

## **Revision of Board of Governors' Statute 2.34.04 on Transfer Students**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors revise Statute 2.34.04 on Transfer Students effective fall semester 2022. This statute is related to the number of credits that students may transfer in from non-baccalaureate degree institutions.

### **Rationale for Proposed Changes**

Community colleges are the entry point to higher education for over 40% of the U.S. undergraduates including a large population of underserved students. The most pressing barrier for vertical transfer (two-year to four-year college) is the loss of credits that community college students experience when they transition. The current transfer policies impose antiquated restrictions that increase the time and cost to degree and are contrary to current trends and best practices.

By limiting the number of credits that an individual can transfer into WSU from two-year institutions, transfer students are losing academic credits that they have already achieved and are being discouraged from seeking additional or specific credentials that are currently not transferable. These limitations also often result in students needing additional credits, often elective credits, from WSU in order to graduate thus increasing the financial cost of earning a bachelor's degree for transfer students. An increased cost and time to graduation often results in students then opting not to pursue additional credentials such as certificates, minors, and dual degrees while at WSU. The current policy creates undue burden and equity issues when compared to transfer students from four-year institutions who can apply all previously earned credit under the current policy. To further conflict matters, several public institutions in the state of Michigan do not have such restrictions on transfer credit. By being more restrictive, WSU runs the risk of being less competitive in our ability to recruit transfer students from two-year institutions.

The current transfer credit policy does allow for exceptions to accept additional credit. There are currently more than 60 articulation agreements in place that allow exceptions for more than 64 credits to transfer in from a two-year institution. These agreements require immense time and oversight to develop and maintain. Equalizing the policy to accept all academic credit will reduce administrative burdens in articulating transfer credit and create equal opportunities for all transfer students to bring their earned credit to WSU.

By limiting technical, vocational, and applied (TVA) credits to transfer in, we are creating additional financial and time burdens on students wishing to complete baccalaureate degrees. Existing statute 2.34.04.210 states "two-year technical degree programs at community colleges provide general and theoretical educational components which can serve as the foundation for both general and professional upper division studies at the University." Statute 2.43.06 currently is in place to allow for TVA credits to apply towards an expanded baccalaureate option, or capstone degree, with the intention of serving technical degree holders by creating direct pathways towards a baccalaureate degree. Wayne State does not currently offer, and has not offered in many years, any expanded baccalaureate capstone programs. The goal behind the described capstone program can be met in a more direct way through lifted restrictions on the amount of transferable credit

from two-year institutions and lifted restriction on TVA credit. Additional TVA credits are already allowed in programs such as Engineering Technology and Nursing.

Lastly, the existing policy, along with various articulation agreements, transfer guides, plans, state initiatives and other policies create a confusing and unproductive environment towards degree attainment. The proposed updates do not impact specific College, School, or Program requirements and maintain the University's 30 credit residency requirement while creating opportunities for innovative collaborations with community college partners that will increase the ability to successfully recruit and retain transfer students.

### **Current Statute Language Regarding Transfer Students**

According to the current Board of Governors statute 2.34.04 regarding Transfer Students, a student from a baccalaureate degree granting institution can transfer over all academic credit they have earned to Wayne State. A student from a non-baccalaureate degree institution can transfer up to 64 academic credits. The President or his/her designee may grant exceptions to this in exceptional circumstances.

Section 2.34.04.140 states that students may transfer up to 12 credits of technical, vocational, or applied credit if courses are determined to be cognate or related to a student's intended program. More than 12 credit hours may be transferred into specific programs when authorized by the curriculum or degree requirements of the program. If a student is transferring from a non-baccalaureate institution, the 12 technical, vocational, or applied credits are included in the 64-credit limitation.

### **Proposed Statute Revision**

The recommended revised text of the statute is presented in its entirety below.

We propose that the 64-credit transfer limit for students transferring from two-year institutions and the 12-credit transfer limit for TVA credit be removed from University policy. This requires revisions in sections 2.34.04.130 and 2.34.04.140 of the Board of Governors statute 2.34.04.

Further, we propose Board of Governors statute 2.43.06 regarding expanded baccalaureate degree options be removed in its entirety as this statute's purpose will be met through the proposed revisions in 2.34.04.140. This also requires deleting sections 2.34.04.210 and 2.34.04.290 which refer to expanded baccalaureate degree options such as capstone programs and the College of Lifelong Learning which is no longer in existence and that are later defined within 2.43.06.

Should the proposed revisions be adopted, 2.43.03.170 in the General Education statute would also need to be revised to remove reference to transfer credit limits. Proposed language reads as follows:

2.43.03.170 Equivalent courses taken at another institution may satisfy General Education requirements. Other proposed revisions throughout 2.34.04 include an affirming of our commitment to equity in transfer policies, updates to reflect the accurate names of accrediting agencies and other organizations, and removal of specific procedural practices that are continually evolving.

## **2.34.04 Transfer Students**

### 2.34.04.010 Preamble

The tradition of independence and autonomy in Michigan's higher education community has created a diversity of strong two- and four-year colleges and universities. Michigan's independent colleges and universities have various, recognized educational and economic missions, but taken together, they nevertheless constitute a comprehensive system of higher education within the State. This system is reflected not only in the complex teaching, research and service relations that exist among our colleges and universities, but also by the constant flow of transfer students among these institutions.

### 2.34.04.020

The transfer of students between Michigan's institutions of higher education is essential for the fulfillment of the total educational mission of the State, promoting access by students to institutions ~~with~~ with each with a different educational mission. The people of the State have created and continue to support an array of public two- and four-year colleges and universities. A choice among different institutions of higher learning is fundamental to fulfill the educational mission of the State and of Michigan's student population. Students should be able to exercise the opportunity to transfer between institutions without prejudice or penalty. Wayne State commits to participate in statewide initiatives consistent with our policies to ensure equal treatment for transfer students.

### 2.34.04.030

Transfer between two- and four-year colleges is also essential to the economic well-being of the State, and to the future growth of this entire region. Michigan's economy will increasingly require the basic, technical and professional skills provided by education at the associate, baccalaureate and graduate degree levels. It is recognized that the institutions providing these levels of education have their own strengths, roles, and responsibilities: The two-year colleges have vigorous programs in technical, vocational, and applied areas that train students and upgrade their skills for immediate employment opportunities, as well as offering introductory programs of a more traditional academic nature that serve general educational purposes and prepare students for further career development; the four-year colleges provide academic programs with greater in-depth range of development and broader educational base; the universities involve education at the undergraduate and graduate levels that benefit from the scholarship and research commitments of these institutions. The whole range of educational institutions mentioned above serve directly the society of which they are a part, and meet this obligation in various ways. Though distinct in character, these educational institutions do have a number of overlapping functions, and there is mobility of students among institutions. Freedom of movement between institutions offering various degrees is essential if Michigan's citizens are to obtain new knowledge that will be vital to future economic growth and the quality of life. Senior institutions in the State have a responsibility to cooperate among themselves, and with the junior and community colleges, to ensure that students are able to pursue advanced degrees in a coherent and timely fashion which minimizes redundancy and delay, and to preserve the quality of the students' education.

### 2.34.04.040

Wayne State University accepts responsibility for cooperation with other collegiate institutions, and has therefore designed a transfer policy which promotes broad access to higher education for

all students who have initiated studies at other colleges and universities. Basic provisions of the policy statement set forward below should be interpreted in the light of this overriding objective.

2.34.04.050 Introduction

Transfer of credit from one institution to another involves at least three considerations:

2.34.04.060

a) the educational quality of the institution from which the student transfers;

2.34.04.070

b) the comparability of the nature, content, and level of credit earned to that offered by the receiving institution; and

2.34.04.080

c) the appropriateness and applicability of the credit earned to the programs offered by the receiving institution, in light of the student's educational goals.

2.34.04.090

Accreditation speaks primarily to the first of these considerations, serving as the basic indicator that an institution meets certain minimum standards. ~~The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA)~~ Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) has a formal process of recognition which requires that any accrediting body so recognized must meet the same standards. Wayne State University accepts the definition of an accredited institution as one which has been granted full recognition by a regional accrediting group (such as the ~~North Central Association of Colleges and Schools~~ Higher Learning Commission) which has received a positive evaluation from ~~COPA~~ CHEA.

2.34.04.100

Comparability of the nature, content, and level of transfer credit and the appropriateness and applicability of the credit earned to programs offered by the receiving institution are as important in the evaluation process as the accreditation status of the institution at which the transfer credit was awarded. Since accreditation does not address these questions, this information must be obtained from catalogues and other materials and from direct contact between knowledgeable and experienced faculty and staff at both the receiving and sending institutions. When such considerations as comparability and appropriateness of credit are satisfied, ~~however, there is reasonable confidence that students from accredited institutions are qualified to undertake the receiving institutions' educational program. The principal mechanism used at Wayne State University to establish comparability is standard procedures for determining course equivalency, the results of which are embodied in Master Course Equivalency Tables. Procedures are also in place to determine whether specific courses are of a traditional academic nature if an exact equivalency may be lacking~~ transfer credit will be awarded. While the course may be awarded undergraduate credit, the corresponding degree-granting school or college will determine its final applicability to specific degree requirements.

#### 2.34.04.110 Equal Opportunity for Native and Transfer Students

Wayne State University will establish academic policies and standards, including satisfaction of proficiency requirements, which apply equally to all students. Within the guidelines established by academic policy, admission to major and professional programs and satisfaction of proficiency and graduation requirements will be applied without discrimination between native students and transfer students from all accredited two- and four-year colleges and universities.

#### 2.34.04.120 Transfer Credit Policy

Wayne State University policy governing transfer of credit from all accredited institutions of higher education will be applied equally to students transferring from community colleges and from baccalaureate colleges and universities. ~~With the exception of a credit hour acceptance limitation on nonbaccalaureate granting institutions (which basically have programs whose extent is not designed to replicate more than the first two years of traditional baccalaureate institutions), transfer credit policy will apply equally to all transfer students, regardless of whether or not such students have completed requirements for a two- or four-year college degree.~~

#### 2.34.04.130

General Rules Concerning Transfer of Credit. Wayne State University will accept all ~~traditional~~ academic credit from regionally accredited baccalaureate-granting institutions, and ~~up to 64 semester hours of~~ academic credits from regionally accredited non-baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. ~~Under exceptional circumstances, the President or his/her designee may grant an exception to the number of credits accepted from institutions.~~ Credits accepted for transfer are for courses for which a course equivalence exists or which have been determined to be of a traditional academic nature.

#### 2.34.04.135

Transfer of Credit from Institutions not Accredited by a Regional Accrediting Agency. Wayne State University may accept for transfer those credits ~~for which a grade of "A" or "B" was earned~~ from those institutions with candidacy status from a regional accrediting agency; or from other accredited institutions provided that the institution 1) grants a baccalaureate or associate degree, 2) is fully accredited by an agency recognized by COPA CHEA, and 3) the courses presented for transfer are shown to have equivalency or are determined to be of traditional academic nature, and 4) meet the transfer grade policy outlined in 2.34.04.150.

#### 2.34.04.140

Technical, Vocational and Applied Credit. To facilitate transfer of students, Wayne State University will accept ~~for transfer up to twelve (12) semester hours of~~ credit earned in technical, vocational and applied (TVA) courses at two- and four-year colleges if such courses are determined to be cognate or related to a student's intended program. The applicability of these technical, vocational, and applied transfer credits toward fulfillment of major program requirements shall be established through existing curricular procedures. ~~More than twelve (12) semester hours of credit may be transferred into specific major programs when specifically authorized by the curriculum or degree requirements of that program. For students transferring from non-baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, the 12 TVA credits will be included in the 64-credit limitation.~~

2.34.04.150

Grades Below "C". WSU will accept individual courses for transfer where the grade of "C" or above is earned, provided the cumulative grade point average earned by the transfer student meets admission standards. The grades will not contribute to the Wayne State University grade point average. A transfer student shall have the same opportunity as a native student to repeat a transfer course for replacement credit by substituting an equivalent Wayne State course, with the earlier credit replaced by the Wayne State course.

2.34.04.160

Transfer of Remedial or Development Coursework. Credit earned in courses designated remedial or developmental will not transfer.

2.34.04.170

Transfer of Redundant or Duplicative Coursework. Transfer credit will not be awarded for redundant coursework (i.e., courses with substantially duplicative content). Credit will be awarded for only one course in any set of redundant courses.

2.34.04.180

Residency and Upper Division Requirements. Transfer students will be required to meet the University and College residency requirement, and to obtain the same number of upper division credits in fulfillment of the baccalaureate degree as are required of native students in specific major programs.

2.34.04.190

Junior Standing. Wayne State University will award junior standing to all transfer students for whom sixty or more semester hours of credits have been accumulated, whether they are transferred credits or credits earned at Wayne State University. The University, acting through established procedures of governance, will retain the right to establish curricular pre-requisites in particular program areas. Junior standing will not guarantee automatic entry to professional programs in the Schools and Colleges. Transcripts will be individually evaluated to determine whether all prerequisites for professional standing have been met by native and transfer students.

2.34.04.200

General Distribution Requirements. Acting through established governance procedures, collegial units will establish general distribution requirements for the baccalaureate degree in major program areas which will apply equally to native and transfer students. Transfer credits for courses which have a course-equivalence relationship to courses at Wayne State University that have been certified to meet native general distribution requirements will likewise contribute to satisfaction of general distribution requirements for nonnative students. Courses of a ~~traditional~~ academic nature that lack equivalency may also contribute to satisfaction of general distribution requirements if they have been determined to have comparable subject matter equivalency to courses taken by native students.

~~2.34.04.210 — Expanded Baccalaureate Degree Options~~

~~Wayne State University will seek to design, in collaboration with other collegiate institutions, an expanded array of upper division programs and degree designations which will maximize~~

~~opportunities for two-year technical degree holders to pursue baccalaureate studies with minimal credit loss. Two-year technical degree programs at community colleges provide general and theoretical educational components which can serve as the foundation for both general and professional upper division studies at the University. The requirements of "capstone" programs will be established by guidelines developed in a later policy statement.~~

#### 2.34.04.220 Extension Offerings in Community College Districts

Wayne State University will continue to offer a wide range of credit courses, undergraduate through graduate, in extension locations where there is sufficient student demand. At the lower division level, enrollment in University course offerings will be analyzed each year to ensure that the prevailing pattern is for enrolled students to be matriculates of the University.

#### 2.34.04.230 Collaboration and Sharing of Resources

Wayne State University will encourage and facilitate collaborative efforts between the University and community colleges in teaching, research and community service. The University will also promote the reciprocal use of resources such as computers, libraries and technological aids by students and staff of the University and ~~area~~ state community colleges.

#### 2.34.04.240

Faculty-to-Faculty Interaction. Collegial units will establish ways and means of strengthening and encouraging interaction between University faculty and their community college counterparts. The Wayne State University advisory staff will continue to cooperate with their counterparts to ensure that prospective students understand the academic requirements in this institution.

#### 2.34.04.250

~~Upper Division Extension Offerings. The College of Lifelong Learning will continue its efforts to offer an expanded array of upper division courses in areas accessible to community college graduates, including the offering of such Wayne State University courses on community college campuses.~~

#### 2.34.04.260

~~ESCALATE. The University will continue its commitment to ESCALATE (Establish a Statewide Computer Assisted List of Transfer Equivalencies) the Michigan Transfer Network to collaborate with other two- and four-year colleges in the development of a master equivalency file and pathways between the for all of the State's public colleges and universities.~~

#### 2.34.04.270 Standard Transfer Procedures

Standard Procedure for Determining Equivalency. Collegial units will determine course-to-course equivalency for new transfer credits in their program areas. Major collegial units will develop, publish and implement standard procedures for determining equivalency of content and level of transfer credit and work collaboratively with other institutions on equivalency evaluation as necessary. ~~Evaluation of transfer courses could include examination of course descriptions, syllabi, texts, graded final examination papers, library holdings and laboratory equipment where applicable. Wayne State University will request that community colleges cooperate in the equivalency evaluation procedure by submitting to the University a packet of information containing detailed descriptions of all new courses on an annual basis. Other course work evaluated~~

and deemed acceptable will be awarded university transfer credit consistent with rules and policies governing transfer credit.

2.34.04.280

Master Course Equivalency Tables. The Master Course Equivalency Tables will continue to be produced and used for the purpose of determining course-to-course equivalency. Positive course equivalency determinations now embodied in the Master Course Equivalency Tables will be changed if course content at either the receiving or the transfer institution undergoes substantial modification. Course-to-course equivalency may be used to determine those transfer credits that fulfill specific major program requirements (e.g., curricular prerequisites, core or cognate courses for a disciplinary major). Academic units will retain the right to accept comparable subject matter equivalency as a standard in determining fulfillment of prerequisite, core or cognate requirements in their major program area. The Master Course Equivalency Tables will also serve as the basis for determining redundancy in transfer coursework.

2.34.04.290

~~Annual Report by the College of Lifelong Learning. The College of Lifelong Learning will be responsible for submitting an annual assessment of enrollment in lower division courses to the President or his/her designee.~~

2.34.04.300

~~Annual Report on Community College Transfer Student Performance. The President or his/her designee will prepare an annual report on the performance of community college transfer students at Wayne State University. Reports on the performance of transfer students from a particular community college will be sent to the President of that institution. As part of the University's ongoing efforts to improve student outcomes, transfer students will be included in all relevant university level student success analysis and reporting.~~

2.34.04.310 Definitions

Junior Standing. Junior standing is the tuition level designation applied to students who have completed sixty (60) semester hours of credit of college level work. The Junior standing designation is separate and distinct from the "Upper Division" designation which is assigned to students by individual collegial units according to criteria established by those units.

2.34.04.320

Comparable Subject Matter Equivalency. General distribution requirements may be fulfilled by transfer credits earned in courses that display comparable subject matter equivalency with courses offered at Wayne State University. A college-level transfer course will have comparable subject equivalency if it falls within a specified disciplinary area (e.g., science, social science, humanities, etc.), has equivalent theoretical and/or mathematical content, and contains other, specific curricular components which are deemed necessary to satisfy baccalaureate distribution requirements (e.g., laboratory experience).



2.34.04.330

Native Students are those who have been admitted and enrolled at Wayne State University before attending any collegiate institution (First Time In Any College (FTIAC) designation).

**Approvals**

This recommendation was approved by the Academic Senate and the Provost.