

Arizona

Arizona Board of Regents

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- 1) Does the state have an identifiable “P-16” effort visible? Who is in charge of this effort?
Yes, in the Fall of 2005 Governor Napolitano established the Governor’s P-20 Council
For additional information go to <http://www.azgovernor.gov/P20/>;
Debra Raeder is the executive director and can be reached at draeder@az.gov.
- a) Does the agency include a utility or function on its website designed explicitly to help potential students locate an appropriate college or university to attend?
The Arizona Commission on Post Secondary Education does provide a link to all colleges and universities in AZ.
<http://stayinschool.azhighered.org/home.aspx> (home page)
http://stayinschool.azhighered.org/acpe_default.aspx?pageid=11 (link to higher education institutions in AZ)
- 2) Is a mandated or recommended college preparatory curriculum in place in the state’s public high schools?
Not at this time. This is an issue the P-20 Council is beginning to address.
- 3) Has the state articulated a set of explicit competencies or skills that define what it means to be “college ready?”
No. It might be helpful to know that there is no state-wide regulatory agency or coordinating board that would address anything in higher education at the state level.
- 4) Are systematic programs in place in the state that encourage students to accelerate progress by taking college-level courses while still enrolled in high school?
Students may take dual enrollment courses offered by community colleges in the high schools or some students take courses at community colleges while still in high school.
- 5) Is there a statewide policy present that governs placement into college-level courses or remedial courses? Is a standard set of placement tests recommended or required? If yes, are common cut scores for placement decisions in place or do institutions get to set their own?
No, there is not a statewide policy that governs placement into college-level or remedial courses.

- 6) Is there a visible statewide transfer and articulation policy? Does this cover all institutions or only public institutions? What are the specifics of this policy?

There is a very strong transfer and articulation system in Arizona, between the public community colleges and universities, but it is not in a state policy, per se. It was mandated by the legislature and there is language in the statute that requires the Arizona Board of Regents and the Arizona community colleges to work together to improve transfer articulation. There are 10 community college districts in Arizona, each with its own elected governing board; there is no statewide board for the community colleges.

A thumbnail sketch of the key components of our transfer system is attached at the end of the document. Please visit the website: <http://az.transfer.org/cas/atass/index.html>

- a) Is the transfer/articulation policy accompanied by a statewide transferable general education requirement? Does this name actual courses and/or credits? Are specific competencies identified that the student should meet through this coursework? Is testing used to guarantee student competency for progress or transfer?

Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) is a 35 credit block with courses that fit within the approved categories. Competencies are not identified, but rather categories of courses, such as math, sciences, humanities, etc... No testing is used to guarantee competency.

- b) More specifically, does an AA or AS degree from a community college in the state meet general education requirements at public four-year institutions? What mechanisms are in place to make sure this actually happens?

Yes. The transfer system was agreed to by all community colleges and universities (see note above on the legislative statute), and is a policy of the Arizona Board of Regents, the governing board of the three public universities.

- c) Does credit from transfer courses meet specific course requirements at the transfer institution (e.g. American History counts for American History) or do just the credits transfer to count against the total needed for graduation?

Courses may transfer as equivalent courses, and many do; others may transfer as elective credit and apply only to the total hours required for graduation.

- 7) Are there statewide test-out or competency-based provisions that will allow a student to accelerate progress toward a degree?

The universities use AP, CLEP, etc... for credit.

- 8) Does the state have an easily-accessible state-supported alternative institution that allows students to complete their degrees more quickly or conveniently than through attendance at a traditional public institution?

Online programs are available through Northern Arizona University primarily, but all three universities offer some programs either completely on line or as hybrids, at the graduate and undergraduate level. The Maricopa Community College District has one college that offers only on-line programs, Rio Salado Community College, but these are either at the associate level or certificate level. They do offer teacher certification at the post-baccalaureate level.

- a) Does the state have an accessible central bank or catalog of on-line courses contributed by many institutions that enable students to do “one-stop shopping” for electronic courses?

There is not a statewide bank or catalog. The Arizona universities have Arizona Universities Network (AZUN) for accessing online courses/programs at the three universities. <http://www.azun.net>;

- 9) Does the state provide incentives to institutions for improvements in degree production or graduation rates? For minimizing the number of students graduating with excessive numbers of credits (e.g. more than 120 SCH)?

No. The state does not provide incentives to institutions for improvements in degree production or graduate rates, nor for minimizing the number of students graduating with excessive numbers of credits.

- 10) Does the state provide incentives for students who successfully complete their degrees (e.g. tuition rebates or cash bonuses)? For students who complete their programs without amassing additional credits (e.g. within 120 SCH)? Are there financial disincentives for students to take more than the number of credits needed to graduate (e.g. full or out-of-state tuition)?

No, the state does not provide incentives for students who complete their degrees or for students who complete their degrees without additional credits. Yes, there are financial disincentives for student to take more than the number of credits needed to graduate. Legislation was passed in 2005 that removes state funding for undergraduates who enroll with excess credits. It has been phased in, beginning with 155 credits in 05-06, 150 credits in 06-07 and 145 in 07-08 and beyond. Students will pay 20% over full time tuition, effective in the Fall of 2007.

Thumb Nail of Arizona’s Public Transfer Articulation Model

In 1996, at the direction of the Arizona Legislature, the public universities and community colleges developed a new model of transfer articulation. The goal of this model was to improve the existing system and insure that students could transfer to the universities without loss of credit. The model sought to address two issues: to provide an even playing field for students at all of the community colleges, whether urban or rural and to remove barriers to community college students who may not know either the major or the university to which they plan to transfer.

Key provisions of Arizona’s transfer system include the following:

Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC). The AGECE is a common set of requirements which may be completed at any of the community colleges and will satisfy the lower division general education requirements at all of the universities. In 2003, more than 3000 completed an AGECE, a 37% increase over the previous year, and by 2004, the number increased to 4000. (See below for more detail)

Common courses. More than 40 disciplines in majors offered at the universities have identified at least 2 courses (6 credits) which may be completed at the community college that are guaranteed to apply to that major at any of the public universities. Many majors have identified more. Business, for example, has identified 27 community college credits applicable to the degree.

Transfer Pathways/ Associate Degrees: AA/AS/ABus. Clearer transfer pathways, including statewide associate degrees, have been developed to assist students and academic advisor in planning for transfer, based on the student's "decidedness". Has the student decided on a university? Has the student decided on a major? The student who has decided on a major at a specific university will be advised to follow very specific guidelines; the student who has chosen neither a major nor an institution may complete an associate degree with more general requirements.

An associate degree guarantees admission to the universities and satisfies the 16 high school core competency requirements.

Arizona's Course Applicability System. This system, developed jointly in Arizona and Ohio, is the recognized leader nationally in technology for supporting transfer articulation. A web-based system, CAS provides critical information to students, faculty and academic advisors for planning and transferring, including an online course equivalency guide (how courses from a community college will transfer to any of the universities) and an interactive planning tool to determine how courses completed or planned will meet the requirements for a desired major at a university. CAS receive 140,000 – 400,000 hits per week.

Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC)

The Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC) is currently the primary tool coming from the Transfer Articulation Task Force. Each of the state's 10 community college districts has agreed to 35 credit block with courses that fit within the approved categories.

There are three types of AGEC: Liberal Arts (AGEC-A), Science (AGEC-S), and Business (AGEC-B). The difference is in mathematics: the AGEC-A requires college algebra level math; the AGEC-S requires calculus, and the AGEC-B requires business calculus. Also the AGEC-S requires biology, chemistry, or physics in the Physical and Biological Science requirement.

The advantages of the AGEC for students are:

- A standard guideline of general education courses meeting requirements for all three state universities
- A guarantee that lower division general education requirements will be completed (there are no state-wide upper division requirements)
- Automatic admission to the university, provided GPA requirements (2.0) are met
- Transfers as a block of requirements, not credits