

# TRANSFERRING CREDITS



## Transferring Credits

### Applicability of the Articulation and Transfer Policy

Ohio's Articulation and Transfer Policy applies to college course credits, documented learning specified within the policy, and related articulation and transfer matters for all undergraduates and other students seeking admission to an Ohio public institution of higher education with a desire to: 1) transfer college credit among Ohio public institutions of higher education or 2) articulate secondary, postsecondary and other prior learning experiences as college credit to Ohio public institutions of higher education as specifically approved in this policy.

Members of the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Network (OATN) Oversight Board and Advisory Council recommend that Ohio's regionally accredited independent institutions of higher education adopt general policy requirements, practices and guidelines. An Ohio independent institution that wishes to be considered for participation in the OATN statewide guarantee processes – including authorization to use tools such as the e-transcript – may direct an inquiry to the OATN. Such participation, if approved by the chancellor of the Ohio Department of Higher Education, requires formal adoption of the policy by the governing authority of the independent institution.

### Institutional Transfer

In 1990, following a directive of the 118<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) developed the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy to facilitate students' ability to transfer credits from one Ohio public college or university to another in order to avoid duplication of course requirements. A subsequent policy review and recommendations produced by the Articulation and Transfer Advisory Council in 2004, together with mandates from the 125<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly in the form of Amended Substitute House Bill 95, have prompted improvements to the original policy. Additional legislation from the 125<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly also initiated the development of a statewide system for articulation agreements among state institutions of higher education for transfer students pursuing teacher education programs. Action by the 126<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly led to the establishment of criteria, policies and procedures for the transfer of technical courses completed through a career-technical education institution and standards for the awarding of college credit based on Advanced Placement (AP) test scores. Legislation from the 130<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly required public institutions of higher education to use baseline standards and procedures in the granting of college credit for military training, experience and coursework; establish an appeals process for resolving disputes over the awarding of credit for military experience; provide specific assistance and support to veterans and service members; adopt a common definition of a *service member* and *veteran*; and establish a credit articulation system in which

adult graduates of public career-technical institutions who complete a 900 clock-hour program of study and obtain an industry-recognized credential approved by the chancellor of the ODHE shall receive 30 college technical credit hours toward a technical degree upon enrollment at an Ohio public institution of higher education.

While all public colleges and universities are required to follow the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy, independent colleges and universities in Ohio may or may not participate in the Transfer Policy. Therefore, students interested in transferring to independent institutions are encouraged to check with the independent colleges or universities regarding their choice around transfer agreements. In support of improved articulation and transfer processes, the ODHE has established an articulation and transfer clearinghouse to receive, annotate and convey transcripts among public colleges and universities. This system is designed to provide standardized information and help colleges and universities reduce undesirable variability in the transfer credit evaluation process.

### Acceptance of Transfer and Articulated Credit

To appropriately recognize courses and provide equity in the treatment of incoming transfer students and students native to the receiving institution, transfer credit will be accepted for all college-level courses successfully completed in or after Fall 2005 at Ohio public institutions of higher education. Students who successfully completed Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees prior to Fall 2005 with a 2.0 or better overall GPA would also receive credit for all college-level courses they have passed. While this reflects the baseline policy requirement, individual institutions may set equitable institutional policies that are more accepting. Pass/Fail courses, credit-by-examination credits, experiential learning courses and other nontraditional credit courses that meet these conditions will also be accepted and posted to the student record.

### Application of Transfer and Articulated Credit

*Application of credit* is the decision process performed by the receiving institution to determine how the credits it has accepted and recorded on the student's official academic transcript will or will not apply toward program and degree requirements. While the receiving institution makes this decision, it will do so within the parameters of the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy.

### The Bachelor's Degree

Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees are designed to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions to continue their education at the bachelor's degree level. General education and pre-major courses offered by Tri-C for transfer purposes are designed to parallel those courses that comprise the equivalent of the first two years of study leading to the bachelor's degree at a four-year college or university. Learn more about Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees (select Associate of Arts Degree or Associate of Science Degree on the landing page).

In some career-technical programs in Tri-C's Associate of Applied Business and Associate of Applied Science curricula, an option enables a student to earn an associate degree in the program at Tri-C and then transfer to a four-year institution to work toward a bachelor's degree in the designated technical field or other programs. Some credits earned at Tri-C in an Associate of Applied Business or Associate of Applied Science degree are transferable toward a four-year degree only at cooperating four-year colleges and universities or those where

Articulation Agreements exist. Students should consult with both a Tri-C counselor and an advisor at the receiving institution regarding this.

It is the student's responsibility to become acquainted with and follow the requirements for the transfer of courses. Students are strongly encouraged to complete an associate degree prior to transfer, as there are numerous benefits such as additional scholarship opportunities, upper-class standing and an increased likelihood of completing a bachelor's degree. Tri-C counselors are available to assist with academic planning, and Tri-C Transfer Center specialists are able to discuss pre-transfer planning.

Students intending to transfer can take general education courses from the Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36) and lower division major-related courses, usually from Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGs), during their freshman and sophomore years at Tri-C. OT36 and TAG courses are part of the Ohio Transfer to Degree Guarantee and are guaranteed to transfer to any public college or university in Ohio. After transferring, students will specialize in a major at the receiving institution during their junior and senior years. Learn more about the OT36, TAGs and the Ohio Transfer to Degree Guarantee.

## Articulation Agreements and Transfer Pathways

University partnerships and articulation agreements have been established by Tri-C with many of Ohio's public colleges and universities, a number of Ohio's private institutions and other institutions across the country. Most articulation agreements provide seamless transfer pathways approved by both institutions for the completion of associate and bachelor's degrees or dual-admission opportunities. Students are encouraged to check articulation agreements periodically for newly added partnerships, agreements and transfer pathways, which are updated throughout the year. These program-specific legal agreements offer transfer opportunities for students and enable them to take advantage of associated benefits, such as significant financial savings, upper-class standing, additional scholarship opportunities and/or the ability to take classes at both institutions concurrently. Learn more about articulation agreements here.

For the most successful transfer experience, it is recommended that students consult with a Tri-C counselor for academic planning and assistance, a Tri-C Transfer Center specialist for pre-transfer planning and an advisor from the intended transfer school for that institution's requirements and procedures. Students are encouraged to start their transfer planning early to save time and money. Learn more about Tri-C Counseling and the Tri-C Transfer Centers.

## Ohio Transfer To Degree Guarantee

**Advanced Placement (AP):** High school students who have taken an AP course and the associated AP exam may be eligible, based on their AP exam score, for guaranteed college credit upon entering an Ohio public college or university. The awarded credit is usually applied toward a General Education curriculum. Learn more about AP and how your score may be applied.

**Apprenticeship Pathway Programs:** The Apprenticeship Pathways Initiative advocates for individuals completing apprenticeships to incorporate their learning into academic credit and encourages them to advance their academic credentials, saving them time and money. Ohio apprenticeship programs partner with Ohio public two-year institutions of higher education to provide technology-specific statewide articulation agreements that recognize nontraditional prior learning. College credit awarded through an Apprenticeship Pathway Program applies toward an applied associate degree. Each articulation agreement simplifies

student advising by outlining how apprenticeship training in a certain pathway applies to an applied associate degree and lists the remaining courses required to complete the degree. The application of credit toward an applied associate degree is guaranteed at the participating receiving institutions. Learn more about Apprenticeship Pathway Programs.

**Career Technical Assurance Guides (CTAGs):** CTAGs provide recognition of learning for students who have completed approved adult or secondary (high school) career-technical coursework. CTAGs help these students enter college with articulated college-level credit. In order to receive credit, students must complete Verification Form Part I and may need to provide additional information. Time limits and conditions for awarding CTAG credit vary by technical area. See a Tri-C counselor to discuss details. Learn more about CTAG courses from the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and read about approved CTAG courses at Tri-C.

**College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** Students interested in earning college credit for subject area knowledge and skills acquired through prior learning should consider taking a CLEP exam. Learn more about available exams, and see how your CLEP exam score applies at Tri-C.

**Industry Recognized Transfer Assurance Guides (ITAGS):** Students earning agreed-upon industry-recognized credentials may receive college-level credit from Tri-C. These ITAGS are based upon the knowledge, skills and competencies gained through credential attainment, regardless of where the learning for the credential took place. In some instances, ITAGs will overlap with other transfer initiatives. This will expand access to other statewide transfer agreements (CTAGs, MTAGs and TAGs) but not replace them. Learn more about ITAG courses from the ODHE and read about approved ITAG courses at Tri-C.

**Military Transfer Assurance Guides (MTAGs):** MTAGs guarantee that certain types of military training, experience and/or coursework align with existing college and university courses for which students may be granted appropriate credit. MTAGs work best for students who have either a Joint Services Transcript or a Community College of the Air Force Transcript. See a Tri-C counselor to review your military transcript for potential MTAG credit. Learn more about MTAG courses.

**Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy:** With leadership from the ODHE, the state of Ohio has established a coherent statewide policy intended to facilitate a student's ability to seamlessly complete their highest level of educational goal achievement within Ohio's postsecondary educational system. To that end, the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy was developed to facilitate the transfer of students and credits from any state college or university to another. It encourages faculty recognition of comparable and compatible learning experiences and expectations across institutions. It also encourages students to complete units of educational experience as they progress (i.e., Ohio Transfer 36, Transfer Assurance Guides and associate and bachelor's degrees). Learn more about the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy.

**Ohio Articulation Number (OAN):** When a course at an Ohio public institution of higher education is approved by a statewide faculty panel for a particular Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG), it is assigned an OAN. These discipline-specific courses or course sequences meet state-established learning outcome standards. This common statewide OAN is assigned to each approved course in addition to its unique institutional course number or designation. This signifies, in part, that the course is guaranteed to apply as an equivalent course or courses bearing the same OAN offered at other Ohio public institutions of higher education. Students are assured of these courses' equivalency at any Ohio public

institution of higher education that has the same OAN approval for the time period during which the student took the course at another Ohio public institution of higher education. Assurance applies not only to the equivalency of the course but also to its application to the degree objective. Courses within the Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36) may also be part of a TAG. In this case, the course has both an OT36 OAN (beginning with "TM") and a TAG OAN (beginning with "O").

**Ohio Guaranteed Transfer Pathways (OGTPs):** OGTPs help students streamline credit transfer among Ohio's public institutions of higher education and find pathways to degree completion. OGTPs serve as advising tools by identifying courses that are part of the ODHE's statewide transfer guarantees. OGTPs are designed to provide a clear path to associate degree completion followed by transfer to an Ohio public college or university for bachelor's degree completion. Tri-C's articulation agreements with many of Ohio's public colleges and universities, a number of Ohio's private institutions and other institutions across the country also provide students with transfer pathways for both associate and bachelor's degree completion. Learn more about OGTPs and Tri-C's articulation agreements.

**Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36):** The OT36 consists of general education course requirements guaranteed to transfer among all Ohio public institutions of higher education. Students who intend to transfer to an Ohio public four-year institution to pursue a bachelor's degree after completing a Tri-C associate degree select their general education courses from Tri-C's approved OT36 courses. See a Tri-C counselor for course selection assistance. An OT36 course may also be a TAG course. Learn more about OT36 courses from the ODHE and read about approved OT36 courses at Tri-C.

**Ohio Technical Center Degree Pathways (OTC):** The OTC builds upon Ohio's existing articulation and transfer processes to help students achieve strong postsecondary foundations and futures. The OTC allows students who have earned specified credentials from an Ohio technical center in a 600-plus clock-hour pathway approved by the chancellor of the ODHE to receive up to 30 college-level technical credits. The 30 semester credits are awarded as a block of credit rather than as credit for specific courses. The credit is awarded toward an Associate of Technical Studies degree after successfully enrolling at Tri-C or another Ohio public college or university. Learn more about the OTC.

**Transfer Assurance Guides (TAGs):** TAG courses are lower-division courses that are part of an academic major. Students who intend to transfer to an Ohio public four-year institution to pursue a bachelor's degree after completing a Tri-C associate degree should choose appropriate TAG-approved courses for their intended bachelor's degree program. See a Tri-C counselor for course selection assistance. Learn more about TAG courses from the ODHE and read about TAG-approved courses at Tri-C.

## Conditions for Transfer Admission

1. Graduates with associate degrees from Ohio's public institutions of higher education and a completed, approved Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36) shall be admitted to a public institution of higher education in Ohio, provided their cumulative GPA is at least 2.0 for all previous college-level courses. Further, these students shall have admission priority over graduates with an out-of-state associate degree and other transfer students with transferable and/or articulated college credit.
2. Associate degree holders who have not completed the OT36 from an Ohio public institution of higher education will be eligible for preferential consideration for admission as transfer students as

long as the institution's admission criteria, such as the minimum academic standards, space availability, adherence to deadlines and payment of fees, are fairly and equally applied to all undergraduate students.

3. In order to encourage completion of the baccalaureate degree, students who are not enrolled in or who have not earned an associate degree but have earned 60 semester/90 quarter hours or more of credit toward a baccalaureate degree with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 for all previous college-level courses will be eligible for preferential consideration for admission as transfer students, as long as the institution's admission criteria, such as the minimum academic standards, space availability, adherence to deadlines and payment of fees, are fairly and equally applied to all undergraduate students.
4. Students who have not earned an associate degree or who have not earned 60 semester/90 quarter hours of credit with a GPA of at least 2.0 for all previous college-level courses will be eligible for admission as transfer students on a competitive basis.
5. Incoming transfer students admitted to a college or university shall compete for admission to selective programs, majors and units on an equal basis with students native to the receiving institution.

The admission of transfer students by an institution, however, does not guarantee admission to any majors, minors or fields of concentration at the institution. Some programs have additional academic and nonacademic requirements beyond those for general admission to the institution (e.g., background check, a GPA higher than 2.0 or a GPA higher than the average required for admission to the institution). Once admitted, transfer students shall be subject to the same regulations governing the applicability of catalog requirements as native students. Furthermore, transfer students shall be accorded the same class standing and other privileges as native students on the basis of the number of credits earned. All residency requirements must be completed at the receiving institution.

## Responsibilities of Students

To maximize transfer credit application, prospective transfer students must take responsibility for planning their course of study as early as possible to meet both the academic and nonacademic requirements of the institution to which they desire to articulate or transfer credit. The student is responsible for investigating and using information, advising and other available resources to develop such a plan. Students should actively seek program, degree and transfer information; meet with an advisor from both the current and receiving institutions to assist them in preparing a course of study that meets the academic requirements for the program/degree to which they plan to transfer; use the various electronic course/program transfer and applicability database systems, including Ohio Transfer to Degree Guarantee; and select courses/programs at their current institution that satisfy requirements at the receiving institution to maximize the application of transfer credit. Specifically, students should identify early in their collegiate studies an institution and major to which they desire to transfer. Furthermore, students should determine if there are foreign language requirements or any special course requirements that can be met during the freshman or sophomore year. This will enable students to plan and pursue a course of study that will better articulate with the receiving institution's major.

## Appeals Process

Following the evaluation of a student transcript from another institution, the receiving institution will provide the student with a Statement of Transfer and Articulated Credit Applicability (Degree Audit Report). A

student disagreeing with the application of transfer and/or articulated credit by the receiving institution must file their appeal in writing within 90 days of receipt of the Statement of Transfer and Articulated Credit Applicability. The institution shall respond to the appeal within 30 days of the receipt of the appeal at each appeal level.

### **Student Complaints Following Transfer Appeals at the Receiving Institution**

If a student exhausts the appeals process at the receiving institution and chooses to pursue further action, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) responds to formal written complaints related to the Ohio Articulation and Transfer Policy against public, independent nonprofit and proprietary institutions of higher education in Ohio. While the ODHE has limited authority over colleges and universities and cannot offer legal advice or initiate civil court cases, the staff will review written complaints submitted through its established process and work with student complainants and institutions.

### **Degree and Credit Transfer**

Students who plan to transfer to a four-year college or university have transfer options and should meet with a Tri-C counselor to discuss which is best for them.

#### **Associate Degree Preferred**

Students are strongly encouraged to complete an associate degree prior to transfer, as there are numerous benefits, including additional scholarship opportunities, upper-class standing and an increased likelihood of completing a bachelor's degree. Additionally, many articulation agreements with four-year institutions are designed to benefit students who complete an associate degree. If the student completes the degree requirements within the parameters of the Ohio Transfer 36 (OT36) requirements, 36 to 40 semester credits will transfer automatically, and the remaining credits up to the 60 that make up the associate degree will be evaluated for transfer on a course-by-course basis unless an articulation agreement is in place. Students who complete the OT36 and an associate degree are guaranteed admission to any Ohio public college or university, provided their cumulative GPA is at least 2.0 for all previous college-level courses.

#### **Course-by-Course Transfer**

Students who do not complete the OT36 or an associate degree can plan a transfer program with a Tri-C counselor on a course-by-course basis. The receiving school evaluates the transferability and applicability of credit for each course taken, which requires the student to select a receiving school well in advance and enroll in appropriate courses with the assistance of a Tri-C counselor and especially a representative from the receiving school. Although this provides no advance assurance of transferability as provided by the OT36 or associate degree completion, it does provide the flexibility to select coursework tailored to meet specific program admission requirements, if this is important to the student. Successful transfer of courses using this method requires careful planning and course selection with the assistance of a Tri-C counselor. This method gives the student the option of taking only those Tri-C courses that will be accepted at the program level at the receiving school, avoiding the problem of taking the same course twice (once at Tri-C to meet general transfer requirements and again at the receiving school to meet a program admission transfer requirement). The following guidelines are the recommended process students should follow to transfer the maximum number of credits using the individual course evaluation method:

1. Identify the institution and the major to which credit will be transferred.

2. Refer to the receiving institution's current catalog.
3. Review the program admission requirements for the intended major.
4. Schedule a consultation with a Tri-C counselor to review the program requirements and identify their equivalents in the Tri-C curriculum.
5. Consult with the appropriate representative at the receiving school to resolve any questions about transferability and applicability at the admission, general education and/or program level.
6. Complete all specific courses and sequences that the Tri-C counselor designates as meeting the program requirements for the school where credits will be transferred.
7. After completing college coursework at Tri-C, complete a request for a transcript of grades to be sent to the admission office at the receiving institution. Consult with the receiving institution's admission office about other details necessary to complete this step. Learn more about requesting a Tri-C transcript of grades.

### **Associate Degree to Bachelor's Degree**

In general, courses in the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees are designed to parallel freshman- and sophomore-level courses at four-year colleges and universities. Some Tri-C career/technical programs in the Associate of Applied Business and the Associate of Applied Science curricula have an option that enables students to earn an associate degree in these programs at Tri-C and then transfer to a four-year institution to work toward a baccalaureate degree in the designated technical field. Credits earned at Tri-C in the two-plus-two career/technical option are transferable toward a four-year degree only at cooperating four-year colleges and universities. Students should consult with a Tri-C counselor if interested in the two-plus-two career/technical transfer option.

### **Transfer Course Selection**

Counselors help students plan individual transfer programs using the above options. Students who are undecided about a major will be assisted in planning a transfer program that meets general admission requirements at the receiving school. Tri-C offers preparatory or refresher courses in English composition, reading comprehension, mathematics and speech communication for students who need to upgrade these basic skills. These courses are not designed for transfer but are intended to provide students with the opportunity to improve their skills. To avoid taking a course that does not transfer, it is the student's responsibility to select courses with the assistance of a Tri-C counselor.