

## **Recommendations Regarding the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Revision Policy Goals**

The Academic Standards and Policies Committee – Articulation Subcommittee discussed the November 2, 2012 draft of the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) Revision Policy Goals and offers the following set of recommendations:

**Establish an Articulation Faculty Council (AFC):** The committee noted that faculty engagement in establishing and carrying out any articulation agreements is important to ensure we are designing a system that maximizes student success, not just a system that is administratively feasible. To this end it is recommended that an Articulation Faculty Council (AFC) be established to ensure that agreements established are effective with respect to classroom success and integration into curricular majors. It is recommended that such AFC be constituted with teaching faculty and disciplinary advisors, with representation from each of the UNC system campuses. We anticipate substantive working interactions with a similar body of community college faculty and advisors.

In addition to helping to craft any CAA, the AFC should regularly and periodically facilitate a summit for faculty and advisors from both Universities and Community Colleges to ensure effective implementation of articulation. The AFC should also regularly and periodically review the CAA and data pertaining to student success.

**Minimum Course Requirements (Bullet 4):** Language needs to be clarified that completion of the general education core pathway will satisfy UNC's minimum admission and *secondary school course* requirements. As written, the statement could be misread to imply that all general education course requirements would be satisfied by the AS/AA degree. If this statement instead is referring to ensuring transferability of credit, then that needs to be specified, but with the recognition that individual UNC institutions and programs will likely have additional course requirements above those in CAA specifications.

**Guaranteed Admission (7<sup>th</sup> Bullet):** It is important to give clarifying guidance to the guarantee of university admission for students completing an AA/AS degree with a grade of "C" or better in all transfer classes. It was noted that policy language in the June 2010 CAA provides such explanation, *i.e.*, admission to *a*, not *any*, UNC institution. It is important that there is clear articulation as to how the "guarantee" admission decisions will be made. There must be a clear process for appropriate pre- and post-admission advising to ensure student success. Additionally, the policy must ensure Universities retain authority to set appropriate admission standards according to their mission and programs that may be above this minimum.

**Tuition Scholarship (8<sup>th</sup> Bullet):** While the committee strongly supports the concept of merit scholarships, such cannot exclusively be offered to students who complete the AA/AS prior to transfer. Thus it is recommended this policy goal be struck from the proposed policy goals.

**Pathways:** The pathways articulated appear to be far too limited/rigid in scope. In every category and pathway there is a need for more options in every track...*e.g.*, physics and geology as options in the

physical science pathway, social sciences need a whole list of options. All pathways should recommend foreign languages.

Concern was also raised about overly defining tracks in the first year of community college. Given that there is a high propensity for students to change majors, any first year curriculum needs to provide a foundation that affords success in more specialized course work, while also providing sufficient diversity of experience to explore a range of disciplinary study.

It is also important to be clear in communication of expectations. Because of both content and sequence issues, not all programs can guarantee completion of a BA/BS within 2 years of completing an AA/AS. As long as there is transparency in advising, this should not be a major concern. (This issue was specifically noted for some science and engineering majors.)

Related to this point, care should be taken with respect to overuse of the term “seamless.” While the CAA should work to minimize barriers and roadblocks to transitions to a University program, honest assessment recognizes that any transition has issues that must be addressed. There are natural transition issues course to course, professor to professor, and clearly institution to institution. It is better to emphasize making effective transitions rather than seamless transitions.

Finally with respect to pathways or tracking, it is important that pathways and tracks are not established such that transition between VoTech and College pathways are hindered. The career training aspects of community colleges is a critical mission that should not be compromised. That said, a student in a career track may discover they have interest and aptitude in academic pursuit. Here articulation to a University program may require somewhat more time to complete a university major, but this ensuring the viability of such transition is critical. We suggest this can be accomplished if there are more choices considered in the pathways, but particularly by ensuring there is quality advising.