

Approval and Review of Bilateral Agreements

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Authority: Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

History: Non-applicable

Related Policies: Non-Applicable

Additional Resources: [SACS: Comprehensive Standard 3.4.4: Acceptance of Academic Credit and Comprehensive Standard 3.4.7: Consortial Relationships/ Contractual Agreements- Collaborative Academic Arrangements- Policy and Procedures](#)

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1. Introduction

The state of North Carolina through the UNC-GA maintains Comprehensive Articulation Agreements between its 17 constituent institutions and most of North Carolina's Community Colleges. The NCCC/UNC Bilateral Inventory by University (2009, pp. 3-5) lists 59 such agreements between ECU and community colleges, which offer programs that align with ECU's degree programs. That list is accessible on the NC Community Colleges website:

<http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/programs/docs/CollegeTransfer/Bilateral%20Agreement/Bilaterals%20009%20by%20University%20Word%20version%2017.09.pdf> As new programs are approved and curricula evolve, East Carolina University may enter into articulation agreements that are of mutual benefit to ECU and to other community colleges. The special circumstances surrounding transfer agreements for associate in applied science (AAS) programs, which are not designed for transfer, require bilateral rather than statewide articulation. Special circumstances include the different accreditation criteria for faculty in transfer and non-transfer programs, the different general education requirements for transfer and non-transfer programs, and the workforce preparedness mission of the technical/community college AAS programs. Under bilateral agreements, ECU and one or more community colleges may join in a collaborative effort to facilitate the transfer of students from AAS degree programs to baccalaureate degree programs. Each articulation or bilateral agreement must clearly demonstrate that its objectives are consistent with the ECU mission and that it is appropriate to the degrees, programs or courses to which it applies. The purpose of this regulation is to institutionalize a planned and smooth procedure for academic units seeking to develop a bilateral agreement.

2. Relevant Definitions

SACS defines three types of contractual relationships, which will be covered by this regulation: [See Commission policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements: Policy and Procedures," available at www.sacscoc.org]

2.1.1. Consortial Relationship: A consortial relationship typically is one in which two or more institutions share in the responsibility of developing and delivering courses and programs that meet mutually agreed-upon standards of academic quality.

2.1.2. Contractual Agreement: A contractual agreement typically is one in which an institution enters an agreement with another institution or service provider for receipt or delivery of courses/programs or portions of courses or programs delivered by another institution or service provider.

2.1.3. Collaborative Academic Arrangements: Collaborative academic arrangements are agreements by institutions accredited by SACSCOC and accredited or non-accredited degree-granting institutions of higher education throughout the world for purposes of awarding academic credits and/or educational program completion credentials, e.g., certificates, diplomas, degrees or transcripts. Institutions describe collaborative academic arrangements in many different ways, most commonly identifying them as dual or joint educational programs, affiliations, partnerships, and consortial agreements. [See Commission policy "Collaborative Academic Arrangements: Policy and Procedures," available at www.sacscoc.org]

3. University Bilateral Agreements Committee (UBAC)

The Office of the Provost will appoint a University Bilateral Agreements Committee (UBAC) by June 2012.

3.1. UBAC Charge

The committee will meet a minimum of once each semester to review and recommend approval/disapproval of pending bilateral agreements.

3.2. Review of Existing Bilateral Agreements

All bilateral agreements currently in force by ECU will be reviewed on biennially. A significant component of each review will be to evaluate the extent to which the agreement demonstrates that its objectives are consistent with the ECU mission and that it is appropriate to the degrees, programs or courses to which it applies.

3.3. UBAC Review Criteria

The UBAC will review bilateral agreements using/considering the following criteria and factors:

3.3.1. Results of annual evaluations conducted by the participating ECU department.

3.3.2. The agreement continues to demonstrate that its objectives are consistent with the ECU mission and that it is appropriate to the degrees, programs or courses to which it applies.

3.3.3. The agreement contains all information required for submission of a new bilateral agreement including appropriate signatures.

3.3.4. The agreement is current in terms of the dates of the agreement.

3.3.5. The specific criteria contained within the agreement are still appropriate under current university or UNC GA rules or policies.

3.3.6. The committee will solicit from the department, school or college the level of current student participation in the agreement.

3.4. Range of Committee Recommendations

The recommendations of the UBAC should include one of the following components for each agreement reviewed:

3.4.1. Continue the agreement.

3.4.2. Recommend changes to the agreement for failure to comply to any of the requirements stated previously.

3.4.3. Recommend renegotiation of the agreement if significant changes have occurred.

3.4.4. Recommendation to vacate the agreement for appropriate reason stated by the UBAC.

3.5. UBAC Membership

UBAC membership will consist of 4 faculty and 3 administrators representing different departments and colleges. Members will serve three-year terms.

4. Approval Procedure for New Bilateral Agreements

4.1. Department chair completes the university's Proposed Bilateral Agreement Form (PBAF)(Attachment 1, ECU and Pitt Community College Agreement). With interdisciplinary degree programs, the chair of the program's coordinating committee (faculty from different disciplines/departments) presents the PBAF to the dean or vice chancellor under whose authority the interdisciplinary degree resides.

4.1.1. After review and approval by the department chair and dean, the PBAF is forwarded to the University Bilateral Agreement Committee for review and recommendation.

4.1.2. After review and a positive recommendation by the UBAC, the PBAF is forwarded to the Provost for review and approval.

4.2. Each approved bilateral agreement will be forwarded to the Office of Academic Program Planning and Development, which is the university repository for such documents. The Office of Academic Program Planning and Development subsequently will make the agreement available to the public.

4.3. Each bilateral agreement must contain a clause that allows either institution to vacate the agreement provided 30-day notification is offered. Reasons for breaking the agreement may be, but are not limited to, the following: insufficient participation in the agreement, revocation of regional or other accreditation, misalignment between mission of the university or other reasons as may reflect on the appropriateness of the agreement.

4.4. Each agreement must contain a starting date, a review date (must be evaluated by the department annually and reviewed by the UBAC biennially), and an ending date.

4.5. Each agreement must contain a description of the parties entering into the agreement.

4.6. Each agreement must contain a preamble containing a general statement regarding the nature of the agreement.

4.7. Each agreement must contain a specific set of criteria for which the agreement will function, and against which the participating ECU department can annually evaluate its effectiveness.

4.8. Each agreement must be signed by representatives from each institution representing all of the following:

4.8.1. Department chairperson or unit head.

4.8.2. Dean of the college.

4.8.3. Chief academic officer or chief executive officer.

5. Effective Date of Regulation Implementation: June 1, 2012.