the courses that should be taken at a community college and the additional courses that must be taken at the university or state college to earn a four-year degree within a selected program of study.

In January 2006, System staff provided to members of the NSHE Articulation Board a compilation of transfer-related policies of the Board of Regents and a list of Board approved majors for which articulation agreements must be established. In February and March 2006, System staff visited each institution to review institutional transfer practices and articulation agreements. At these campus visits institutional representatives provided written documentation as to how institutional practice complies with the Board policies, confirmed existing articulation agreements, and provided informational materials that are given to students interested in transferring to another NSHE institution.

This report includes recommendations as to how each institution can better provide for seamless transfer of students between NSHE institutions. The findings and recommendations herein are based on the verbal and written responses, catalog information, and other documentation institutions provided to demonstrate compliance with Board policies. The report also provides an update that lists actions institutions have taken in response to the initial findings and to improve students' transfer experience.



## **Board of Regents' Policies on Transfer and Articulation**

The Board of Regents established policies that govern the transfer of students within the Nevada System of Higher Education that are codified in Title 4, Chapter 14 of the Board *Handbook*. Each institution utilizes these policies in assisting students who transfer and in establishing institutional policies and practices. The following are the policies for which institutions were responsible to demonstrate compliance at the time of the audit. During the audit, System staff and the NSHE Articulation Board members reviewed the Board policies and proposed changes subsequently adopted by the Board in August 2006. Substantive changes are displayed in the next section of the report.

### **NSHE Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14)**

#### *Section 13. Transfer and Admissions*

*Transfer students to the state college and universities may be admitted under the following alternatives:*

#### *1. Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Business Degree Graduates*

*The primary basis for admission to upper-division study with full junior status of transfer students from the community colleges to the state college or the universities in Nevada shall be the associate of arts, associate of science, and the associate of business degrees.*

- a. Associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business graduates will have completed a minimum of 60 credits of baccalaureate level courses.*
- b. Baccalaureate level courses included as part of the associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree will transfer to the state college or the universities at a minimum as general elective credit.*
- c. Application of credits toward major or college requirements is the responsibility of the college and department in which the student is seeking a degree. Validation of course content may be required when lower-division courses are used to satisfy upper-division curricular requirements.*
- d. Completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, or the associate of business degree does not certify satisfaction of all state college or university lower-division requirements except for the lower-division general education requirements. Major-to-major or two-plus-two agreements should be in place between university and state college majors and the community colleges. They may be incorporated into academic majors within associate degrees. Other majors within associate degrees may be developed by the community colleges where no equivalent major exists at the universities or state college.*

*e. The receiving institution will evaluate all university and state college parallel courses attempted at the community college (and any other educational institution attended) and compute an overall admission grade point average in accordance with the institution's transfer policies.*

*f. If the overall transfer grade point average computed by the receiving institution is less than "C" admission is on a "probationary" status and all grade point deficiencies must be removed prior to graduation.*

## *2. Other Associate Degrees*

*a. Other associate degrees and certificates may be awarded by a community college for programs that have requirements different from the associate of arts, associate of science, associate of business, or a primary objective of transfer. Baccalaureate level courses, which are taken in such associate degree programs, shall be transferable to the state college and universities. However, students with these degrees may not be guaranteed junior status. Developmental courses will not be used to fulfill degree requirements in associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of applied science programs.*

*b. The primary transfer degree shall remain the associate of arts, with the associate of science degree providing a background for students who plan to transfer into four-year programs in mathematics, science, engineering, or agriculture. The associate of business degree is the appropriate transfer degree for students who plan to transfer to a four-year program in business. However, to provide for flexibility in program planning, "capstone programs" (programs designed on a two-year community college curriculum leading to the final two years at the state college or university and a degree) may be developed leading to a specialized bachelor's degree (e.g. Bachelor of Applied Science), with the approval of the Chancellor and the Board of Regents. These and other written agreements may be approved between community colleges and one of the universities or state college.*

## *3. Bachelor of Applied Science*

*a. The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS ) degree is a four-year occupationally specific degree that is responsive to the needs of the workforce. The BAS degree builds upon the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in those areas where a technical four-year degree is appropriate to meet expanding workforce requirements.*

*b. The degree is workforce-driven and designed in consultation with employers to ensure that the BAS incorporates the specific skills and knowledge required in the workplace.*

*c. The upper-level component of the BAS will include general education credits in addition to the workforce-specific courses of study. Because this degree is distinct from the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and the Bachelor of Science (BS), the general education requirements are not expected to mirror those required of the BA or BS.*

*d. Specific programs leading to the BAS degree may differ in emphases reflecting the particulars of the workforce component of the program. The creation of each emphasis*

*within a BAS degree requires approval of the Board of Regents.*

*4. Non-Associate Degree Admissions*

*a. Approved baccalaureate level credits, which have been completed, shall be transferable to the state college and universities at a minimum as general elective credit.*

*b. The state college and universities require an overall "C" average in all completed transfer courses attempted as a minimum standard for admission from a community college. The grade of "D" is accepted for transfer (provided the overall grade average does not drop below the prescribed "C" level) and counts toward a bachelor's degree in the same way as "D" grades obtained by students enrolled in the lower-division of the state college or universities. Credits in courses transferred with "D" grades count towards credit earned for a baccalaureate. However, it is at the discretion of the department or college at the state college or university offering the major as to whether courses with "D" grades in the major satisfy requirements in the major field.*

*c. Community college students should be strongly encouraged to complete their lower-division programs before transfer, but qualified students may apply for transfer at their own discretion.*

*d. An applicant who does not satisfy state college or university admission requirements upon graduation from high school must complete the equivalent of 12 semester credits in baccalaureate level courses with an overall "C" average or above at a community college or other accredited institution to qualify for admission as a freshman. These requirements are to be revised at the universities as follows: Effective Fall 2006, the minimum number of credits required is the equivalent of 24 semester credits. Effective Fall 2006, the minimum required overall grade point average is 2.30. Effective Fall 2010, the minimum required overall grade point average is 2.50.*

*e. Any student under academic suspension from a state college or university may attend a community college, and appropriate credits and grades earned are applicable toward satisfying the requirements for readmission to a state college or university.*

*Section 14. System Transfer Guide and Master Course File*

*1. A NSHE transfer guide or common course numbering master file shall be maintained by the Office of the Chancellor and published on the Web.*

*2. Each state college and university shall list and update the requirements for each program leading to the bachelor's degree and publicize these requirements for use by all other institutions in the state.*

*3. Each state college and university shall include in its official catalog of undergraduate courses a section stating all lower-division prerequisites for each upper-division specialization or major program.*

## *Section 15. Transfer Courses*

- 1. A transfer course is one that is acceptable by a receiving community college, state college, or university to apply toward an approved degree program at that institution.*
- 2. All baccalaureate level courses are transferable. In general, a baccalaureate course is one that is commonly offered by a regionally accredited four-year educational institution as being applicable toward a bachelor's degree.*
- 3. All baccalaureate degrees will include at least 60 credits of lower-division requirements.*
- 4. In order to be sure that all students who start at the community college have the opportunity to complete the baccalaureate degree in the same number of credits as those who start at the universities or the state college, if lower division courses required in the major are not offered by the community college, the universities or the state college shall either offer the courses at the community college or offer a reverse transfer agreement with the community college. If on a case-by-case basis, specific baccalaureate degrees appear unable to be articulated by either method, the NSHE Academic and Student Affairs office shall resolve the impasse.*
- 5. The completion of the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Business degrees at a NSHE community college automatically fulfills the lower-division general education requirements at the universities and the state college.*
- 6. The admissions officer at each institution shall determine the acceptability of general elective transfer credits, and departmental, college, or other requirements or equivalents shall be forwarded to the appropriate department or college for course evaluation. Written justification will be supplied in cases where transfer is not allowed. If general elective credit is granted by one institution, then all institutions shall accept the credit. Appropriate consultation with the faculty is encouraged throughout the evaluation process.*
- 7. For graduation requirements, at least half of the number of credits required for a baccalaureate degree at the institution must be earned at a four-year institution, except in cases where transfer agreements for specific degrees have been made between institutions.*
- 8. All academic majors at the universities and at the state college will have updated major-to-major agreements with NSHE community colleges. These agreements will provide clear information for community college students about which courses to take to transfer efficiently to the universities or to the state college in each major. Information on these agreements will be available to all students at the Transfer Centers on each campus.*
- 9. Receiving institutions may not require transfer students to take examinations to validate credit in those courses that are approved as transferable. For validation of course content, see Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13.*

10. *No NSHE student can be required to repeat a course on transfer to the university or state college if an equivalent course has been taken and successfully completed at the community college. (see Nevada Revised Statutes 396.568)*

11. *Students at a community college who plan to transfer to one of the universities or to the state college in the next semester and have applied for admission are eligible to apply for financial aid and scholarships at the universities or state college.*

12. *A NSHE brochure and Web site will be published that outlines the transfer process and the protections given to baccalaureate degree-seeking students who enter the System at a community college. Designed for students, parents, faculty, and legislators, this publication will explain the transfer process and a transfer student's "Bill of Rights." Telephone numbers regarding where a student can find assistance will be provided by each campus.*

### **Revisions to Articulation and Transfer Policies Adopted August 2006**

As mentioned previously, the Articulation Board and System Administration staff conducted a review of the Regents' transfer policies at the same time the campus review occurred. The intent of the policy review was to remove duplications and clarify language, making the policies consistent with previous Board action and direction. As a result, substantive changes were made and are noted herein. These revisions were approved at the August 2006 meeting of the Board of Regents. It is important to note that no institutions were brought into non-compliance as a result of the policy revisions. See Appendix B for the formal proposal presented to the Board to revise the articulation and transfer policies.

#### **Substantive Revisions**

Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13.1c)

- *Baccalaureate students who have completed NSHE associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree shall complete a minimum number of credits at the accepting NSHE institution. This minimum number shall be set by the baccalaureate degree granting institution.*

Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13.1e)

- *Completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, or the associate of business degree does not guarantee satisfaction of all state college or university lower-division requirements except for the lower-division general education requirements. All baccalaureate academic majors at a university or state college must have current major-to-major agreements with NSHE community colleges. These agreements must provide clear information for community college students as to those courses that will transfer efficiently to another NSHE institution within each major. Information on these agreements must be available to all students on each campus.*

Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 14.1)

- *All undergraduate courses in the NSHE must be common course numbered with equivalent courses offered throughout the System. To be assigned a new and unique course number at least 20 percent of the proposed course content must be unique and not found in a current or pending course within the NSHE. Any additions or changes to undergraduate course prefixes, numbers, titles, and/or credits must follow the procedures established by the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs and may not be included in class schedules or catalogs until written approval is received from the Department of Academic and Student Affairs.*

Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 14.6)

- *Community colleges may utilize a B-suffix for course numbers to alert students that the course may be non-transferable for a NSHE baccalaureate degree. Course selection for students who plan to seek a baccalaureate degree shall be based on degree requirements published pursuant to subsection 3 and the governing course catalog.*

Board of Regents' *Handbook* (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15.8)

- *Each NSHE institution will create a brochure and Web site that outlines the transfer process and the protections given to baccalaureate degree-seeking students who enter the NSHE at a community college. Designed for students, parents, faculty, and legislators, these resources must include an explanation of the transfer process and a transfer student's "Bill of Rights." Telephone numbers regarding where a student can find assistance must be provided by each campus.*

## **Audit Findings – Articulation Agreements**

In general, NSHE institutions have established and published the necessary articulation agreements. With constant advances in knowledge and the resulting changes to the curriculum, major-to-major agreements must be constantly monitored and updated. This is a daunting task and the institutions are to be commended. However, there are some majors that do not have an existing articulation agreement. Board of Regents’ policy (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13.1d) mandates that major-to-major or two-plus-two agreements must be in place between university and state college majors and the community colleges.

The following tables display the majors that did not have articulation agreements in place at the time of the review. If not specifically listed in these tables, the articulation agreement for a particular major at UNLV, UNR, or NSC exists and is published for student use. The findings were determined by comparing the information available to students (either through the catalog or the institutional Web site) and the list of Board-approved majors contained in the Academic Program Information System (APIS).

Each table is identified by the path of transfer (e.g. CCSN to UNLV, TMCC to UNR, etc.) and lists the degree type, the majors missing a published articulation agreement, and specific notes related to either the status of the articulation agreements or the institutional Web site at the time of the initial review.

### **CCSN TO UNLV**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement</b>	<b>Notes</b>
BA, BFA	Art	- UNLV’s transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNLV and CCSN: however, they were last updated in 2004. - Agreements posted online are not in alphabetical order. - Articulation agreements posted under the admissions office Web site are labeled specifically for freshman students. This is a confusing place to post the agreements for students transferring in that have completed two years at CCSN. - CCSN does not have any major transfer agreements listed on its Web site. The link for UNLV transfer agreements advised the user to check back soon. In their written response provided for the audit, CCSN stated that the catalog lists the articulation agreements simultaneously with the degree requirements. However, neither the catalog
BUS	University Studies	
BS	Biochemistry	
BS	Earth Sciences	
BS	Health Sciences	
BA	Interdisciplinary Studies	
BM	Jazz Studies	
BLA	Landscape Architecture	
BS, BA	Management Information Systems	
BS	Public Administration	

BA	Senior Adult Theatre	nor the transfer center Web site informs the students that the program requirements constitute articulation agreements.
BUS	University Studies	

### GBC TO UNLV

Degree	Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement	Notes
BA, BFA	Art	<p>- UNLV's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNLV and GBC: however, they were last updated in 2004.</p> <p>- GBC's transfer center Web site links appropriately to UNLV's Web site that lists the articulation agreements in place between UNLV and GBC.</p>
BS	Biochemistry	
BS	Earth Sciences	
BS	Health Sciences	
BS	Human Services Counseling	
BA	Interdisciplinary Studies	
BM	Jazz Studies	
BLA	Landscape Architecture	
BS	Public Administration	
BA	Senior Adult Theatre	
BUS	University Studies	

### TMCC TO UNLV

Degree	Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement	Notes
BA, BFA	Art	<p>- UNLV's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNLV and TMCC: however, they were last updated in 2004.</p> <p>- TMCC's Web site does not provide a link to transfer agreements between UNLV and TMCC.</p>
BS	Biochemistry	
BS	Earth Sciences	
BS	Health Sciences	
BA	Interdisciplinary Studies	
BM	Jazz Studies	
BLA	Landscape Architecture	
BS	Public Administration	
BA	Senior Adult Theatre	
BUS	University Studies	

### WNCC TO UNLV

Degree	Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement	Notes
BS	Biochemistry	<p>- UNLV's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNLV and WNCC: however, they were last updated in 2004.</p>
BS	Earth Sciences	
BS	Health Sciences	
BA	Interdisciplinary Studies	
BLA	Landscape Architecture	
BS	Public Administration	



BA	Senior Adult Theatre	
BUS	University Studies	

**CCSN, GBC, TMCC, WNCC TO NSC**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement</b>	<b>Notes</b>
All	All majors excepting Elementary Education	- NSC is in the process of developing their transfer agreements and redesigning the Web site.

**CCSN TO UNR**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement</b>	<b>Notes</b>
BS	Biotechnology	- UNR's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNR and CCSN.  - CCSN does not have any major transfer agreements listed on their site. The link for UNR articulation agreements advised the user to check back soon. In their written response, CCSN stated that the catalog lists the articulation agreements simultaneously with the degree requirements. However, neither the catalog nor the transfer center Web site informs the students that the program requirements constitute articulation agreements.
BA	International Affairs	

**GBC TO UNR**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement</b>	<b>Notes</b>
BS	Biotechnology	- UNR's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNR and GBC.
BA	International Affairs	- GBC's transfer center Web site appropriately links to UNR'S transfer center Web site that lists the articulation agreements.

### TMCC TO UNR

Degree	Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement	Notes
BS	Biotechnology	- UNR's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNR and TMCC.
BA	International Affairs	- TMCC's transfer center Web site appropriately links to UNR'S transfer center Web site that lists the articulation agreements.

### WNCC TO UNR

Degree	Majors Missing An Articulation Agreement	Notes
BS	Biotechnology	- UNR's transfer center Web site publishes the articulation agreements between UNR and WNCC.
BA	International Affairs	- WNCC's transfer center Web site appropriately links to UNR'S transfer center Web site that lists the articulation agreements.

### Recommendation

For each of the majors identified in the tables as missing an articulation agreement, institutions will provide to the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs an updated articulation agreement by **December 31, 2006**.

### Institutional Update

Since the initial review in February and March, 2006, institutions have taken the following steps toward improving the transfer experience for students and to respond to the initial findings of the review.

- UNLV hired Scott Stover as the Transfer Center Director and began the process of updating old articulation agreements and creating the agreements that were missing.
- UNR is creating the articulation agreements for their two missing majors.
- NSC created the articulation agreements for each of the 22 majors missing agreements and redesigned their Transfer Center Web site.
- CCSN has created Transfer Centers for each campus and hired three individuals to serve as the Center directors.

## **Audit Findings – Board of Regent Policies and Institutional Practice**

An additional function of the transfer audit was to determine how institutional practice aligned with the Board policies on transfer. During each campus visit, verbal and written responses demonstrating compliance were sought. After an analysis of the policies and the institutional responses, the following findings and recommendations are provided to assist each institution in complying with Board policies. If an institution was not in compliance with Board policy or if the written response did not adequately demonstrate compliance, the policy, response, and a recommended action to meet compliance is provided.

### **UNLV**

UNLV can improve students' transfer experience by complying with common course numbering. Board policy (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 14) mandates participation in common course numbering that is maintained in a database by the System office. UNLV stated in a written response that it is their understanding that common course numbering is "incomplete" and that they have no internal process for reporting common course numbering to the System office.

### **Recommendation**

UNLV and System staff will review the status of UNLV's compliance with common course numbering and ensure that full compliance is met.

### **UNR**

The System Office queried institutions if every major prescribes a course of study year-by-year and if the courses identified in the first two years are at the 100 and 200 level. This allows the community colleges to offer the first and second year courses. Prescribing a year-by-year path toward graduation provides students with a timetable and roadmap by which they can plan their education. UNR reported that approximately 31% of their majors have a year-by-year plan outlined in the catalog. There are a few programs that have students take 300 and 400 level courses in the first two years (biochemistry and engineering). UNR asserts that NSHE community colleges do not and cannot (due to demand) offer some of the more technical lower-division courses.

### **Recommendation**

UNR will complete a prescribed year-by-year course of study for all majors where the first two years in each major include only 100 or 200 level courses and submit these plans to the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs by **December 31, 2006**.

### **NSC**

Nevada State College faces some unique circumstances for the purposes of the transfer audit. As a new institution, NSC operated under the academic accreditation of UNR's programs, thus making any articulation agreement fall under the jurisdiction of UNR's articulation agreements. Therefore, NSC did not develop any of their own articulation

agreements except for elementary education. Also, many of the services and documents provided to students that assist in transfer (e.g. transfer center, Web site, brochure, etc.) did not exist.

**Recommendation 1**

NSC must focus first on creating articulation agreements with the community colleges for each major offered.

**Recommendation 2**

NSC should fully implement DARS, establish a transfer center and Web site, and pass the transfer of credit policy with the Faculty Senate as soon as practicable, but no later than Fall 2007.

**Institutional Update**

Since the review visit, NSC has created articulation agreements for each major; began the creation of a transfer center, including a redesign of the Web site displaying transfer information; improved graduation verifications; has forwarded a transfer of credit policy to the Faculty Senate; and is in the process of implementing DARS. These are all important steps toward seamless transfer for NSC students.

**CCSN**

Institutional practices are compliant with Board policies, except for the missing articulation agreements mentioned in the “Audit Findings – Articulation Agreements” section of this report.

**GBC**

Institutional practices are compliant with Board policies, except for the missing articulation agreements mentioned in the “Audit Findings – Articulation Agreements” section of this report.

**TMCC**

Institutional practices are compliant with Board policies, except for the missing articulation agreements mentioned in the “Audit Findings – Articulation Agreements” section of this report.

**WNCC**

Institutional practices are compliant with Board policies, except for the missing articulation agreements mentioned in the “Audit Findings – Articulation Agreements” section of this report

## **NSHE Systemwide Recommendations**

In addition to institution-specific steps that institutions must take to improve the transfer process for students, there are some recommendations applicable to all institutions. The following recommendations are items that should be adopted across the System and will contribute to making the transfer process more seamless.

### **1. Increase the communication between institutions regarding changes in curriculum. When submitting curricular changes to the appropriate Institutional Curriculum Committee for approval, a notification of the pending change should be provided to the NSHE community colleges.**

Advances in knowledge necessitate that faculty adjust the curriculum and requirements of respective majors. As these changes move through the approval process, other NSHE institutions are informed of the changes through the institutional curriculum committee. Being informed of the curriculum change at the time of approval does not provide adequate time to make the corresponding change at the community college and to the respective articulation agreement. The pending curriculum change needs to be communicated earlier than the current practice. The department chair or representative should notify the appropriate department at other NSHE regional campuses when a change is pending and prior to the change being reviewed by the institutional curriculum committee.

The institutional curriculum committee (or its equivalent) should include in their curriculum approval process a stipulation that the appropriate regional campuses be formally notified of the potential curriculum change at the time it is submitted to the committee for review.

### **2. Each institution must provide students with information on reverse transfer.**

At both the receiving institution and the institution from which a student is transferring, information should be provided on how students can complete the associate degree at the community college. The institution from which the student is transferring can provide the student with a list of the remaining courses needed to complete a degree. The receiving institution should remind incoming students of the availability of reverse transfer and that the student should check with the institution they transferred from regarding the specific requirements remaining for an associate degree.

Reverse transfer does not generally occur, although it is established in Board policy (Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15.3). The burden to initiate the reverse transfer process is currently placed on the student who may or may not be informed that the option even exists. Adding the responsibility for institutions to inform students about reverse transfer should increase the degrees awarded by the community colleges and improve graduation rates.

**3. Biennially, the Office of Academic and Student Affairs will conduct a workshop on Board transfer policies for advisors, faculty advisors, admission officers, and administrators at each NSHE institution.**

Conducting the workshop will improve the likelihood that the Board policies are known, understood, and incorporated into institutional practice. It will provide an opportunity for institutions to clarify policies as well as serve a vital function in assuring that updated policies are communicated to the institutions.

**4. Improve the NSHE System Web site to support information provided by institutions on articulation and transfer.**

It is important that students receive the most up to date information about courses and transfer options, including accurate information on common course numbering. Students usually visit the institutional Web site when searching for information on transferring but also visit the NSHE System Web site. The System Web site should also be a resource in providing transfer-related information to students. Accordingly, the System Web site will provide information on transferring, common course numbering, and links to institutional transfer center Web sites.

## **Conclusions**

In general, NSHE institutions are compliant with Board policies related to transfer. They do much in providing information to students regarding transferring to the state college or universities. Often the confusion associated with transfer is not whether or not a course transfers, but how it transfers to the state college or universities. When students have problems with transferring, they often do not understand the distinction between a course transferring as an elective credit and a course transferring to fulfill a degree requirement. Therefore, it is critical that institutions maintain current articulation agreements for each major offered at the state college or universities. Adequately informing students as to how and why a course may or may not apply to a degree requirement will considerably decrease the confusion associated with transferring.

This report provides a number of recommendations that, when implemented, will contribute significantly to the Chancellor's guarantee of a seamless transfer for NSHE students. It is important that institutions and students understand that the basis for a seamless transfer lies in establishing and following articulation agreements between NSHE institutions. As articulation agreements become incorporated fully into every conversation and transaction associated with transfer, students' transfer experiences and academic success will improve.

# *Appendix*



# Appendix A

## **Nevada System of Higher Education** **Transfer Rights and Responsibilities for Students and Institutions**

Board policy, Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 15.12, mandates that there be a NSHE Web site outlining the transfer process and protections given to baccalaureate degree-seeking students. The following presents the policies and procedures that govern student transfers between NSHE institutions. It is intended to inform students of their rights and responsibilities and affirm institutional responsibilities. Students and institutional representatives should follow these policies when making transfer-related decisions.

### **Student Rights**

Students have the right to:

- Receive automatic fulfillment of lower-division general education requirements at the universities, state college, and community colleges that offer select baccalaureate degrees upon completion of an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or an Associate of Business degree from a NSHE community college.
- Access information from the community colleges, state college, and universities about their transfer admission requirements, including documents required for admission, housing, and information about the institution's costs, financial aid, and student services.
- Access information about the transfer of specific courses, credit hours, grades, and degree requirements. This includes information about transferring courses with grades below a "C," courses students may have repeated, and credit previously granted by examination.
- Access and receive admission and transfer-related decisions in writing (electronic or paper) specifically:
  - Acceptance by the community colleges (limited access programs only), state college, and the universities.
  - Evaluation of courses and credits accepted for transfer credit and their course equivalencies, if applicable.
  - Outline of transfer courses and requirements which the transferred courses or credits will satisfy for the degree or program sought.
  - Analysis of the number of semester credits required to complete a degree in the chosen major program of study.
  - The NSHE institution's appeals process for transfer-related decisions.

- Appeal any NSHE institution's transfer-related decision. The appeal process will be developed and maintained by each NSHE institution and published on the institutions' Web site.
- Elect to graduate under the course catalog graduation requirements under any of the following options, provided that the course catalog at the time of graduation is not more than ten years old:
  - The course catalog of the year of enrollment in a baccalaureate level course/program at a NSHE community college (valid transfer contract may be required.)
  - The course catalog of the year of transfer into a baccalaureate level program at the universities, state college, or community colleges that offer select baccalaureate degrees.
  - The course catalog of the year of graduation from a NSHE institution.

**Warning:** Changing majors may change the course catalog and graduation requirements, which may increase the time to degree completion.

**Notice:** Students have all the above rights and any others as summarized in the Summary of Board of Regents Transfer Policies. The summary can be accessed at the NSHE Web site at <http://system.nevada.edu>. Paper copies of this document are available upon request of the institution's admission office.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students have the responsibility to:

- Understand the transfer policies and procedures of the institution they are considering for transfer. Students should seek information from the institution they are transferring to regarding: core curriculum, prerequisites, major program requirements, degree requirements, admissions, financial aid, scholarships, housing, deadlines, restrictions, and other transfer-related criteria.
- Complete all materials required for application and submit the application on or before the published deadlines.
- Research how courses are applicable to degree and major requirements.
- Understand that if they change their major, not all courses taken will necessarily apply to their new major.
- Plan ahead and realize that appointments with advisors are necessary.
- Understand that after a break in their enrollment, status as an admitted student may be affected.

## **NSHE Institution Responsibilities**

NSHE institutions will:

- Make transfer-related policies and procedures available on their Web sites.
- Make answers to frequently asked questions about transfer issues accessible for students and provide opportunities for appropriate follow-up appointments to students.
- Provide information on the approximate costs of attending the institution, including tuition, books and supplies, housing, and other related fees.
- Relay admission and transfer-related decisions to students in writing (electronic or paper); including information about the student's appeal rights.
- Establish and make available upon request internal appeals processes to review transfer-related issues and decisions.
- Engage in continuous, authentic dialogue among NSHE institutions about transfer-related issues with the purpose of solving the challenges before they negatively impact students.

## Appendix B

### **Board of Regents' Handbook** **Title 4, Chapter 14, Sections 13-18** Approved August 2006

Additions in *boldface italics*; deletions ~~stricken~~

#### Section 13. NSHE Transfer and Admissions

Transfer students to the state college and universities may be admitted under the following alternatives:

##### 1. Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Business Degree Graduates

The primary basis for admission to upper-division study with full junior status of transfer students from ~~the~~ *an NSHE* community colleges to ~~the state college or the universities in Nevada~~ *any other NSHE institution* shall be the associate of arts, associate of science, and the associate of business degrees.

- a. The completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business degree at a community college automatically fulfills the lower-division general education requirements at any other NSHE institution.*
- ~~a.b.~~ Associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business graduates will have completed a minimum of 60 credits of baccalaureate level courses.
- c. Baccalaureate students who have completed NSHE associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree shall complete a minimum number of credits at the accepting NSHE institution. This minimum number shall be set by the baccalaureate degree granting institution.*
- ~~b.d.~~ Baccalaureate level courses included as part of the associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business degree will transfer to ~~the state college or the universities~~ *any other NSHE institution* at a minimum as general elective credit.
- ~~e.~~ Application of credits toward major or college requirements is the responsibility of the college and department in which the student is seeking a degree. Validation of course content may be required when lower-division courses are used to satisfy upper-division curricular requirements. (B/R 8/03)
- ~~d.e.~~ Completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, or the associate of business degree does not ~~certify~~ *guarantee* satisfaction of all state college or university lower-division requirements except for the lower-division general

education requirements. ~~Major-to-major or two-plus-two agreements should be in place between university and state college majors and the community colleges. They may be incorporated into academic majors within associate degrees. Other majors within associate degrees may be developed by the community colleges where no equivalent major exists at the universities or state college.~~ ***All baccalaureate academic majors at a university or college must have current major-to-major agreements with NSHE community colleges. These agreements must provide clear information for community college students as to those courses that will transfer efficiently to another NSHE institution within each major. Information on these agreements must be available to all students on each campus.***

e.f. The receiving institution will evaluate all university and state college parallel courses attempted at the community college (and any other educational institution attended) and compute an overall admission grade point average in accordance with the institution's transfer policies.

f.g. ~~For associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business graduates, if the overall transfer grade point average computed by the receiving institution is less than "C" admission is on a 2.0 grade point average, the student shall be placed on "probationary" status until such grade point deficiencies are corrected.~~ ***and all grade point deficiencies must be removed prior to graduation.***

(B/R 12/02)

## 2. Other Associate Degrees

a. ~~Other associate degrees and certificates may be awarded by a community college for programs that have requirements different from the associate of arts, associate of science, associate of business, or a primary objective of transfer. Baccalaureate level courses, which are taken in such associate degree programs, shall be transferable to the state college and universities. However, students~~ ***A student with an associate degree other than an associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of business is not*** these degrees may not be guaranteed junior status ***at a receiving institution.*** ~~Developmental courses will not be used to fulfill degree requirements in associate of arts, associate of science, or associate of applied science programs.~~

b. ~~The primary transfer degree shall remain the associate of arts, with the associate of science degree providing a background for students who plan to transfer into four year programs in mathematics, science, engineering, or agriculture. The associate of business degree is the appropriate transfer degree for students who plan to transfer to a four year program in business. However, to provide for flexibility in program planning, "capstone programs" (programs designed on a two-year community college curriculum leading to the final two years at the state college or university and a degree) may be developed leading to a specialized bachelor's degree (e.g. Bachelor of Applied Science), with the approval of the Chancellor and the Board of Regents. These and other written agreements may be approved between community colleges and one of the universities or state college.~~

(B/R 12/02)

### 3. Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Applied Science Degrees

a. The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree is a four-year occupationally specific degree that is ~~responsive~~ **intended to respond** to the needs of the workforce. ~~The BAS degree builds upon the associate of applied science (AAS) degree in those areas where a technical four-year degree is appropriate to meet expanding workforce requirements. A student with an associate of applied science in a program approved by the Board of Regents seeking a Bachelor of Applied Science degree is guaranteed junior status upon transfer to another applicable NSHE institution.~~

b. ~~The degree is workforce-driven and designed in consultation with employers to ensure that the BAS incorporates the specific skills and knowledge required in the workplace.~~

c. ~~The upper level component of the BAS will include general education credits in addition to the workforce-specific courses of study. Because this degree is distinct from the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and the Bachelor of Science (BS), the general education requirements are not expected to mirror those required of the BA or BS.~~

d. ~~Specific programs leading to the BAS degree may differ in emphases reflecting the particulars of the workforce component of the program. The creation of each emphasis within a BAS degree requires approval of the Board of Regents.~~

(B/R 6/00)

### 4. Non-Associate Degree Admissions

a. ~~Approved baccalaureate level credits which have been completed;~~ **courses** shall be transferable to ~~the state college and universities~~ **another NSHE institution** at a minimum as general elective credit.

b. Community college students should be strongly encouraged to complete their lower-division programs **and an associate degree** before transfer, but qualified students may apply for transfer at their own discretion.

c. An applicant who does not satisfy university admission requirements upon graduation from high school must complete the equivalent of 24 semester credits in baccalaureate level courses with an overall grade point average of at least 2.30 at a community college or other accredited institution to qualify for university admission. Effective Fall 2008, the minimum required overall grade point average is 2.50.

d. An applicant who does not satisfy state college admission requirements upon graduation from high school must complete the equivalent of 12 semester credits in baccalaureate level courses with an overall grade point average of at least 2.00 at a community college or other accredited institution to qualify for state college admission.

e. A course with a "D" grade (1.00 grade points) may be accepted for transfer provided the institution specific overall grade point average established in subsections c. and d. above is maintained. Transfer courses with a "D" grade will count towards a bachelor's

degree in the same manner as “D” grades obtained by students enrolled in the lower-division at a state college or university. Credits from courses transferred with a “D” grade count towards credit earned for a baccalaureate; however, it is at the discretion of the department or college offering the major as to whether courses with “D” grades in the major satisfy requirements in the major field.

~~f. Any student under academic suspension from a state college or university may attend a community college, and appropriate credits and grades earned are applicable toward satisfying the requirements for readmission to a state college or university.~~

~~(B/R 12/02)~~

#### Section 14. ~~System Transfer Guide and Master Course File~~ *Course Numbering*

1. *All undergraduate courses in the NSHE must be common course numbered with equivalent courses offered throughout the System. To be assigned a new and unique course number at least 20 percent of the proposed course content must be unique and not found in a current or pending course within the NSHE.*

*Any additions or changes to undergraduate course prefixes, numbers, titles, and/or credits must follow the procedures established by the Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs and may not be included in class schedules or catalogs until written approval is received from the Department of Academic and Student Affairs.*

2. *An NSHE transfer guide or common course numbering master file shall be maintained by the Office of the Chancellor and published on the Web.*
3. *Each state college and university NSHE institution shall list and update the requirements for each program leading to the bachelor’s degree and publicize these requirements for use by all other institutions in the state.*
4. *Each state college and university NSHE institution shall include in its official catalog of undergraduate courses a section stating all lower-division prerequisites for each upper-division specialization or major program.*

~~(B/R 12/02)~~

5. *A system-wide course numbering rubric for all institutions shall be maintained so that baccalaureate transfer courses are clearly identified for student reference prior to registration under the following general course numbering parameters:*

<i>a. Remedial/developmental courses</i>	<i>001-099</i>
<i>b. Lower-division courses</i>	<i>100-299</i>
<i>c. Upper-division courses</i>	<i>300-499</i>
<i>d. State college graduate courses</i>	<i>500-699</i>
<i>e. University graduate courses</i>	<i>500-799</i>

6. **Community colleges may utilize a B-suffix for course numbers to alert students that the course may be non-transferable for a NSHE baccalaureate degree. Course selection for students who plan to seek a baccalaureate degree shall be based on degree requirements published pursuant to subsection 3 and the governing course catalog.**

#### Section 15. Transfer Courses

1. A transfer course is one that is acceptable by a receiving ~~community college, state college, or university~~ **NSHE institution** to apply toward an approved degree program at that institution.
2. All baccalaureate level courses are transferable. In general, a baccalaureate **level** course is one that is commonly offered by a regionally accredited four-year educational institution as being applicable toward a bachelor's degree.
- ~~3. All baccalaureate degrees will include at least 60 credits of lower division requirements.~~
- 4.3. In order to be sure that all students who start at the community college have the opportunity to complete the baccalaureate degree in the same number of credits as those who start at ~~the universities~~ **a university** or ~~the state college~~, if lower division courses required in the major are not offered by the community college, the ~~universities~~ **university** or ~~the state college~~ shall either offer the courses at the community college or offer a reverse transfer agreement with the community college. If on a case-by-case basis, specific baccalaureate degrees appear unable to be articulated by either method, the NSHE **Department of Academic and Student Affairs** office shall resolve the impasse.
- ~~5. The completion of the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Business degrees at a NSHE community college automatically fulfills the lower division general education requirements at the universities and the state college.~~
- 6.4. ~~The admissions officer at each~~ **Each** institution shall determine the acceptability of general elective transfer credits, and departmental, college, or other requirements or equivalents shall be forwarded to the appropriate department or college for course evaluation. ~~Written justification will be supplied in cases where transfer is not allowed.~~ If general elective credit is granted by one institution, then all institutions shall accept the credit. Appropriate consultation with the faculty is encouraged throughout the evaluation process.
- ~~7. For graduation requirements, at least half of the number of credits required for a baccalaureate degree at the institution must be earned at a four year institution, except in cases where transfer agreements for specific degrees have been made between institutions.~~



~~8. All academic majors at the universities and at the state college will have updated major-to-major agreements with NSHE community colleges. These agreements will provide clear information for community college students about which courses to take to transfer efficiently to the universities or to the state college in each major. Information on these agreements will be available to all students at the Transfer Centers on each campus.~~

~~9. 5. Receiving institutions *A receiving institution shall* may not require *a* transfer students *student* to take examinations to validate credit in those courses that are approved as transferable. For validation of course content, see Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 13.~~

***6. Application of credits toward major or college requirements is the responsibility of the college and department in which the student is seeking a degree. Validation of course content may be required when lower-division courses are used to satisfy upper-division curricular requirements.***

~~10. 7. No NSHE *Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes 396.568, an NSHE institution shall not require a* student can be required to repeat a course on transfer to the *a* university or state college if an equivalent course has been *was* taken and successfully completed at the community college *at any other NSHE institution, except for programs that have defined a time limit for completion.* (see Nevada Revised Statutes 396.568)~~

~~11. Students at a community college who plan to transfer to one of the universities or to the state college in the next semester and have applied for admission are eligible to apply for financial aid and scholarships at the universities or state college.~~

~~12. 8. A NSHE *Each NSHE institution will create a* brochure and Web site will be published that outlines the transfer process and the protections given to baccalaureate degree-seeking students who enter the system *NSHE* at a community college. Designed for students, parents, faculty, and legislators, *this publication will explain, these resources must include an explanation of* the transfer process and a transfer student's "Bill of Rights." Telephone numbers regarding where a student can find assistance will *must* be provided by each campus. (B/R 8/03)~~

Section 16. System Core Requirements

1. Associate of arts, associate of science, associate of business, and baccalaureate graduates ~~will have completed~~ **must complete** a program of System Core requirements **defined as follows:** ~~not to exceed 15 credits. Satisfactory completion of System requirements will be recognized by all institutions whether or not an associate degree has been awarded.~~

Nevada System of Higher Education Core Course Requirements for the Associate of Arts Associate of Science, Associate of Business or Baccalaureate Degree		
<u>Core Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>	
English	6 cr.	Freshman level English Composition (see catalog for exceptions)
Mathematics	3 cr.	<del>Any three</del> <b>Three</b> credits of a lower division level course ( <del>100 or 200 level</del> )
Natural Science	3 cr.	<del>Any three</del> <b>Three</b> credits of an introductory level lower division ( <del>100 or 200 level</del> ) course
Social Sciences or Humanities	3 cr.	<del>Any three</del> <b>Three</b> credits of an introductory level lower division ( <del>100 or 200 level</del> ) course in either the social sciences or humanities.
<b><i>United States and Nevada Constitutions</i></b>	<b><i>1-4 cr.</i></b>	<b><i>Institutional course catalogs shall identify courses that meet this requirement</i></b>

~~NOTE: \* Courses taken for the System Core may not be applied to more than one area in the Core.~~

~~\* Credits earned by examination may apply toward requirements in any area of the System Core.~~

~~\* See specific community college, state college, or university catalog for other information, which pertains to major, college, or university requirements.~~

***2. Courses taken toward the System Core shall not be applied to more than one area in the Core. Credits earned by examination may apply toward any of the Core requirements.***

Legislative Requirements:

U. S. and Nevada Constitutions	1-4 cr.	Refer to community college, state college, or university catalog for specific courses which satisfy this requirement. (B/R 6/83)
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~~2.~~ **3.** Students earning a second associate of arts, associate of science, associate of business, or baccalaureate degree *from an NSHE institution* are not required to repeat the Nevada System of Higher Education Core of fifteen credits *System Core*. (B/R 6/98)

Evidence of completion of the legislative requirements of U.S. and Nevada Constitutions is required of all second-degree students *whose first degree is not from an NSHE institution*. (B/R 8/88)

~~3.~~ **4.** The universities, state college, and community colleges *NSHE institutions* are encouraged to exchange ideas in the development and improvement of NSHE requirements; however, each institution ~~has the continuing responsibility~~ *is responsible* for determining the character of its own program. (B/R 12/02)

**5.** *NSHE community colleges must articulate their respective general education core requirements with at least one of the NSHE universities selected by the community college.*

Section 17. ~~University General Education Core Requirements~~ *Section Deleted.*

~~1.~~ NSHE community colleges agree to articulate their respective general education core requirements with one of the NSHE universities selected by the community college.

~~2.~~ The completion of the associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of business degrees at a NSHE community college automatically fulfills the lower division general education requirements at the universities and the state college. (B/R 12/04)

Section 18. ~~Course Numbering~~ *Section Deleted*

~~A system-wide course numbering rubric for all institutions shall be maintained so that baccalaureate transfer courses are clearly identified for student reference prior to registration. The following numbering system shall be in effect until amended by the Board of Regents:~~

~~a.~~ Community college courses ~~100B-299B~~

~~b.~~ Community college community service courses ~~100C-299C~~

~~c.~~ Community college developmental courses ~~001-099~~

~~d.~~ University and state college lower division courses and (B/R 12/02) ~~100-299~~

~~equivalent community college courses~~

~~-~~

~~e. University and state college upper division courses (B/R 12/02) 300-499~~

~~-~~

~~f. State college graduate courses (B/R 12/02) 500-699~~

~~-~~

~~g. University graduate courses 500-799~~