Uniform Articulation Agreement:
Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Engineering Pathways

Building off of the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) already in place between the University of North Carolina system and NC Community Colleges, the North Carolina Community College System and University of North Carolina system have developed agreements to provide seamless education pathways for students wishing to pursue specialized degrees in the high-demand careers of nursing and engineering. These agreements create uniform requirements for students moving between North Carolina’s public higher education systems, help students avoid course duplication, shorten the time to degree completion, eliminate the need for multiple agreements between institutions and help address the needs of both employees and employers by building a pipeline of skilled, talented citizens for promising careers.

While these agreements streamline the intra-institutional agreements, they do not ensure entrance into these rigorous bachelor programs of study, just as a freshman at one of our state’s public four-year institutions would not be guaranteed admittance into one of the designated areas as a junior. However, these articulation agreements keep costs lower for students by offering more course work at community colleges, eliminating course duplication and reducing time for those who continue toward their bachelor degree goals.

Uniform Articulation Between RN to BSN Programs and Associate Degree Nursing Programs

Smoothing the educational pathway for registered nurses seeking Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees

The Uniform Articulation Agreement between the 11 University of North Carolina RN to BSN programs and the 55 colleges in the North Carolina Community College System offering Associate Degree Nursing Programs supports the concept of a seamless, concise pathway for moving from community colleges to public universities, while also responding to the industry’s increasing demand that nurses pursue BSN degrees. A report published in 2010 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Institute of Medicine recommended increasing the proportion of nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80 percent in 2020 to meet the evolving demands of the health care industry.

Currently there are 11 RN to BSN programs within the University system, and 55 NC community colleges offering Associate Degree Nursing programs. In most cases, these colleges have bilateral articulation agreements in place with multiple universities. The number of programs and differing requirements for transfer create an unnecessary barrier for nurses seeking to continue their education, often resulting in increased time, duplication of courses and added cost to complete their BSN degree.

The Uniform Articulation Agreement will provide students a clear pathway to begin an Associate Degree Nursing program at an NC community college, and eventually transfer into any of the 11 RN to BSN programs within the UNC system. Students who successfully complete this pathway and who are admitted to an RN to BSN program within the UNC system will receive transfer credits that meet most, if not all, of the prerequisite course requirements at all University of North Carolina system RN to BSN programs. The agreement follows a 3+1 model, with the majority of credits being taken during the three years at the community college, providing further cost savings to students and their families.

The Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing Articulation Agreement (RN to BSN AA) will be effective August 1, 2015, for all community college nursing students entering in associate degree nursing programs and
who successfully complete an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree in nursing. Nursing students who were enrolled in an AAS degree program or completed the program prior to Fall Semester 2015 are subject to the conditions in place at the individual institutions at the time of their original enrollment as long as they have been continually enrolled.

**Uniform Articulation Agreement Between Baccalaureate and Associate Degree Engineering Programs**

*Providing seamless engineering pathways for students and respond to employers’ workforce needs*

This Uniform Articulation Agreement allows students to begin engineering studies at a North Carolina community college and to have the opportunity to transfer seamlessly to one of the University of North Carolina engineering programs. The agreement outlines a pathway that includes an Associate in Engineering degree designed specifically to meet the prerequisite requirements of the University of North Carolina engineering programs. Students who successfully complete this pathway will receive transfer credit for engineering prerequisite and general education courses at all of the University of North Carolina Bachelor of Science in Engineering programs, and Associate in Engineering graduates may then apply to any of these programs without taking additional or duplicative courses.

Engineers are often listed among the positions that industry struggle to fill. The development of the Uniform Engineering Articulation Agreement stemmed from the Building Engineering Pathways grant, funded by the Golden Leaf Foundation, with the purpose of expanding the pipeline to four-year engineering degrees. By providing a unified, seamless pathway to an engineering degree, the two public higher education systems are increasing students’ opportunities to pursue engineering while also responding to industry’s workforce needs.

Five of the 16 University of North Carolina constituent institutions currently offer Bachelor of Science in Engineering programs. The Associate in Engineering Program is a specialized college transfer degree for engineering majors and requires higher-level math courses as well as other general education and pre-major courses designed to prepare students to enter universities as juniors. The articulation agreement goes into effect for the fall 2015 semester.