**Memorandums of Understanding, AA/PPS No. 02.02.12 (2.15)
Articulation Agreements, and Transfer Issue No. 4
Planning Guides Effective Date: 07/21/2021**

 **Next Review Date: 04/01/2023 (E2Y)
Sr. Reviewer: Director, Undergraduate Admissions**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Texas State University is committed to maintaining a well-designed, effective process for developing and implementing articulation agreements, transfer planning guides, and reverse transfer processes with lower-division institutions.*

**01. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

01.01 Texas State University recognizes the importance of transfer students in the state higher education system and makes efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate them. This policy summarizes the key elements of these efforts and processes to facilitate articulated transfer coursework.

01.02 Texas State will evaluate credits accepted for transfer in terms of level, content, quality, comparability, and degree program relevance, as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). This policy is aligned with the [Transfer of Academic Credit Policy](http://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/transfer-credit.pdf) that expects universities “to review their transfer policies and procedures with a view toward making transfer of credit easier for students while continuing to honor their obligation to maintain academic quality and integrity.”

01.03 Texas State will comply with the [Transfer of Credit, Core Curriculum and Field of Study Curricula Texas Administrative Code](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac%24ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=4&rl=24) from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB): “All successfully completed lower-division academic courses that are identified by the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS) and published in the Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) shall be fully transferable among public institutions and shall be substituted for the equivalent course at the receiving institution. Except in the case of courses belonging to a Board-approved Field of Study Curriculum (FOSC), the receiving institution determines applicability of transferred courses to requirements for specific degree programs.”

01.04 In 2011, the Texas Legislature established a reverse transfer program, as defined in [Texas Education Code, Section 2, Subchapter S, Chapter 61, paragraphs 61.833 (b) and (c)](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.61.htm#61.833), that applies to each student who, no earlier than the 2011 fall semester, transfers to Texas State from or previously attended a lower-division institution of higher education. Transfer students at Texas State who earned at least 30 semester credit hours of coursework at the lower-division institution and a cumulative total of at least 66 semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed, may be considered for an associate’s degree. As soon as the student has met the above criteria, Texas State shall release the student’s transcript to the lower-division institution, which determines if the student has earned the credits required to receive an associate’s degree awarded by the lower-division institution.

**02. DEFINITIONS**

02.01 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – an officially-approved agreement that is executed at the institutional level to develop a partnership between Texas State and a lower-division institution. The MOU constitutes a broad range of initiatives at the university level. MOUs are developed at the discretion of the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and the president, and if deemed appropriate, can be executed in a formal signing ceremony.

02.02 Lower-Division Institutions – a public junior college, public state college, or public technical institutions.

02.03 Articulation Agreement – an officially-approved agreement that is executed at the departmental level documenting the transfer policies for a program degree to be consistent with curriculum policies.

02.04 Field of Study (FOS) – an official block of major program courses that are required by law to be accepted by the major program. These are lower division courses.

02.05 Transfer Planning Guides – programmatic-level documents that outline:

a. course equivalencies such as the course-by-course patterns for articulated transfer work and the Texas FOS courses;

b. undergraduate admission requirements with contact information for advising centers and undergraduate admissions;

c. program application deadlines and admission requirements (e.g., grade point averages, minimum hours, prerequisite courses, test scores, auditions, etc.); and

d. the Texas general education core curriculum and degree plan requirements including prerequisites, co-requisites, specialized core curriculum courses, and depending on the major, sequencing.

Transfer planning guides exists for all majors. Transfer planning guides are designed to show how equivalent coursework can help students efficiently plan their transfer to Texas State by taking the necessary courses at a lower-division institution that may transfer for credit toward an undergraduate degree program of their choice at Texas State. These guides contain lower-level degree requirements as listed by the TCCNS equivalent.

02.06 Reverse Transfer Rules – ensure that credits earned while a student is working toward a baccalaureate degree at Texas State are sent back to the student’s former lower-division institution to be assessed in fulfillment of associate degree requirements.

**03. DEVELOPMENT OF MOUS, ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS, AND TRANSFER PLANNING GUIDES**

03.01 Interest in establishing an MOU or articulation agreements may originate from the lower-division institution, from Texas State, from professional associations, or from external grants.

MOUs are usually developed because officials desire a formal document that demonstrates a partnership between the lower-division institution and Texas State to assist the state in meeting goals for student recruitment, retention, and success. MOUs should not be developed to cover standard business operations.

03.02 Articulation agreements are developed because academic departments desire to document a special transfer credit policy for a specific academic program or degree. Upon notice of any new departmental transfer agreement, Undergraduate Admissions will enter the guidelines into the appropriate transfer catalog and apply specific credits to all applicants from the sending institutions.

03.03 Transfer planning guides are developed and maintained because:

a. they reduce student confusion and promote greater transparency regarding credit transfer between and among institutions at the degree program level;

b. there are structured degree programs with multiple course requisites and equivalencies that necessitate careful planning;

c. there are significant opportunities to increase the number of transfer students;

d. there is a strategic interest to maximize course transfer and enrollments in identified high need areas for the state of Texas; or

e. they reflect the faculty-developed degree plans in the catalog.

**04. PROCEDURES AND APPROVALS**

04.01 If an MOU is desired, the initial request, justification, and draft MOU, if available, should be submitted to the associate vice president for Enrollment Management and Marketing. If an MOU is deemed appropriate, the provost and VPAA will consult with the president for final approval. MOUs must be signed by the provost and VPAA. If the agreement is approved, a formal signing of the agreement is arranged. If so desired by the provost and VPAA and the president, a signing ceremony may be arranged, or the signing may be handled through the mail.

04.02 If a program-level articulation agreement is desired, the initial request, justification, and draft agreement should be routed through the department or school and the chair or director (deans must be copied on this agreement) and submitted to the associate vice president for Enrollment Management and Marketing. The articulation agreement will then be sent to the dean for approval. Once approved by the dean, a copy will be provided to the provost and VPAA and to Undergraduate Admissions to update the transfer catalog of the sending institution.

04.03 The following materials are used to develop new and update existing transfer planning guides:

1. current undergraduate catalogs (Texas State’s included), degree plans, and websites for the lower-division institution;

b. Texas general education core curriculum and the Texas Core Webcenter;

c. Texas field of study;

d. transfer course equivalencies;

e. TCCNS;

f. samples of completed transfer planning guides from the same academic discipline; and

g. DegreeWorks.

04.04 Developing new transfer planning guides begins with the assistant vice president for Curriculum and Academic Programs notifying the associate director of Undergraduate Admissions of a new degree program. The associate director of Undergraduate Admissions then contacts the appropriate academic advising center to enlist their help in developing the guide. Upon completion and subsequent review of the guide, the associate director of Undergraduate Admissions will then forward the approved transfer planning guides to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions’ web manager to be published on the website.

04.05 For updating existing guides, the associate director of Undergraduate Admissions contacts the academic advising centers by no later than mid-February to inform them of the timeline for transfer planning guide updates. All updates or changes must be submitted by June 1. Undergraduate Admissions will update all postings no later than July 1.

**05. PROCEDURE FOR BI-ANNUAL REVIEWS**

05.01 Every MOU and articulation agreement is reviewed every three years. Transfer planning guides are reviewed annually. Reverse transfer processes are reviewed by the Office of the University Registrar at the end of each term.

**06. REVIEWERS OF THIS PPS**

**06.01 Reviewers of this PPS include the following:**

**Position Date**

**Director, Undergraduate Admissions April 1 E2Y**

**Assistant Vice President, Curriculum April 1 E2Y**

**and Academic Programs**

**University Registrar April 1 E2Y**

**07. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This PPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State Academic Affairs policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Director, Undergraduate Admissions; senior reviewer of this PPS

Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs