

**Process for Revisions and Changes to the Statewide Transfer  
Associate Degree Agreements  
Revised 5/5/2011**

**Policy**

The procedures involving the transfer of students and the credits they have earned are governed by the statewide transfer policy and agreement titled “Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation Among Washington Public Colleges and Universities,” commonly known as the “umbrella transfer policy.” This Higher Education Coordinating Board policy is outlined in the ICRC Handbook and states that

*Each college and university has the responsibility and the authority to determine the requirements and course offerings of its programs in accordance with its institutional mission. These requirements and course offerings shall be published and communicated to students and the public. Colleges and universities shall treat transfer students and native students on an equitable basis. In particular, all students shall be expected to meet equivalent standards for regular admission to programs and to satisfy comparable program requirements.*

Once changes in lower division baccalaureate degree course requirements have been adopted and published, baccalaureate institutions shall allow a grace period of two years before the changes become effective for transfer students. This policy applies to lower division course requirements of all subdivisions of an institution (schools, colleges, departments, etc.).

*Baccalaureate institutions shall notify community colleges of changes in lower division course requirements for baccalaureate degrees two years prior to their implementation for transfer students, and shall consult with community college academic officers when significant changes are under consideration.*

In accordance with the policy stated above, it is agreed that a “significant change” to the Direct Transfer Agreement, Associate in Science-Transfer Agreements (track 1 and 2), and Major Related Program agreements is defined as:

*a change in lower-division course requirements for entrance to a baccalaureate degree program (major program of study) or institution that could negatively impact a community and technical college student’s eligibility for entrance or timely progress to degree completion.*

The two-year grace period for significant changes begins when written notification is received by the Joint Transfer Council (JTC)<sup>1</sup>. HECB and SBCTC staff members will distribute notice of significant change to all Washington colleges, universities and groups involved in transfer. At the end of the two-year grace period, all transfer students are expected to meet the new requirements of receiving institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> The Joint Access Oversight Group (JAOG) was renamed Joint Transfer Council effective October 2011 to reflect more clearly its purpose – consideration of statewide transfer issues, recommendation of policy strategies for transfer, and communication strategies related to transfer.

## **Process for implementing change to transfer degrees and Major Related Programs**

1. Raise as a JTC issue: Anyone with a proposed revision to statewide transfer associate degree agreements (the DTA or AS-T agreements) may ask a JTC member to place that idea or proposal on the JTC agenda.
2. JTC discussion: JTC will make a determination about the following issues:
  - How should the proposal go forward for broad discussion? Who needs to be informed of the potential change? Is the proposed change a “significant modification?”
  - How much time for discussion is needed?
  - Does the change conform to other transfer policy?
  - On what date, or by what term and year, would the change go into effect?
3. Provide written notice of intent to make a significant change to the HECB and SBCTC transfer policy staff members. The date written notification is received by the HECB and SBCTC begins the two-year notification time frame.
4. Broad discussion among stakeholders: JTC will define a process and timeline for discussions within and among institutions, ICRC, and others, including faculty, staff, and students with interests related to the proposed change.
5. Loop back to JTC and further broad discussion (if needed)
6. Share draft final recommendation among stakeholders indicating what input was or was not included in the final proposed change.
7. JTC recommendation: If the discussions result in support for a recommended change, JTC will recommend that the academic leadership of the state’s public and independent institutions party to the agreement under consideration approve the proposed changes to the agreement effective by the date set by JTC.
8. Academic leadership approvals: The CTC Instruction Commission (IC), the Interinstitutional Committee of Academic Officers (ICAO) and representatives of the academic leadership of each independent institution party to the agreement will transmit their approval of the proposed change(s) to JTC to ensure a coordinated response.

HECB Adoption: By virtue of HECB staff participation in JTC and official notification of proposed significant changes to transfer agreements, the HECB will be updated on the policy discussion as the issue moves through these steps. After step 6, JTC will advise the ICAO, IC and ICW of the community’s agreement on the proposed change(s) and will assist those leadership groups in forwarding a recommendation to the HECB for adoption of the proposed change. Policies adopted by Board resolution at a regularly scheduled meeting become effective on the date of adoption, or other date if so specified in the resolution.

**MRP agreements:** Major Related Program agreements are degree pathways that follow one of the two statewide transfer agreements (DTA or AS-T agreements). The MRPs are based on negotiated agreements by MRP workgroups and may be updated or altered via the following process:

1. Alert the institution's or sector's JTC member of the need for a change. When the proposed change will make a significant change to the pre-requisites to majors and thus affect lower division course taking, the JTC member will bring the issue to the group's attention. The institution seeking change will provide written notice to HECB and SBCTC transfer policy staff members. The date written notification is received by HECB and SBCTC staff begins the two-year notification time frame.
2. Upon discussion, JTC will establish an appropriate review process for updating the MRP agreement. In a process consistent with the initial process for development and approval of the statewide MRP agreements, changes to the agreements that affect lower-division course taking will require review by JTC and approval by those institutions signatory to the agreement.
3. If the changes under review by JTC alter the published transfer associate degrees, JTC will establish an implementation timeline appropriate to the type of proposed change with a goal of minimizing impact on students already enrolled and progressing under the existing agreement.