Creating Transfer/Degree Completion/ or Program-to-Program Articulation Agreements with Other Educational Institutions

General Overview

UWM currently has many transfer agreements in place with a variety of other educational institutions. For a complete listing of same, go to: https://www4.uwm.edu/future_students/transfer/special_programs.cfm and scroll down to the bottom of the page.

General guidelines for the establishment of such agreement are provided for by UW System document ACIS 6.2, which may be found at: http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acis/acis-6-2.pdf. The program-to-program template is attached.

Transfer agreements serve various purposes. Most of them, particularly those established with the Wisconsin Technical College System, are program-specific “transfer articulation” agreements which spell out how credits earned in a particular program at the WTCS campus will transfer and apply towards a particular degree program at UWM. Some of the existing agreements are broader and specify how coursework and/or an earned associate’s degree at another campus will transfer to UWM generally. UWM also has several “guaranteed transfer” agreements in place which spell out how a student may begin his or her studies at another institution and then transfer to UWM to complete a baccalaureate degree.

Transfer agreements of any type may be initiated either by UWM or the other educational institution. In either case, the key first step is to engage the relevant academic unit representatives (e.g. faculty/staff, department chairs or possibly the academic dean) at both campuses to assess mutual interest and curricular alignment, determine the goals of the agreement, whether and how it will benefit both students and the institutions, etc. Ideally, program-specific transfer articulation agreements should spell out not only how courses taken at the other institution will transfer and be applied to UWM degree requirements, but also clearly specify what requirements remain to be completed at UWM. The goal should always be to enable the student to enroll in the most appropriate courses at the first institution such that s/he will have the most efficient path to eventual degree completion at UWM while avoiding or minimizing “wasted” credits that do not transfer or do not satisfy UWM degree requirements. Typically a representative from Academic Affairs (most often the Associate Vice Chancellor) will coordinate development or revision of transfer agreements, working with the appropriate academic unit representatives at UWM and with
an appropriate counterpart(s) at the partnering institution. However, it is also important to involve other UWM representatives as may be appropriate, including the Office of Enrollment Management, Admissions, Registrar, Legal Affairs and possibly Finance and Administrative Affairs, depending on individual circumstances.

Issues to Consider

In establishing (or significantly revising) a transfer agreement of any type, a number of issues should be considered, including the following:

- What is the overall goal of establishing the agreement? How will it serve prospective students, UWM, and the other partner institution?
- What is the likely enrollment impact when compared to the status quo? I.e., is it likely that more students will enroll at UWM as a result of the agreement, or is it possible that students who might otherwise directly enroll at UWM will instead enroll (or take more credits) at the partner institution? If more students are expected to enroll at UWM, does the program have adequate capacity to accommodate them without adversely affecting UWM students seeking admission to the same program?
- What are the cost implications for UWM? Will there be any waiver or reduction of the application fee, any special tuition pricing, etc.?
- How will the agreement be implemented, maintained and periodically reviewed/updated?
- If the agreement offers or implies guaranteed admission, what admission criteria are being used and what will the application process be for transferring students? Any special forms, procedures or tracking of students required?
- Are there any legal or policy implications associated with the agreement? I.e., are we committing to any sort of admissions “guarantee” or making any other commitment that might require new or revised academic or administrative policies?
- How and where will the agreement be published and promoted?

Approval Process

Once agreement has been reached to establish (or significantly revise) a transfer agreement, follow the routing procedures outlined below.
Establishing an Articulation Agreement

Academic Unit Develops Draft Agreement.
http://www4.uwm.edu/registrar/faculty/upload/Articulation_Template.docx

Registrar’s Office Review
Sends to Admissions Office if admissions guarantee and/or Department of Finance & Administration if financial and/or Legal Affairs. Sends to UW System.

Academic Unit Representative (upon approval of department and dean) sends to articulating institution.

Academic Unit Representative receives back and sends to Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.

Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs obtains Provost’s signature.

Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs keeps original. Sends copies to Registrar and Academic Unit Representative.