

Chapter 3

Classifications of Course Articulation Agreements

Course articulation is established between “sending” and “receiving” institutions. In California, this process occurs mainly between the two-year community colleges and the three segments of higher education that grant the baccalaureate degree: the California State University (CSU), the University of California (UC), and the independent colleges and universities. In addition, a significant number of **intra**segmental transfers occur. Therefore, articulation may be established between two-year institutions as well as between four-year institutions. Articulation between the California Community Colleges, CSU and UC campuses (and a limited number of independent institutions) is recorded at www.assist.org, the official repository for their articulation information (see Chapter 2, pg. 10).

A word of caution: In some regions within the United States and at some independent institutions in California, the term “articulation agreement” may refer to either a transfer admission agreement or a memorandum of understanding between institutions. It is important to distinguish these intentions from the CIAC definition used throughout this handbook.

Articulation agreements as described in this document refer to course transferability between regionally accredited institutions. The nature of articulation agreements means that the receiving institution has agreed to accept the courses identified as being “comparable to” or “acceptable in lieu of” their courses. In California, regional accreditation refers to accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In some instances, institutions have established one-way transferable course agreements with a non-accredited institution that guarantees transfer of credit from the accredited institution to the non-accredited institution. However, the courses from the non-accredited institution typically may not be transferred to the accredited institution.

Course articulation agreements are classified into four discrete types discussed below and summarized in the chart at the end of this chapter:

- Courses Accepted for **Baccalaureate Credit** (UC/CSU)
- **General Education-Breadth** Agreements (CSU-GE/IGETU)
- **Course-to-Course** (By Department) Agreements
- **Lower Division Major Preparation** Agreements

A. Courses Accepted for Baccalaureate Credit

The primary level of articulation identifies courses that are baccalaureate-level and therefore acceptable by a receiving institution or system (such as CSU or UC) to fulfill both unit requirements for admission and baccalaureate elective credit. These agreements do not indicate how the courses will be applied toward degree credit or whether they are acceptable

for satisfying General Education-Breadth requirements or major preparation requirements at the receiving four-year institution. Courses accepted for baccalaureate credit are the first level of articulation and comprise the basic “pool” of transferable courses from which subsequent articulation agreements are developed. Occasionally, courses for technical majors (e.g. architecture, engineering) may include non-transferable courses if the course content, rigor, and level are determined to be sufficient to articulate for major requirements. Such agreements are established on a case-by-case basis.

Courses Transferable to the California State University

CSU Executive Order 167 (*see Appendix C*) authorizes California Community Colleges to identify courses that are baccalaureate level and appropriate for transfer to the CSU. This articulation agreement is commonly known as the Baccalaureate List or the “Bacc List” (*see Appendix D*). Community college articulation officers, in consultation with appropriate discipline faculty on their campuses, and in adherence to local curriculum guidelines, determine which courses are appropriate for inclusion on the Bacc List.

The CSU Academic Senate document, *Considerations Involved in Determining What Constitutes a Baccalaureate Level Course* (November 7, 1986) (*see Appendix E*) may help serve as a guideline in making this determination. The community college AO, who is responsible for maintaining the Bacc List in the ASSIST database, updates this list four times each year, or as appropriate when courses are added to and deleted from the curriculum. See Chapter 6 for detailed information regarding course transferability to the California State University.

Courses Transferable to the University of California

Community college courses that are transferable to all campuses of the University of California are identified on the UC Transferable Course List, also known as the UC TCA. (*see Appendix F for an example*). In the UC System, the Office of the President (UCOP) initiates this agreement by extending an annual invitation for community colleges to submit courses for review and possible inclusion on the TCA. The University of California has established criteria for course transferability in specific discipline areas. The criteria includes types of courses appropriate for UC transferability and minimum required prerequisites, as well as other factors influencing transferability. The criteria may be revised by the UCOP as appropriate. Appendix G outlines the current criteria. Community college AOs should distribute the criteria to faculty who seek UC transferability for their courses. See Chapters 5 and 7 for detailed information regarding course transferability to the University of California and preparing the TCA (*see Chapter 5, pg. 29 and Chapter 7, pg. 40*).

Courses Transferable to Independent Institutions

The independent segment does not currently maintain a systemwide transferable course agreement or baccalaureate list. Some independent institutions accept community college courses identified either on the CSU Bacc List or the UCOP TCA list for transfer credit, while others maintain comprehensive course-to-course lists. A few independent institutions have developed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the California Community College System Office guaranteeing transfer of credit for all associate degree-applicable courses.

It is essential for the respective institutional AOs to communicate with each other when establishing course articulation or transfer agreements. Articulation agreements should not

Criteria B. Need

The proposal must demonstrate a need for a program or course that meets the stated goals and objectives in the region the college proposes to serve with the program. Furthermore, a proposed new program must not cause harmful competition with an existing program at another college.

Need is determined by multiple factors, such as the educational master plan of the college or district and accreditation standards. Colleges are required to periodically review curriculum in a process called program review. Program review is a planning process whereby departments determine the future needs and goals of their educational programs. Both new and revised curriculum should reflect the fulfillment of this planning.

For baccalaureate preparation curriculum, need is presumed to exist if there is student demand for a program or course and its transfer applicability for a university major or general education (GE) has been documented. The proposal for approval must include evidence that the coursework required for the community college program substantially satisfies the lower-division coursework requirements for a university major or for GE requirements at the four-year institution.

For college preparation noncredit curriculum, need is presumed to exist if there is a student demand for a program or course and its transition to credit work has been documented. For both credit and noncredit Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, or those that respond to economic development interests, need for the program must be documented by supplying current labor market information (LMI) within the local service area of the individual college and/or a recent employer survey as per Education Code 78015. In addition, a current job market analysis, or other comparable information, must show that jobs are available for program completers within the local service area of the individual college and/or that job enhancement or promotion justifies the proposed curriculum.

However, if cooperative planning with neighboring colleges has occurred, labor market evidence for the region as a whole may be sufficient. Statewide or national labor market evidence may be included as supplementary support, but evidence of need in the specific college service area or region is also necessary. If the college believes the program has statewide or national importance and wishes to substitute statewide or national labor market evidence for local evidence, an explicit justification of why this is appropriate must be included.

Proposals for credit CTE programs must include a recommendation from the appropriate CTE Regional Consortium as per title 5, section 55130(b)(8)E. The community colleges in California are organized into ten economic regions, served by seven consortia of CTE faculty and administrators from community colleges in that region. The CTE Regional Consortia provide leadership for colleges to:

- Integrate and coordinate economic development and CTE programs and services,
- Develop and coordinate staff development,
- Increase the knowledge of programs and services in the region, and disseminate best practices.

Evidence of labor market need may be submitted in the form of:

- Statistical projections of growth in specific jobs by county (or labor market area) from the Employment Development Department's (EDD) Labor Market Information (LMI) system
- Recent employer surveys
- Industry studies
- Regional economic studies
- Letters from employers
- Minutes of industry advisory committee meetings (when offered in conjunction with other evidence)
- Job advertisements for positions in the individual college's service area
- Newspaper or magazine articles on industry or employment trends
- Studies or data from licensing agencies or professional associations

Further specifics on labor market need are found in the following places: the instructions for completing the application form for approval of a new credit career technical education (CTE) program or the instructions for completing the application form for approval of a new noncredit career technical education program (in Module 3: Noncredit Curriculum).

Considerations Involved in Determining What Constitutes a Baccalaureate Level Course

Because baccalaureate level coursework is intended to contribute to the student's attainment of the objectives embodied in the baccalaureate degree, courses which are designated as baccalaureate level will meet, as one of several standards, the criterion of having a "bridging" function, helping to move the student from the skills and knowledge expected at entrance toward the competencies expected at graduation.

In areas of the curriculum for which the three segmental Academic Senates have identified expected entry level competencies (e.g., English, mathematics, natural sciences), baccalaureate courses shall not replicate the skills and knowledge which are entry expectations but will instead require for satisfactory completion the prior attainment of such skills and knowledge. As comparable statements are developed in other areas of the curriculum, reference to entry level expectations will be useful in helping to define baccalaureate level coursework.

Various graduation expectations, such as those expressed in (1) the goals of general education, (2) the objectives of the various majors, (3) the standards for competency, and (4) such generalized expectations as "intellectual growth" also will influence the judgment as to what constitutes baccalaureate level coursework. Courses designed by qualified faculty to help qualified students move toward the attainment of those expectations will generally be of baccalaureate level. In such courses, faculty judged by their peers to be qualified to teach the courses shall have the determining voice in the decisions as to content, instructional methodology, instructional support resources, and methods and standards for assessing performance. Qualified faculty shall construct and teach baccalaureate courses in ways which assure that the level is appropriate for enhancing the knowledge and skills of the adequately prepared student, and appropriate faculty entities shall have primary responsibility for making course level determinations.

Criteria for Determining Baccalaureate Level Courses

The significant elements involved include institutional issues, the course expectations, and the pedagogy employed. Course content alone will not determine acceptability for baccalaureate credit. The criteria are phrased in terms of expectations from each of the parties. These expectations shall not be construed as, by themselves, defining a baccalaureate level course; rather they are designed as aids to the process of making that determination. Thus, they suggest the kinds of considerations that must underlie a determination of course level but they do not define a rigid and objective standard. The use of this document requires informed judgment as to the extent to which the course in question meets the expectations embodied in each of these criteria. These criteria have been developed primarily to guide community college faculty and administrators in determining appropriate baccalaureate course designations, but they should also be useful in university curriculum review processes.

Institutional Issues

- 1) The course is to be taught by a qualified instructor, judged by peers to be competent in the subject matter.
- 2) Qualified faculty, as judged by their peers, shall make the decisions as to course content, instructional methodology, instructional support requirements, and methods and standards for assessing student performance.
- 3) The institution shall provide adequate assessment and advising to ensure that students enrolling in baccalaureate courses are adequately prepared.
- 4) Adequate instructional support resources shall be available to all students who enroll in the course, including facilities, library materials, and access to qualified faculty outside of class meeting times.

Course Expectations

- 1) The course is presented in a manner that requires of students:
 - a. a level of intellect, skill, prior knowledge, and maturity consistent with entry level collegiate expectations and the stated prerequisite(s), if any, for that course;
 - b. learning skills and a vocabulary necessary to master the subject matter of a baccalaureate level course; and
 - c. the capacity to think critically and to understand and apply concepts.
- 2) The course:
 - a. treats subject matter with an intensity and pace that establishes an expectation for significantly greater learner independence than that required at the secondary level; and
 - b. requires the student to continue development of communication skills appropriate for higher education.
- 3) Coursework that:
 - a. enhances understanding of analytical, intellectual, scientific, or cultural concepts and traditions generally shall be considered baccalaureate level;
 - b. enhances understanding of occupational and professional fields usually requiring experience in higher education as prerequisite to employment in such fields may be considered baccalaureate level if it includes attention to appropriate theories and concepts;
 - c. provides instruction in occupational fields not usually requiring experience in higher education as prerequisite to such fields may be considered baccalaureate level if the primary emphasis is upon understanding the theories and concepts that underlie practice rather than only upon the development of technical skills required for immediate employment.

d. is remedial or college preparatory shall not be considered baccalaureate level.

Pedagogy Employed

- 1) There shall be opportunity for student-faculty interaction of a kind and variety commensurate with achievement of course objectives.
- 2) The method of evaluation of student performance in courses shall discriminate among levels of attainment as appropriate to both entry and exit expectations.

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