

DRAFT

Arkansas Transfer System

Act 182 of 2009 requires the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in collaboration with Arkansas public institutions of higher education, to create a system for fully transferable credit hours for students with earned Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degrees. The law also delineates criteria for a statewide transfer agreement that must be developed by January 2010.

The purpose of Act 182 of 2009 is to create a transparent, easy-to-understand statewide transfer system. And, in keeping with this intent, ADHE staff have developed guidelines for its implementation that seek to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative, and/or hard-to-determine degree requirements when a transfer student has completed all courses required for a transfer degree approved by the AHECB.

On January 29, 2010, the Board adopted the following resolution (Item No. __):

RESOLVED, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approves the guidelines for the Arkansas Transfer System presented with this agenda item.

Arkansas Transfer System

Act 182 of 2009 requires the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in collaboration with Arkansas public institutions of higher education, to create a system for fully transferable credit hours for students with earned Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), and Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) degrees. Criteria for a statewide transfer agreement must be developed by January 2010.

The goal of Act 182 of 2009 is to create a transparent, easy-to-understand statewide transfer system that eliminates obstacles to the transfer of credit among Arkansas public higher education institutions. Furthermore, the legislation calls for a seamless transfer of academic credits from a **completed designated transfer degree program** to a baccalaureate degree program without the loss of earned credits and without the receiving institution requiring additional lower level credits. Finally, it seeks to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative, and/or hard-to-determine degree requirements when a transfer student has completed all courses required for a transfer degree approved by the AHECB.

Approved Full-Transfer Degrees under Act 182

In order to ensure that the associate-level transfer degrees meet the AHECB curricular and total credit hour criteria, all Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Arts in Teaching degrees were reviewed by ADHE academic staff in Fall 2009. Associate degree programs that meet AHECB criteria will be included on an approved transfer program list at www.adhe.edu. Associate (transfer) degrees earned prior to December 2009 do not come under the direction of ACT 182 of 2009; therefore, institutional discretion should be used when considering the comprehensive transfer of these degrees.

Guidelines for associate degrees that are fully transferable.

- **Associate of Arts/Associate of Science.** The Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees must include the 35-hour state minimum general education core that requires courses in English/writing, the humanities and fine arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The range of hours is 60-64 semester credit hours, and the degree title does not specify a field of study. Remedial/developmental education courses must be used for placement purposes only and cannot be used to fulfill degree requirements.

- **Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT).** The Associate of Arts in Teaching degree must include the state minimum general education core (35 semester credit hours) that requires courses in English/writing, the humanities and fine arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The approved AHECB curriculum required for the AAT degree is designed to align with state licensure requirements in middle-school and P-4. The degree consists of 60-64 semester credit hours. In order to receive the AAT, students must have a final grade point average of 2.65 and pass the Praxis I exam.
- All courses required by an institution for its Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees must be included in the institution's list of approved ACTS courses. (Please note that the ACTS database also includes business courses that are not general education courses. These business courses are not part of the transferable AA or AS.)

Guidelines for associate degrees that are transferable based upon field of study (major) at participating two- and four-year institutions.

- Signed agreements between institutions in which the associate's and baccalaureate degrees are articulated must be on file with ADHE.
- Published statements designating institutions where the degree will fully transfer in that field of study must be made available to the general public.
- Designated degree titles in specific fields of study such as the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science in agriculture, chemistry, business, etc. must be approved by AHECB.

Academic Program Review

All Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Arts in Teaching degree programs will be reviewed by the institutions on a 7-year cycle to ensure that they continue to meet AHECB criteria.

Degree Transfer Guidelines

1. Additional lower-division general education courses cannot be required for a transfer student with an earned Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or Associate of Arts in Teaching unless the course(s) meets one of the following exceptions:
 - The course(s) is required of the student's major.

DRAFT

- The course(s) is a pre-requisite for a course that is required of the student's major.
 - The course is required by an accrediting and/or licensure body.
 - The student earned a grade of "D" or "F" in the transfer course.
2. Additional lower-division general education courses cannot be required for a transfer student with an earned AA, AS, or AAT based solely on the type of baccalaureate (Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science) degree the transfer student seeks.
 3. Arkansas public four-year institutions must develop transfer guidelines for each two-year public institution that has a campus within 50 miles.

Reporting Requirements

Act 182 of 2009 requires the submission of an institutional report to ADHE to determine compliance.