

BOARD OF REGENTS  
BRIEFING PAPER  
*Handbook Revision, Co-Admissions*

**BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

The purpose of this request is to permit the universities and colleges to establish a “co-admission” category for admission of students. Co-admission will allow students who begin their academic program at a community college, to establish an uninterrupted pathway from the associate’s degree to the bachelor’s degree, through early identification and structured advisement opportunities at both the community college and at the institution offering the bachelor’s degree. Further, co-admission will facilitate continuous academic advising and the monitoring of progress toward final degree attainment.

Community college students enrolled full-time and in good academic standing who have completed between 12 and 30 credits at the community college and at least one college-level English and one college-level mathematics course will be eligible for co-admission status. Community college students will complete a co-admission application, authorizing both the community college and the four-year institution to share academic transcript information each semester for the purpose of academic advising and establishing a clear pathway to both the associate’s and bachelor’s degrees. The four-year institution will maintain an active student record for each student in this category, supporting continuous transfer credit evaluation and assessment of progress toward the bachelor’s degree.

The home institution of the co-admitted student will be the community college. Program requirements for full-time student status are met through enrollment at the home institution. Co-admission students are expected to remain at the community college until they have completed all requirements for the associate’s degree. Co-admission students may receive financial aid from their home institution. In some cases, the student’s academic program may require simultaneous enrollment in some required courses at the four year institution. Existing financial aid policies governing co-enrollment would be available to students in the co-admission program. Students enrolled at more than one NSHE institution are responsible for the payment of fees at both institutions.

Co-admitted students must remain in good academic standing and complete the requirements for progression as prescribed by the universities, state college and community college. Upon completion of the associate’s degree at the community college, consistent with current Board policy, the student will be granted full enrollment at the university or four-year college at the junior year level.

**SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Amend Board policy (*Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 5*) to authorize a co-admission program whereby qualified students may be co-admitted at a community college and four-year institution under certain circumstances. (See Policy Proposal.)

**IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

NSHE institutions have made a substantial commitment to the “Complete College America” initiative. National data indicate that of community college students who intended to earn a bachelor’s degree, 66% actually transferred to a four year institution and only 14% earned the bachelor’s degree. (Source: NSHE Presentation to the Board of Regents, December 2009).

The Fall 2004 NSHE community college cohort of degree seeking students numbered 1,968. Of this number, 751 had earned an NSHE degree by December 2010. Specifically, 442 earned the Associate’s degree and 309 earned the Bachelor’s degree. (Source: NSHE 2009 Completions Indicator Report)

Individuals most seriously effected in volatile economic times are those who have not earned the associate's or bachelor's degrees. The average unemployment rate in 2010 was 8.2% overall. For those who had an associate's degree, the average unemployment rate was 7%. For those who had earned a bachelor's degree, the average unemployment rate was 5.4%.(NSHE Report , September 2011, Committee on Access and Affordability)

The rate of bachelor's degree attainment at an NSHE institution for the 2004 NSHE community college degree seeking cohort was 16%. This program is intended to improve the attainment of the both the associate's degree and the bachelor's degree at NSHE institutions.

**BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

- Students will receive coordinated advising each semester from both the community college and the four-year institution, ensuring a clear pathway to degree attainment.
- Coursework taken at the community college will be transferred to the four-year institution each semester, allowing for timely and accurate advisement reporting and counseling.
- Co-admission creates an expectation of degree completion at both the community college and four-year institution.
- Co-admission supports an early commitment to bachelor's degree completion.
- Students will have formalized opportunities to become familiar with the four-year institution through advisor contact and structured events designed to ease the transition from the two-year to the four-year institution.
- Community college advisors will have access to the four-year institution's advising reports to assist students through their academic program.
- Co-admitted students will be monitored by advisors both at the community college and four-year institution.
- Both NSHE community colleges and universities may seek to improve degree attainment while optimizing resource availability through academic planning. The continuous assessment of academic progress toward degree attainment through academic advisement and degree audit reporting supports this effort.

**POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

Students may not be interested in participation and may accomplish the same goals on their own if so motivated.

**ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

Current policies and procedures, such as transfer agreements and reverse transfer, may accomplish the same objectives through a less structured approach.

**COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #\_\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_\_
- Amends Current Board Policy: *Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 5*
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #\_\_\_\_\_ Section #\_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Fiscal Impact: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**POLICY PROPOSAL**  
**TITLE 4, CHAPTER 16, SECTION 5**  
Simultaneous Admission to the Universities

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

**Section 5. Simultaneous Admissions [~~to the Universities~~]**

1. ***Admission Guarantee.*** Students seeking admission to a university whose high school grade point average or test scores are insufficient for admission will be offered enrollment at either a NSHE community college or state college with a subsequent guarantee of admission to the universities under the transfer criteria established in Title 4, Chapter 14.
2. ***Co-Admission.*** *A university or college may establish a program to co-admit a degree-seeking NSHE community college student if the student:*
  - a. *Is in good academic standing at all NSHE institutions and planning to complete a baccalaureate degree;*
  - b. *Completed at least 12 and no more than 30 credits at the community college, is enrolled full time at the community college, and plans to enroll at that four-year institution when awarded a transferable associate degree; and*
  - c. *Completed at least one college-level English and one college-level mathematics course.*

*Students must apply to the university or college of choice for co-admission and meet the requirements set by that institution. Students accepted into the program will receive academic advising from both institutions, but the community college will be the home campus for purposes of financial aid and data reporting.*