



**Transferring from
Community College of Allegheny County
to a Four-year Institution**

A General Guide to a Successful Transfer

Revised March 2013

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Since a successful transfer requires an informed plan and a lot of work on the student's part, you have already taken the first step in achieving this goal by reading this *General Guide to a Successful Transfer*. A successful transfer means that you are not only accepted by your target institution, but that you are also able to use most or all of your CCAC credits and enter as a junior. Attaining this goal requires the following steps:

- **Decide early, in your first or second semester, if your goal is to transfer.**
- **Identify your targeted school and major intended for transfer.**
- **Get to know and use the resources available for transfer students both at CCAC and the transfer institution.**
- **Know and fulfill the transfer requirements of the target institution including the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) required for admission and particular course requirements.**
- **Understand that the acceptance of credits at a transfer institution is the decision of the transfer college, not of CCAC, and depends on your fulfillment of the college's transfer requirements.**
- **Understand that some courses may transfer but are not required within the major at the four-year college.**

**Remember:
Always
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transfer
counselor!**

WHY BEGIN AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

Earn a Quality Education

In wisely choosing CCAC to begin your journey to a transfer institution, you will receive a **quality education** equal or superior to what you would have in your transfer school, but **at a much lower cost**.

Approximately 78% of CCAC students with a goal of transferring have done so successfully to schools both in and outside of Pennsylvania*. Information received from transfer colleges indicates that CCAC students are academically prepared to pursue higher levels of education. In many instances, CCAC students do as well as and often better than the students who started their education at four-year institutions. CCAC's high quality of instruction, dedicated instructors, small classes and academic support services build a strong foundation for success when students transfer.

**CCAC-Planning and Institutional Research*



Find the Resources to Address Academic Needs

The college provides specific programs and resources to address various learning needs based upon the academic abilities of students entering CCAC. For students who need to improve upon their basic academic skills, CCAC offers developmental courses in reading, mathematics and English. Although a number of these developmental courses may not transfer, they are necessary to improve the student's academic skills. For students with learning disabilities or other needs, the college offers support services. For high achieving students, CCAC has an Honors Program.

Benefit From a Top-quality, Low Cost Education

Students save an average of \$19,000 over public and \$53,000 over private colleges and universities by spending their first two years at CCAC.* This is especially important for those of you who plan to graduate or attend a professional school. One of your goals should be to minimize the cost of your undergraduate education since you will need the resources for advanced degrees. Attending CCAC can be a critical component of your educational financial planning.

** 2012-2013 academic year. Visit www.ccac.edu, search keywords "tuition matrix" for details.*

WHAT IS AN ARTICULATION AGREEMENT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER TO ME?

This guide will reference "articulation agreements" many times, as they are important in certain transfer arrangements. The goal of an articulation agreement is to assist a student in earning as many guaranteed credits as possible at CCAC with the intent of transferring them to a four-year college or university to complete the bachelor's degree requirements. All students should work closely with transfer counselors to create course schedules with the most efficient credit transfer. There are three types of articulation agreements.

1. **PA TRAC**, the Pennsylvania Statewide College Credit Transfer System, is directed by the Pennsylvania Transfer and Articulation Oversight Committee (TAOC). PA TRAC develops agreements enabling students to transfer full Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) degrees into parallel bachelor degree programs with junior standing at the participating institutions. The program launched in fall 2012.
2. **Program-to-Program Articulation Agreements** are contracts between CCAC and partner four-year colleges or universities. Upon acceptance into the partner four-year institutions, students are given advanced standing in the corresponding programs.
3. **University Parallel programs** are associate's degree programs offering the flexibility to earn credits typically studied in the freshman and sophomore year while pursuing a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution. Students enrolled in these programs must work closely with the transfer counselor at their campus.

PLANNING FOR TRANSFER: THE PROCESS

This guide explains the steps you will need to take whether you transfer with or without an associate's degree. If you plan to transfer, you need to understand the transfer process. This core information is discussed below.

Make a Decision Early—It's the Key to Success

When you begin your studies at CCAC, you need to decide **early** that transferring to a four-year college to complete your bachelor's degree is your goal. Preferably, during your first or second semester, you should decide **where** to transfer and the **major** you intend to pursue. Early decision-making will make the transfer process more productive and efficient. It is important to make an appointment with your campus **transfer counselor**. The transfer counselor will assist you in selecting the appropriate courses based upon the requirements of the transfer school.

If you wait until you are in your second year at CCAC to begin to work on the transfer process, you might find that you have not taken the appropriate courses required by your desired institution. In order to maximize the number of credits that will transfer, you need to register for the correct courses.

Work with CCAC Staff

Transfer is a complex process and requires that you work with a number of people both at CCAC and the transfer institution. The CCAC staff members who will partner with you to develop and execute a transfer plan will be counselors and academic advisors. The transfer school admissions representatives and CCAC instructors are also excellent resources for information relative to academic programs and colleges that excel in specific disciplines.

Work With Career Counselors

Career counselors provide a wide range of services designed to assist you in choosing and achieving your personal, educational and career goals. There are a number of different resources that you will use to help you learn more about yourself and various occupations. Career counselors will help you choose a career path and an academic major to meet your future career plans. If you want to explore specific careers, need information on the academic major you wish to pursue or want to confirm the career choices you have made, make an appointment to meet with a counselor.

Work With Transfer Counselors

The role of the transfer counselor is to help you determine the transfer requirements of the four-year institution. The transfer counselor will help you select courses that will be applicable to the four-year college in one of the following areas: general education, major requirement or general elective credit. Some colleges and universities maintain information on their websites relative to the transferability of CCAC coursework, including equivalencies. When using these guides, however, you are advised to check with a transfer counselor before registering for classes.

It is important that you are aware of the following when transferring:

- the grade point average you must achieve to be admitted to a particular college and major;
- the program and courses you should take at CCAC;
- deadline dates;
- other requirements specific to an institution.

If you have previously attended a college or university, please provide the transfer counselor with a transcript. This may prevent you from registering for a class you have already completed.

Remember to **consult with a transfer counselor before registering for classes** for updates and curriculum changes at the four-year institution. Admissions applications are available online on the institution's website.

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The transfer counselor will also discuss the terms of an articulation agreement with you to ensure transfer to that institution if certain criteria are met. All students should work closely with transfer counselors to create course schedules that will maximize potential credit transfer. If you want to transfer to a college with an articulation agreement, your transfer counselor will guide you through the process and help you to organize your courses at CCAC.

Work With Academic Advisors

If you are thinking about transferring or have already decided that transferring is your goal, your academic advisor will discuss general academic information with you and refer you to a transfer counselor for more specific information relative to transferring. Throughout your stay at CCAC, your advisor will continue to discuss your program choice, schedule your classes based upon the recommendation of the transfer counselor and monitor your academic progress. Your advisor will work in collaboration with the career counselors and transfer counselors to help you achieve your goals.

Work With Instructors

Your instructors are great resources who can discuss your interests in subject areas and may recommend colleges and universities that excel in those subject areas. In addition, your instructors can provide you with letters of recommendation as required by many colleges as part of the application process.

Work With Transfer School Admissions Representative

During your last semester at CCAC, you should contact the admissions office at the transfer school to make arrangements to visit the institution. In addition, it would be helpful if you could meet with the academic advisor at the four-year school to discuss the requirements of the major you intend to pursue. The admissions representative may complete a preliminary transfer credit evaluation if you have submitted an application to that particular institution. You should inquire about financial aid and scholarships that you may be eligible to receive. Any information you receive from the transfer school should be shared with your transfer counselor, who may need to modify your future CCAC coursework.

CHOOSING AN APPROPRIATE PROGRAM & COURSES

Learn General Education Requirements of Transfer Schools

If you were beginning your education at a four-year school, you **might not declare a major or take most of your coursework in that major until your junior year.** During your freshman and sophomore years, you would take what colleges describe as core skills, general education or distribution courses. Colleges prescribe the number of credits required across various discipline areas like natural sciences and mathematics, humanities, social sciences and fine arts. Within these requirements, some colleges require subjects such as foreign languages and laboratory science courses. Remember to consult with your transfer counselor before registering for classes to obtain updates or changes at the four-year institution. With careful planning many CCAC credits may be distributed as general education requirements toward a bachelor's degree.

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SELECTING A MAJOR AT CCAC

It is more important that you match the distribution requirements of your targeted transfer school than you declare a major in a subject area while enrolled at CCAC. Meeting the distribution requirements is essential if you want most of your credits to transfer. **Some institutions will not accept credits in a major beyond introductory courses.** They prefer students take the majority of major courses at their institution.

The following programs are designed for transferring to a four-year institution and are general in nature. One of the following programs may be best suited for you while enrolled at CCAC, but you must consult with a transfer counselor prior to making this decision.

- *Liberal Arts and Sciences, AA (002)*
- *Liberal Arts and Sciences, AS (006)*
- *Mathematics and Sciences, AS (003)*
- *Business, AS (004)*
- *General Studies, AA (087)*
- *General Studies, AS (089)*

The General Studies degrees permit greater flexibility in course selection and are appropriate for students who are transferring to schools where the general education requirements are very specific.

You will also find a number of programs for specific majors in the CCAC catalog. These majors may or may not be appropriate for your transfer school as they may focus more on courses in a major rather than the distribution requirements of the transfer school. If so, many of the program credits may not be accepted by the transfer school.

The CCAC catalog found at www.ccac.edu/catalog also lists many career majors that are intended to prepare students for the workforce rather than for transfer. In some cases, certain schools may accept several credits from CCAC's career programs, such as business, social work, computer information technology or nursing. If you are planning to major in a career-oriented program and decide to transfer to a four-year college, you should explore your options with a transfer counselor.

EARNING A GOOD GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Applying for admission to another school places you in a competitive pool with other students. Although schools require a minimum GPA to be eligible for admission consideration, they often admit students with the best grade point average. Do your very best at CCAC to make sure that you are accepted by your first choice transfer institution. Remember that most transfer institutions accept only the courses with **C or better grades**. Under most circumstances, students will be required to maintain at least a **GPA of 2.0 or above**. In many instances, four-year colleges require a much higher GPA in specific programs of study, such as education or business. It is important to be aware of the minimum GPA that is acceptable at the four-year college you plan to attend.

If you find yourself in academic difficulty in any course at CCAC, get help immediately. Ask your instructor for an appointment to review your work. For additional help, make an appointment to receive tutoring services. In addition, work with a counselor to review all of the variables that may be affecting your work. The counselor may advise you to withdraw from the course for that semester and discuss other support services and resources that are available to assist you. It is critical that you take action to identify and address what is causing the academic problems. Not acting could have long-range consequences that may impact your transfer plans.

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TRANSFERRING WITH OR WITHOUT AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE

Students can transfer with or without an associate's degree. Whether you plan to take a few courses and transfer or earn an associate's degree and transfer, **it is critical that you do what has been discussed in this guide:**

- **Identify your target school and major early**
- **Work with a CCAC transfer counselor**
- **Choose a CCAC program that allows you to fulfill the course requirements of the transfer school**

There are several types of transfer opportunities, addressed below.

1. Transfer With an Associate's Degree

There are advantages **to transferring with an associate's degree.**

One of the advantages of transferring with an associate's degree is that you will most likely have fulfilled the distribution requirements of the four-year college at a cost far less than you would have paid in two years in that institution. In addition, you will have had the advantage of small classes, accessible faculty and staff, qualified instructors and a broad range of student services. If your grades in high school and/or your SAT/ACT scores were below an acceptable level for other colleges or universities, earning an associate's degree will be to your advantage. If you achieve a grade of C or better in your coursework at CCAC, it may increase your chance for acceptance to the transfer school of your choice. A four-year college will place more weight on your academic record at CCAC as you will have achieved academic success in college-level courses.

2. Transfer With an Associate's Degree to a College With a CCAC Articulation Agreement

Transferring to a school with an articulation agreement with CCAC offers even more advantages. The contract between the two institutions ensures that CCAC students with an articulation agreement have fulfilled the program requirements and earned an associate's degree are, if accepted by the transfer college, given full credit. **Included at the end of this guide is a list of the institutions that have articulation agreements with CCAC. Some** of these agreements are for general transfer while a significant number are special program agreements. The latter agreements provide for the transfer to the equivalent program at the four-year college without loss of credits. If you have completed requirements in a specialized CCAC program such as nursing you should consult with a transfer counselor for guidance through the transfer process.

3. Transfer With an Associate's Degree to a College Without a CCAC Articulation Agreement

Earning an associate's degree may or may not be to the advantage of transfer students and will depend upon the transfer school and the major the student pursues. If you want to



transfer to a school that does not have an articulation agreement with CCAC, the benefits of getting an associate's degree remain the same: a quality education at a reduced cost. The major difference in transferring without an articulation agreement is that the receiving institution may not guarantee acceptance of all credits. By working with a CCAC transfer counselor, you can determine what courses will be accepted. **The key is knowing what the transfer institution requires.**

4. Transfer Without an Associate's Degree

If your goal is to attend CCAC to take a few courses and transfer, you may want to reconsider and earn an associate's degree. CCAC offers a quality education at a reduced cost. However, if you prefer transferring without a degree, you need to follow the basic guidelines previously outlined in this guide. Acceptance of your credits by the transfer institution depends on your fulfillment of that institution's program and course requirements. Please see your campus transfer counselor **before** you register for CCAC classes.

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5. Cross Registration

On occasion, four-year colleges require courses in their distribution requirements that CCAC may not offer. One way to address this need is through **cross registration**. Cross registration is a regional agreement that permits, under certain conditions, students from one institution to register for courses at another and pay the cost per credit of their home institution. For example, if you need to have a foreign language that CCAC does not have, you may cross register to attend the University of Pittsburgh for the course and pay the CCAC tuition rate. Transfer students have the opportunity to experience a four-year college class at the CCAC price. Your academic advisor can detail the terms of the cross-registration process.

CONCLUSION

Achieving your goal of transferring to the college of your choice with all or most of your credits accepted demands hard work and planning on your part from the moment you begin at CCAC toward the bachelor's degree requirements. This guide provides the basics. The process of transfer requires an active partnership between you, career counselors, academic advisors and transfer counselors. Your CCAC partners have confidence that you will follow the key steps we have outlined in this booklet to attain your goal.

TRANSFER CHECKLIST

Listed are key actions that you need to take to ensure successful transfer. Remember that transfer requires detailed planning, good information and hard work on your part. Review this list periodically with your advisor and your transfer counselor.

Identify your goal of transferring to your transfer counselor in your first or, at the latest, the beginning of your second semester at CCAC. **Continue to meet with your transfer counselor to review your progress toward that goal.**

- Identify the college(s) or universitie(s) that you plan to attend AND the major you wish to pursue at the four-year schools.
- Identify the transfer requirements of the transfer school including the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA for acceptance, the general distribution requirements and the application process.
- Contact the Admissions office of the transfer school *prior to* your last semester to arrange a visit and to review the admissions requirements for transfer students. In addition, inquire about financial aid and scholarships you may be eligible to receive.
- Discuss with your transfer counselor the most appropriate CCAC program that will allow you to fulfill the distribution requirements of the transfer school.
- Maintain a good GPA at CCAC.
- Explore the advantages of earning an associate's degree before transferring to a school with or without an articulation agreement.
- Celebrate your successful transfer and stay in touch with CCAC as a valued alumni.

COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES WITH SIGNED GENERAL ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

AiP Art Institute of Pittsburgh
Allentown College of St. Francis DeSales
Bethany College
California University of Pennsylvania
Capella University
Carlow University
Chatham University
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Drexel University
Duquesne University: School of Leadership-Professional Advancement
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania
Gannon University
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Kaplan University
LaRoche College
Lincoln University
National Labor College
Penn State, Greater Allegheny
Penn State, New Kensington
Pennsylvania College of Technology
Point Park University
Robert Morris University
Salem International University
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
Strayer University
University of Phoenix
University of Pittsburgh
Washington & Jefferson College
West Liberty University
Wheeling Jesuit University

List as of February 2013

CONTACT INFORMATION

Academic Advisors

Allegheny Campus	412.237.2700
Homewood-Brushton Center	412.371.1600
Boyce Campus	724.325.6674
Braddock Hills Center	412.271.0201
North Campus	412.369.3662
West Hills Center	412.788.7500
South Campus	412.469.6238
Bethel Park Center	412.469.6238
Washington County Center	724.223.1012

Career Counselors

Allegheny Campus	412.237.2565
Boyce Campus	724.325.6657
North Campus	412.369.3614
South Campus	412.469.6216

CCAC Nondiscrimination Policy

The Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) and its Board of Trustees are committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment for all. CCAC does not discriminate based upon race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, use of a guide or support animal due to disability, marital status, familial status, genetic information, veteran status or age. Creating, supporting and sustaining a diverse community prepares our students to be effective in the world outside of CCAC. Questions may be addressed to diversity@ccac.edu.

Notifications of nondiscrimination and contact information can be found at www.ccac.edu, search keywords "notifications of nondiscrimination."

Individuals with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should contact the Supportive Services for Students with Disabilities office at 412.469.6215. This publication is available in alternate formats; contact 412.469.6215.

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