Articulation Agreement Manual

Introduction
In alignment with our Mission and Vision, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UW Oshkosh) recognizes the need for efficient and thoughtfully constructed pathways with technical and community colleges, and universities. We are committed to working with stakeholders to ensure students can transfer between institutions as efficiently as possible. UW Oshkosh actively seeks expansion with university partners to create opportunities for students to advance in their education through these cooperative partnerships.

These strategic pathways allow students to:

- Ensure curricular alignment with key partners
- Design academic pathways to UW Oshkosh degrees and majors
- Maximize the applicability of transfer credit

This manual serves as a shared reference to clarify roles, expectations, workflows, and standards to ensure articulation agreements are developed consistently, remain compliant with UW System policy, and support student success.

Purpose of Articulation Agreements
An Articulation Agreement is a contract between two educational entities, in which students will transfer earned academic credit. These agreements formalize the transfer process for prospective transfer students who intend on earning an undergraduate degree. Articulation Agreements typically allow the transfer student to enter UW Oshkosh as sophomore or above standing, with completion towards general education, major, and/or degree requirements. Some degrees and majors may require additional coursework, outside of the Articulation Agreement, prior to granting advanced standing in the major. Pre-advising by UW Oshkosh's Transfer Admissions Recruiter is strongly encouraged.

It is important to note that articulation agreements do not guarantee admission into UW Oshkosh. Schools within UW Oshkosh may also require a specified GPA prior to admission.

Benefits of Articulation Agreements For Students
Upon meeting the requirements as stated in the Articulation Agreement, students may have
met most, if not all, of the general education requirements, as well as many lower division academic requirements within their discipline. Additional benefits include:

- Ease of transfer transition from prior institution to UW Oshkosh
- Proper distribution of academic credit
- Safeguards against taking unnecessary or duplicative courses, which impact the students' finances and time to degree
- Pre-Advising from UW Oshkosh's Transfer Admissions Recruiter
- Early and consistent motivation to continue with school
- Improved job readiness and placement

For UW Oshkosh:
The benefits to the baccalaureate institution include:

- Improved student success – for both institutions

- Increased ease of academic alignment, analysis of learning outcomes, and collaboration
- Increased communication between institutions and cross-campus
- Enhanced public relations, marketing and recruiting efforts

Guiding Principles

UW Oshkosh will enter into agreements that:

- Align with UW System Administrative Policy SYS 135-140
- Align with UW Oshkosh's Mission, Vision and Values
- Support the educational needs of students and community
- Support the educational and career attainment for current and future students
- Can be mapped to university partners and that align with their curriculum
- Provide effective and cooperative systems to strengthen partnerships and initiatives that benefit students
- Reduce costs to students
- Are mutually beneficial to all parties

Best Practices for Articulation Agreements

To ensure articulation agreements are effective, sustainable, and student-centered, UW Oshkosh follows these best practices throughout development and maintenance.

- **Center on Student Outcomes**
  Agreements should clearly demonstrate how transferred coursework applies toward degree progress and reduces excess credits, cost, and time to completion.
- **Ensure Clear Academic Alignment**
  Course and program alignments should be based on documented learning outcomes and curricular intent, not solely on course titles or credit totals.
- **Engage Stakeholders Early**
  Faculty, the Registrar's Office, and the AVC for Curricular Affairs and Student Achievement should be involved early to identify feasibility, policy considerations, and potential barriers.
- **Document with Precision and Consistency**
  Agreements should use consistent terminology, exact degree and program titles, and clearly defined effective dates, start terms, and renewal expectations.
- **Maintain Policy and Accessibility Compliance**
  All agreements, degree maps, and curricular tables must align with UW System policy and be created in an ADA-accessible format.
- **Design for Advising and Operational Use**
  Agreements should be written so advisors, Admissions staff, and students can easily understand how credits apply and what requirements remain.
- **Plan for Ongoing Review and Change**
  Agreements should include clear renewal cycles and be revisited when curricula, policies, or partner programs change.

Articulation Agreement Workflow

Internal Communication and Initiation

- Prior to reaching out to the college or university, UW Oshkosh's academic department should contact the AVC for Curricular Affairs and Student Achievement.
- After notification about the intent to partner, UW Oshkosh program faculty will be advised on next steps, including initiating contact with the partner institution.
- Should another college or university reach out to an employee of UW Oshkosh, please connect them to the above contacts to initiate the Articulation Agreement creation or renewal process.

Development of the Agreement

- Each university has its own way of establishing an Articulation Agreement. Typically, much of the paperwork and contract is drafted through the associate degree granting institution. Details that must be included on the agreement (in accordance with SYS 140) are as follows:
    - Title of partner school's program (exact degree title)
    - Title of UW Oshkosh program (exact degree title)
    - Rationale for how these programs are related
    - A table listing credits accepted in transfer and the course equivalency
    - A table summarizing credits required to earn UW Oshkosh's major, credits fulfilled by the partner school's program, outstanding credits to be completed at UW Oshkosh, and total credits for all
    - Other UW Oshkosh academic requirements, such as residency or GPA, that the student must satisfy
    - Effective date and start term
    - Revision and renewal date(s)
    - Signatures of the appropriate UW Oshkosh department/program representative(s) and UW Oshkosh Provost or Chancellor
    - Signatures of the appropriate partner school's department/program representative(s) and college Vice President or President
    - Admission and financial aid statement (not guaranteed)
- Course equivalencies, pathways and contracts are developed and completed by the coordination and collaboration of identified key partners. It is typical to go through several iterations of editing before a finalized agreement is reached. During this time, the AVC and Transfer Coordinator in the Registrar's Office will rely heavily on faculty for their content expertise.
- Curricular maps and contracts are to be made ADA accessible.

Approval Process

- Once the final version of the contract, course equivalencies, and degree map have been established, the contract will be routed for signatures. UW Oshkosh prefers that the other school sign agreements first. After all signatures are gathered, a copy will be routed to the UW Oshkosh community. This typically includes:
    - Provost
    - Curricular Affairs and Student Achievement Associate Vice Chancellor
    - Curricular Planner
    - Registrar
    - Transfer Coordinator
    - Director of Undergraduate Admissions/Enrollment Management
    - Transfer Admissions Recruiter
    - Director of Academic Advising – UARC
    - Marketing
- The Registrar's office will ensure that the Articulation Agreements are published on the UW Oshkosh website and in Transferology.

Articulation Maintenance

- Articulation Agreements are typically renewed every three years. The specific renewal needs of the agreement should be listed within the contract.
- Faculty should take note of when their agreements end, if course credits change, course titles change, etc. Anything that alters the agreement needs to be updated as soon as possible, or during the next renewal.
- If an agreement is being revised, please notify the AVC of Curricular Affairs and the Curricular Planner.
- The agreement should be sent to the partner institution for review and updates. The partner institution should make changes as needed.

- After the agreement has been reviewed by the partner institution, the Faculty at UW-Oshkosh should also review the agreement for updates and make changes as needed.
- Once revised by both parties please send to the Transfer Coordinator (tchelp@uwosh.edu)
- Once reviewed by the Transfer Coordinator and updates have been made, please submit the agreement to the Curricular planner (kundeaj@uwosh.edu) for review.
- Once reviewed, the agreement is submitted to the articulation agreement review team for approval. This includes the Registrar Office, Admissions-transfer recruiter, AVC of Curricular Affairs, and the Curricular Planner.
- Once approved, the curricular planner will route agreement for signatures.

Who Should Be Involved?

Curricular Affairs and Student Achievement AVC and Curricular Planner

- The AVC and Curricular Planner should be involved at the beginning of the process to ensure that the planned agreements is in line with the institution's mission and vision and to bring it to the Provost's attention if needed.
- The Curricular Planner will help coordinate the efforts of the Transfer Coordinator and the faculty, communicate with partner institutions, and address any barriers or issues that arise. They will also be the contact person for submitting agreements to the Articulation Agreement Review Team for approval.
- The Curricular Planner will coordinate routing of documents for signatures at both institutions.

Registrar's Office

- The Registrar and Transfer Coordinator should be involved in the creation and maintenance of Articulation Agreements and can support faculty as they make decisions about course equivalencies.

Faculty

- Faculty need to be involved in the review of curriculum and how articulated credit will apply to the degree program. Many Articulation Agreements require an in-depth look at course content and applicability of coursework. Additionally, if credit for prior learning is being assessed, faculty need to determine how that will be applied. The extent to which faculty are involved can be determined by the institution; however, faculty need to have say and at times be the decision makers on articulation content and completion toward a degree.

Academic Advising

- The area that will advise for all the specifics of an Articulation Agreement should be part of the conversation. Important factors such as how credits fit into a degree program and what a student has left to complete the degree need to be determined as part of the process. Additionally, advisors need to be aware of what the agreement says, what an institution has the capacity to do, and how it impacts the students and advisors. Policies and procedures for the agreement could also be determined during these conversations.

Student Accounts/Financial Aid

- Agreements that allow for students who take courses at a discounted or flat rate requires the business office officials to review the document. This will help with developing a process and procedure for the agreement and to ensure the financial aspect runs smoothly.

Admissions Office - Transfer Admissions Recruiter

- Once an Articulation Agreement is signed or renewed, it will need to be promoted by the Admissions Office. These staff will be speaking to potential students and will need general knowledge about how the Articulation Agreements work, enough to explain it correctly to prospective students.

University Marketing and Communications

- Once an Articulation Agreement is signed or renewed, it will need to be promoted. Partnership with enrollment management, academic affairs, and marketing will ensure the correct information is up to date, relevant, and distributed.

Articulation Agreement Lifecycle – RACI Matrix

Lifecycle Stage	Academic Program	Curricular Affairs & Student Achievement AVC/Curricular Planner	Registrar/ Transfer Coordinator	Provost / Chancellor	Admissions/ Enrollment Management	Academic Advising	Student Accounts / Financial Aid	University Marketing & Communications
Initiation & Intent to Partner	R	A	C	I	I	I	I	I
Partner Outreach & Coordination	R	A	C	I	I	I	I	I
Curriculum Review & Equivalencies	R	A	A	I	I	C	I	I
Drafting Agreement & Degree Maps	C	R/A	R/A	I	I	C	I	I
Policy, Compliance & ADA Review	C	R	A	I	I	I	I	I
Internal Review & Finalization	C	A	R	I	I	I	I	I
Signature & Formal Approval	C	R	I	A	I	I	I	I
Publication (Website, Transferology)	I	R	R/A	I	I	I	I	C
Promotion & Recruitment Use	I	I	C	I	R	C	I	C
Advising & Student Support Use	I	I	C	I	C	R/A	C	I
Maintenance & Renewal Tracking	I	R/A	C	I	I	I	I	I

Key:
R = Responsible | A = Accountable | C = Consulted | I = Informed

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Articulation Agreement (AA) *Type of Agreement*	Formal transfer contract between institutions which typically focus on academic policies that guide transfer, such as credit equivalents between schools. These are detailed in nature and collegial in purpose.
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) *Type of Agreement*	Transactional in nature and focus on specific outcomes or responsibilities between institutions. These are often broad in nature and short-term.
Course to Course *Scope of Agreement*	Course to Course agreements identify specific courses and how they transfer to and from institutions. Individual courses are reviewed in terms of content, learning outcomes, and relevance, and match another course at or above 75%. UW Oshkosh displays course to course agreements in Transferology.
Program to Program *Scope of Agreement*	Widely used to align community or technical college associate degrees to university bachelor's degree options. These agreements detail specific alignment of similar content offered at different degree levels. For example, associate degree in Nursing (ADN) to bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN).
Block Transfer *Scope of Agreement*	The word "block" refers to the idea of students being able to transfer a partial or full credential en bloc – or in a bundle. This may be the block transfer of general education, or as a degree in its totality. With block transfer arrangements, the receiving institution does not have to perform a course-by-course transfer credit evaluation and can satisfy degree (or general education) requirements in bulk.
Institution to Institution *Scope of Institutional Inclusion*	These agreements are the basis for an inter-college partnership. Participation may be at the institution level or within a specific college or discipline.
State-wide or System-wide *Scope of Institutional Inclusion*	These agreements are exclusive to public higher education institutions. It is common for these agreements to exist in areas of statewide employment shortages such as Nursing or Education.
Joint/Dual Admission *Agreements Focused on Enrollment*	Allows a student to be admitted and active at both institutions simultaneously while they pursue their studies. Often, students in admission programs have access to services and resources at both institutions, but are only enrolled at one institution at a time.
Guaranteed Admission *Agreements Focused on Enrollment*	Guaranteed Admissions differs from Joint Admissions as the student's admissibility is not granted until the student completes a certain set of requirements at one institution and moves onto the next institution.

Common Course Numbers *Agreements Focused on Credit Transfer*	When a state or system adopts a common course numbering system, this requires the institutions within the system to identify their course offerings using a similar schema and naming convention. It expands upon this premise to ensure that similar courses between institutions are also named exactly the same and have unified learning objectives so that, if a student transfers from one institution to another, the coursework will be recognized.
Reverse Transfer *Agreements Focused on Credit Transfer*	These agreements realize that students often transfer before completing a degree and encourage students to transfer credits back to a previously attended institution to complete a degree even after leaving that institution.
Prior Learning Assessment *Agreements Focused on Credit Transfer*	This includes nationally recognized exams such as AP (Advanced Placement), CLEP (College Level Exam Program) or IB (International Baccalaureate) Or, it may include military credit as identified on the Joint Services Transcript (JST) or as evaluated through a portfolio or competency review.
1 + 3 *Structure of Agreement*	A 1 + 3 agreement is designed for a student to start at an institution and transfer after 30 credits of work and without degree completion.
2 + 2 *Structure of Agreement*	2 + 2 programs are designed for students who take half of a degree at one institution and the second half at another institution. This is typically 60 semester credits/120 credit program.
3 + 1 *Structure of Agreement*	This type of agreement is designed for a student to complete 75% of the coursework at an institution and transfer to another institution for the final, often senior level, coursework. This is typically 90 semester credits/120 credit program.

Resources

- UW System Transfer Policy
  - https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-policies/uw-system-administrative-policies/uw-system-undergraduate-transfer-policy/
- AACRAO Articulation Agreement
  - https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/signature-initiative-docs/trending-topic-docs/transfer/aacrao-articulation-agreement-final_aacraocover.pdf