

Texas Early Childhood Education Degree Articulation Toolkit



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Visit our website to view two additional reports related to the Texas Early Childhood Education Degree Articulation Toolkit, a review of higher education articulation agreements and survey data, and an analysis of articulation agreements among higher education early childhood education programs in Texas.

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www.earlylearningtexas.org/articulation-toolkit



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The Texas Early Childhood Education Degree Articulation Toolkit was developed to support Texas institutions of higher education in creating or improving early care and education degree articulation agreements.

Purpose

Why exemplary articulation in child development/early childhood education?

Students are considering careers in early childhood more than ever before. The need for teachers in child care centers, program directors, family specialists and teachers of Pre K and Kindergarten is growing rapidly. Teachers with skills to build literacy, numeracy, and contextual experiences related to curriculum goals are needed to support the public school initiatives, Head Start program goals, and the needs of families entering the workplace each day. However, the success rate of students who enter college and complete a degree within six years is extremely low. In 2011, less than 50% of Texas college students were completing a degree within six years of enrollment. Adding to the need to improve the success of students is the consideration of the cost of higher education. In Texas, average incomes have been declining but the cost of college increased by 30% between 1999 and 2009 (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education 2011). Improving articulation for all students is valuable but for the early childhood and child development student the need to affordably finish on time in a program most likely to prepare them for early childhood careers is critical.

Consider the experience of a student in a remote

community in Texas. She

said, "I was able to complete my Associate in Child Development by taking online classes and driving 45 miles one way to classes held face-to-face at my community college without moving my family. Considering how to earn a bachelor's degree was especially challenging until my advisors told me about Sam Houston State University and Stephen F. Austin State University. Both would take all my credits, use financial aid grants and offer an online completion of the bachelor's degree."

The individual path may be the focus of an articulation policy, but everyone in the system has a benefit from the result of good articulation.

Students in child development/early childhood education often work full-time schedules and are raising their own family and have limited money for college. The articulation of a community college degree to a university degree that will fully accept their courses and can meet the needs of very busy students will save the student time and money, and maximize career options.

Advisors also have shared their struggle to find exemplary articulation agreements. One advisor explained, “A few years ago we had full articulation across the state with Texas Early Childhood Articulated (TECA) courses in the child development degree plan. Then the state changed certification for elementary teachers and now those classes may or may not be used. Each university has a different design to their elementary degree plan. Helping students negotiate transfers and completion of the bachelor’s degree is complicated.”

Research on exemplary articulation in Texas provided additional information about the advising process. In the diagram below (Figure 1), a student at the community college needs a great deal of information at the beginning of their college enrollment in order to choose the appropriate classes to match their career goals. If a student is sure that teaching in the elementary schools is their goal, a straight path using courses matching core curriculum and bachelor’s degree articulation is available. However, if the student is unsure about working in schools and is more interested in programs for young children or in work with agencies serving families with young children, the choice is more complex. As students gain success in college, they may also become aware that teaching in the public schools can mean doubling the annual salary of an early childhood practitioner in a child care program. Many times, students who were sure they did not want to teach elementary school in the beginning of their education later decide to reach for teacher certification. As illustrated below, teacher certification (or alternative certification) can be achieved in most of the tracks.

Students choosing to work on a Child Development/Early Childhood Education degree plan earn approximately 42 credits in the associate’s degree and 18 additional credits in core curriculum. This is a distinct difference from the preparation of early childhood teachers on an education track who generally earn 42 credits of core curriculum and perhaps 18 credits in program specific work. Elementary education degrees may also integrate early education theory into overall education courses, but often require fewer early childhood courses.

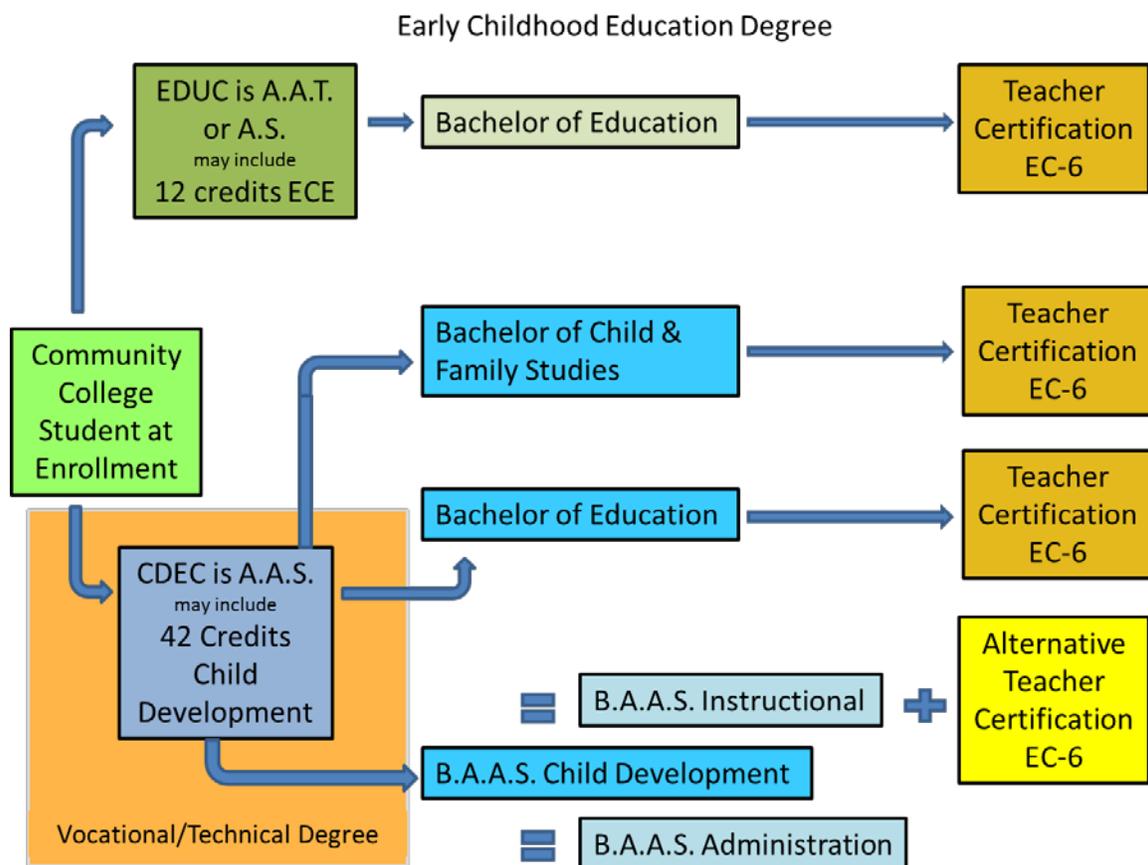


Figure 1. Decision map for new community college students. Diagram illustrating the various educational pathways for students seeking either vocational/technical or educational degrees related to Child Development/Early Childhood Education.

Research into articulation also uncovered a problem in the process related to child development degrees and a separate early childhood education degree. At the community college level, a student can begin in either education or in child development/early childhood education. At the university level, a student will need to make an early choice to study child development or to study early childhood education. These degree plans are similar in that they focus on early childhood, but very different in recommended courses and lead to different career opportunities. This is also true as a student applies for studies at the master's degree level or the doctorate level. Child Development has traditionally provided research into the cognitive, health, safety and nutrition of young children. Many secondary teachers of home economics or human development and family studies studied Child Development in college, while educators at the elementary level graduated from early childhood education programs. In either case, a student will need intensive advising to become aware of career options, names of degrees at various higher education campuses and the opportunities for articulated degrees in the chosen area. The research also indicated many universities offer education degrees but few offer child development degrees.

Students must navigate many barriers in order to achieve in-depth preparation in their early childhood career.

An actual example of navigating barriers is found in the story of a student currently enrolled in a master's program for Child Development. This student, upon accepting a position at a charter school for Pre K, was asked to switch her major to Early Childhood Education to comply with the job description. Some courses were accepted in the new master's degree plan and some were not. The student said, "It took a while to understand the area I most wanted to focus on regarding my work with young children. Now that my career is more settled and my master's work is coordinated, I am on the right path." It is unknown how many students are affected by degree changes as job openings occur.

Another thoughtful comment was received from a professor; "What if a student in Texas had a goal of serving in the highest possible career achievement, such as a Presidential cabinet member for the Department of Education? Can Texas provide an educational foundation from the freshman year to the end of the doctoral studies to accomplish a goal such as that?"

Clearly, students in early childhood courses and degree options would benefit from an efficient and available articulation agreement and supportive advising. Texas has high quality universities, but there are only two, both located in Denton, that offer doctoral degrees in child development or early childhood education. A student working and rearing a family has limited opportunities, but if the student lives somewhere other than the Dallas-Denton area some opportunities are impossible.

By using this toolkit to create seamless articulation from a community college to a 4-year university, communities will provide any student with high achievement and personal goals for excelling in early childhood education hope for efficient and effective educational opportunities. Two-year colleges can be the starting point to a bachelor's degree that leads to an achievable master's program and eventual work at the doctoral level without extreme loss of course credit, time, or money. With a coordinated system and exemplary articulation agreements, Texas can produce national leaders in child development and early childhood education.

Exemplary Articulation is Working

Articulation is evolving in Texas and the United States.

Where does exemplary articulation exist today? Many states are actively investing in more efficient statewide plans for articulation between high schools, community colleges and universities. Some of the most effective systems have established a single state agency to provide accountability and data regarding articulation between institutions. Wisconsin and Florida have made significant changes to address the need for clear pathways for students in various locations around their state ([Texas Early Learning Council, Analysis of Articulation 2013](#)).

Other states have addressed the issue of articulation in different ways including 1) outcome centered articulation, 2) control point, and 3) common course systems. These particular models help describe the way in which transfer of courses and exemplary agreements can be developed. Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) are agreed-upon crosswalks of program specific course-to-course transfer between two institutions while articulation agreements include

Exemplary articulation agreements are more than an MOU for transfer of credits

the information in the MOU plus additional information on grades, enrollment dates, transfer events, financial aid information, all contact information and is signed by leadership in the institution.

Outcome Centered Articulation

Outcome centered articulation is based on the content mastery of the student. Competencies within each concept area are used to develop common course content at all educational levels. This means that child development or early childhood education courses must address the same competencies at both two-year and four-year IHEs through a “program-to-program” articulation. Outcomes and expectations per course can be difficult to craft between two-year and four-year degrees due to the time needed to find agreement on specific curriculum and the ownership issues. Faculty-driven, jointly-developed learning outcomes created within this type of articulation agreement can go a long way to diffusing this type of resistance (Kisker, et al. 2011). Outcome centered articulation is currently being used by Missouri (<http://www.dhe.mo.gov/cota/credittransfermain.php>; Hezel Associates, et al. 2009; Hezel Associates, et al. 2010) and North Carolina (<http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa/articulation/index.htm>).

Control Point Articulation

Control point articulation is a system where campuses use a formal system to develop control points within the articulation agreement that are used to plan a student's educational path. The control points are developed by aligning the community college curriculum to the degree required curriculum of the four-year IHE. The student will use the degree plan for the school in which they plan to complete their final degree. Examples of control point articulation are Wisconsin (<http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acis/>) and Mississippi ([http://www.rcu.msstate.edu/Portals/1/Documents/Public/CUR/Validation/2011/\[PI\]_Articulation_Agreement_\[2011\].pdf](http://www.rcu.msstate.edu/Portals/1/Documents/Public/CUR/Validation/2011/[PI]_Articulation_Agreement_[2011].pdf)).

Common Course Articulation

Common course articulation appears to be the most common form of articulation in the United States. Common course articulation, as the name implies, relies on development of a common course listing that is used by all IHEs. There are variations on the common course articulation theme, but all essentially rely on a developed statewide course listing or course crosswalk. Currently, common course articulation is used by Florida (<http://www.transfer.sdes.ucf.edu>; Falconetti 2009^A), Louisiana (<http://www.regents.la.gov>, <http://www.latransferdegree.org/whatistdg.html>), New Mexico (http://hed.state.nm.us/PR_cip.aspx), Oklahoma (<http://www.okhighered.org/transfer-students/policies.shtml>), and Arkansas (http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/pages/aa_acts_faqs.aspx). Texas has developed this type of articulation system for the degrees that were most in demand when the common course guide for transfer was instituted. The Texas Common Course Numbering System is used to facilitate articulation between Texas IHEs, especially the Core Curriculum courses, but does not include Child Development and Early Childhood Education (CDEC) courses or other technical degree plans.

The common theme among all these systems is that there is a state-wide agency or organization that oversees the articulation program. This provides consistency of application and development. The student does not need to worry about what school they articulate to since all receiving universities will be following the same approach. A statewide plan for transfer of both traditional academic degrees and technical certificates and degrees provides the most efficient use of time and money to the system and the student. Many institutions in Texas, both regional partners and statewide partners, have shared course crosswalks. Some of the best partnerships also include shared spaces and face-to-face transfer and recruitment events. The social support of this kind for the transferring student is a best practice for student success.

Community colleges and universities should not view themselves as competitors for a limited resource, but as partners working to educate the world.

Texas-Sized Options for Articulation

In Texas, we have articulation of early childhood courses taught in high school or with dual credit offerings. Some high schools have on-campus child care and support their students with education in child development including opportunities for pre-service training (Appendix 2, Field Perspective). Once a person is in the workforce, some carefully constructed training can be accepted into specific courses at a community college. A trainer who works with centers in the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation process shared, “I work very closely with my local community college to make sure the students in my training are learning the same competencies that are expected on campus.”

Some might wonder if the quality of a course taught at a community college is not as challenging as the same course taught at a university. Research in Texas has discovered that community colleges offering CDEC courses have worked with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to assure that courses at the community college level are meeting state expectations for content and activities. Debbie Simpson-Smith described the process and results of the project as a success (Appendix 2, Field Perspective). Each college received a notebook of course resources and digital versions for future revision. The state got a well-connected set of instructors and departments offering courses that meet all standards for students in CDEC degrees. In addition, six community colleges have used this curriculum alignment in the NAEYC accreditation process for their associate’s degree programs in child development and early childhood education (Appendix 2, Field Perspective). Thirteen universities have also achieved NCATE accreditation of their education degree programs. Quality of programs at community colleges are meeting and exceeding national standards. Their curriculum is aligned with the highest standards across the state. The past president of the Child Development Educators Association said, “The state enjoys a strong network of instructors who share and support the improvement of programs and courses. We meet twice a year to maintain our connections and look for opportunities to have greater student success.”

What are the benefits of successful articulation?

Texas is a very large state and offers several top tier universities, many regional universities, and 51 community college districts. The best way to describe articulation success is to recognize the 42 credits named, *Core Curriculum*. These credits do transfer successfully in most institutions of higher education, especially if all 42 credits have been taken in one IHE (Institution of Higher Education) system. In addition, many community colleges have established MOUs with partner schools that clearly outline the crosswalk of courses from one campus to the next. On top of those examples are the regional partnerships among faculty and advisors that are able to assist students by making a phone call to the connecting school, effectively paving the way for a smoother transfer from one campus to the next. In rare instances, universities publish their full transfer agreements on their websites with supporting information on who to contact and where to go to complete the process for advising and registration. In many ways Texas' success with articulation is success on "transfer" of course work. True exemplary articulation is a system that supports student success from the beginning with transparent policies and expectations, allowing a student to compare options by time, cost, convenience and final degree awarded. The very best articulation plans for transfer of the full associate's degree not just selected courses within the two year degree.

Professors at four year universities have also identified many benefits to articulation in Texas regarding early childhood education (Appendix 2, Field Perspective). As shared in a recent focus group, faculty explained that students come to the program with experience, with a deep knowledge of the growth and development of young children and have already mastered a certain amount of discipline needed to complete coursework and maintain a job. Receiving dedicated students into the programs helps improve the quality of classroom interactions and the resulting projects.

Additionally, the benefits of articulation for the state and all stakeholders are:

- Efficient use of time needed to complete a degree
- Maximizes education dollars for the student
- Increases completion rates for IHEs
- Increases student satisfaction
- Increases the quality of student services
- Strengthens curriculum alignment
- Increases communication between IHEs

- Increases numbers of trained people in the workforce
- Improves preparation for the workforce

As Texas moves to a more outcome based approach to student success, articulation may become more student-centered. Improvement in making articulation easily accessible on college websites so that a student exploring career paths and comparing where one degree might lead as opposed to another and then being able to find a person to talk to quickly would likely help student success more than anything else. As an advisor and a department chair, Mary Clare Munger has said, “I would like to mentor my new students in a way that educates them about career choices as early as possible. If I could link to our top 5 transferring universities and know that the student could decipher how to find the next degree name, course crosswalk and contact information, I might truly impact the long term success of my students. As it stands that information is either not on the college website or it is not current for the school term. It just isn’t a ‘click away’.”

Students should expect to have a plan that is current, understandable, attainable and especially readily available to them at the beginning of their higher education experience. The price they will pay for a degree is perhaps the greatest financial investment they will ever make. Affordability is knocking students out of the higher education market even though 50% of high school students have some dual credit courses at the end of high school. Poor articulation impacts this cost by asking students to start without full information and then asking them to repeat courses in a degree sequence, usually at a much higher cost, and even asking for a change of major, requiring a student to start over in a degree plan. The time, the money, the frustration involved in degree attainment all combine to limit the number of people finishing college and entering the workforce with strong skills and potential for advancement.

“We are getting better but we’re not getting better fast enough.”
Raymund Paredes,
Ph.D.

The need for a skilled early care and education workforce has been increasing since the 1970s following the implementation of Head Start and public school kindergarten. The need for a highly trained workforce will only increase in the foreseeable future. Articulation from two-year programs to four-year universities will be critical to maximizing numbers of highly trained and educated teachers and leaders as well as controlling education cost for students.

Why Use a Toolkit

Common practices can build a stronger network of articulation.

Texas has a large and diverse population entering higher education programs that span top tier universities, regional universities and local community colleges with many private college options and online university choices. Some students in the early care and education field enter college immediately following high school and may have earned college credits from opportunities in high school. Additionally, some will enter the workforce and then attend college part time. Many early childhood education students will combine community college credits and university credits to reach the bachelor's degree. There is evidence that these students do achieve certificates and degrees and transfer on to junior and senior level courses. This articulation toolkit will support the continuation of these relationships and is intended to make the process more closely match the best practices in the country.

The Texas Early Learning Council supports the development of a well prepared workforce in the early care and education field by establishing a guide to exemplary articulation. This toolkit is available to any IHE faculty or advisor or administrator who assists students with a goal of transfer and eventual bachelor level degree. The use of an articulation agreement assures a

student that earned course credits transfer and thus opportunities to reach career goals can be realized with minimum issues related to credit transfer or repetition of course work. Clearly articulated degree plans are cost efficient to both students and IHEs and minimize miscommunication. With exemplary articulation students can advocate for their career goals and educational options which allows them to build a successful career.

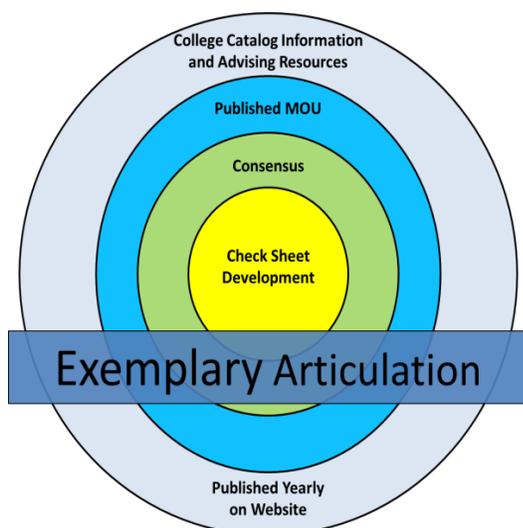


Figure 2. Illustration of the articulation development process.

In addition, this toolkit provides a common source of best practices so that IHEs can begin conversations and improve agreements benefitting both student and program success. A clear outline of articulated degree

options supports the use of a career lattice (www.EarlyLearningTexas.org) to guide the thoughtful planning needed to reach career goals.

Exemplary articulation is centered on the use of the check sheet (Figure 2). This check sheet walks the institution (IHE) through the process of discussion and agreement on exactly how the community college program will be used at the next level or vice versa. This is the first step. This check list helps each institution discover who is involved in the advising and instruction of the student, as well as the leadership of the institution that will need to approve the agreement. As the conversations begin to cover the relationship of one course to another, competencies and requirements of student work can inform both institutions of strengths and possible areas of redesign. The potential to strengthen institution-to-institution educational competence of the students is increased just by starting the conversation on the check sheet. For example, in the Dallas and Denton area, where there are full opportunities to begin at local community colleges and finish with a Ph. D., the conversation on preparation could align competencies with unlimited results for career options.

Once the check sheet has been discussed fully, the agreements will result in consensus. At that point, a Memoranda of Understanding between programs can be produced. After the MOU has full support, both institutions can follow up with information from the college policy and procedures and the school catalog. This will inform the student of application procedures, advising and registration rules, financial aid resources, deadlines and all contact information. When the information is collected, agreed upon by leadership at both institutions, and posted on the website for current students, full articulation will have occurred. If the institutions also share recruitment events, and social supports to students ready to move between institutions and keep the information current on their websites, then exemplary articulation will be possible. This is true for child development/early childhood education departments and for all programs of study.

Elements of Model Agreements

An exemplary agreement has the following attributes that not only benefit the student, but also benefit both the sending and receiving IHE institutions. These attributes were garnered from the literature and may be reflected to some degree in current agreements in Texas. An exemplary articulation agreement will have the following attributes:

- Reviewed on a regular basis by both the sending and receiving institutions as a renewed agreement.
- Provide information on how financial aid will continue with or support the student who transfers.
- Provide specific, written outlines of expectations, social support, and student outcomes.

- Lay out the required coursework for both institutions at the beginning of the educational program.
- Designate transfer advising centers at both institutions.
- Cover multiple transfer situations including transferring with an Associate's Degree, transferring without an Associate's, and reverse transfers.
- Developed for a specific program or degree.
- Adaptable to private institutions and online universities.
- Readily available to all students and faculty online and in print.

Figure 2 is a graphic representation of incorporating these elements into a process of creating articulation. Articulation practices are constantly evolving. As this toolkit is developed each IHE is in the process of updating the Core Curriculum. Financial Aid is revising policies to match the new directives from the federal and state agencies. The diagram states that the information from the check sheet and the published agreements must be renewed each year. This might be very simple in a year of little change but in years with a huge change in curriculum such as new Core Curriculum courses, some attention to the details should occur with intention and planning by all partner institutions.



Challenges to Exemplary Articulation

Articulation agreements can seem like two steps forward and one step back.

The Buck Stops Here

President Truman once used the words, “The Buck Stops Here”, to describe who, if anyone accepts responsibility for a given situation. Exemplary articulation practices have no president or CEO to say those words. Articulation is encouraged. Articulation is studied. But there is no accountability attached to the directives. Charting which course transfers is simply a chart with no accounting for how that advances a student’s degree option or hinders the articulation of the desired degree. Each institution at the university level accepts or denies transferability as they deem appropriate. For program-to-program articulation to be accomplished in any program of study, much cooperation is needed. In-depth discussion of competency and quality will be needed to accomplish lasting relationships and seamless transfer of credits. Without a powerful influence asking for creation of these exemplary practices in articulation, students will face unequal opportunities for success. A single student has very little power to change the result. A single community college has little influence over the process and even the largest university system can only impact a portion of the state.

Without a powerful influence asking for creation of these exemplary practices in articulation, students will face unequal opportunities for success.

Relationships Are Complicated

Texas is not alone in the struggle to improve student success and over-all educational achievement. Many states work within systems to improve access to education and greater production of a qualified work force.

While we have attempted to explain the challenges associated with developing articulation agreements, David A. Longanecker, President of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, wrote an accurate description in his forward for the document “Promising Practices in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems” (Hezel Associates, et al. 2010). His forward describes the persistence of the challenges in creating effective statewide articulation systems. We are including his forward in this document to emphasize his points.

Forward (Hezel Associates, et al. 2010)

Will this issue ever go away? Since substantial numbers of students began moving from one institution to another nearly a half century ago, particularly from community colleges to four-year colleges, transfer and articulation practices have been “an issue.” Students who began in community colleges, often with the intent of saving time and money, frequently found that the transfer track took longer and cost more than if they had just begun at a four-year institution.

This brief provides a number of clues as to why this issue has remained so persistent without apparent resolution over time.

In part the fault lies with the higher education community. Institutional pride often comes into play, with faculty at the institution to which a student wants to transfer believing that the courses taken at another institution can’t possibly measure up to theirs. In part, the problems result from a higher education ideal that envisions students attending only one institution for their entire education, which has created a curriculum and perception of academic integrity bounded by an outdated concept of what students actually do. Perhaps of even more significance, however, is the lack of broad trust within academe, particularly between types of institutions. Four-year institutions often simply don’t believe community colleges offer a real college experience, and this attitude is even more pronounced between traditional colleges and universities and new nontraditional providers, such as online and for-profit institutions.

But part of the fault also lies with the students. When students change majors, they will almost certainly lose some transfer credit. When they take courses not designated as transferable, either toward their major or at all, once again, they may lose credits.

Indeed, much of the impediment to transfer appears associated with that famous line from “Cool Hand Luke”: “What we’ve got here is failure to communicate.” Institutions have transfer guides, advisors have great knowledge on the rules of transfer and articulation, and students have expressed desires. Too often, however, all our fine efforts fail to communicate effectively back and forth. So

students often don't hear or see what is provided to them to guide successful transfer and articulation. And faculty and advisors too often don't see or hear when the students are getting off track.

Today, it is more important than ever to tackle this persistent issue and improve the transfer and articulation process. It is important because we must, as a nation, improve the efficiency of our educational process and get students through quicker and more successfully. President Obama has challenged the U.S. to regain international leadership in the education of our citizenry, yet we simply cannot achieve this goal, given our substantial reliance on community colleges, unless we improve transfer and articulation. As we improve transfer, we obviously must do so in a way that assures both the integrity and quality of the education being provided and received, and we must assure that faculty understands that this is our overarching goal. If for no other reason, we must improve success in transfer and articulation to retain, or in some cases restore, the faith of both state and federal policymakers who have become extremely frustrated with the persistence of this problem, a problem they blame primarily on the higher education community.

Most importantly, though, we need to improve in this area for the sake of the students. They deserve better. And the changing nature of our student population – the “swirling” nature of their course-taking as they move between institutions, their episodic attendance patterns, and the substantial increase in the number of returning older students – requires enhanced attention to the policies and practices around transfer and articulation.

Traditional higher education should also realize that if it does not respond to the needs of these students, the emerging nontraditional sectors of higher education – online institutions and for-profit providers – will respond to them.

Within this guide we document a number of promising practices with respect to statewide transfer and articulation policies and practices. The information we gathered suggests a legitimate role for policy, including policy at the state level. But it also cautions against believing that legislation will solve the problem, particularly legislation that dictates exactly “how” to improve transfer and

articulation. The “how” must be found in the coordination of institutional and statewide efforts. And ultimately the faculty has to buy into the value and need for reform, if we are to make the transfer of credits from one institution to another work smoothly. Technology can likely help in improving transfer and articulation, as we show, both by enhancing effective communication between institutions and students and by facilitating the exchange of administrative and academic records.

We also discovered, however, that while we can identify “promising practices,” there is so little evidence of what actually works that we still must rely to a great extent on hunches. There is simply no culture of evidence in this arena. We believe common course numbering makes a difference, that good advising assists students, and that technology portals assist institutions and students. Yet few policies or practices have been measured against true performance metrics. And until the higher education policy and practice communities begin to measure progress against clear metrics of success, we will only be able to talk about what is “promising,” not about what we know works.

The challenges mentioned can be mitigated with student-centered policies and practices. Perhaps by using this toolkit greater communication will occur. With greater understanding consensus can emerge. With consensus, leadership can successfully institute new expectations. With clear expectations, more data can be collected and more reliable conclusions can inform the recommendations for change. Texas knows change is needed in student success rates. Exemplary articulation is one way to have a positive impact on statewide student success rates.

Exemplary articulation is one way to have a positive impact on statewide student success rates.

Articulation Toolkit

The tools for developing agreements build exemplary articulation.

There are three main parts to the toolkit: a Developmental Tool, a Memorandum of Understanding Tool, and an Articulation Tool. The Articulation Development Tool includes a task list (Part A) and a worksheet (Part B). The development tools are designed to produce a publishable Memoranda of Understanding describing how courses at one institution can be accepted at another institution. The final publishable document is the formal agreement describing the assurances a student will have as they pursue the chosen degree plan and transfer to the next institution. The Articulation Development Tool, Part A and B, is not published on the website but is the guiding document informing the process of exemplary articulation and used by the team to complete an agreement. Below we discuss each tool and provide instruction on their use.

Context

Students enter college from high school or from work settings or from transition points in career paths. Whatever the past educational experiences were for the individual student, future success is dependent on an academic plan that matches the student's long and short term goals. As the student begins to search for academic opportunities, the need to see what courses, certificates and degrees are available is critical. The student also needs to consider the results of the time and money invested in the choices presented. Articulation of courses and degrees that can be explained, copied, downloaded, shared with advisers at both two year and four year institutions of higher education is extremely important to student retention and completion. Developing the agreements with the student in mind or "student centered" planning is an important aspect of exemplary articulation.

Advisors, career counselors, registrars and department chairs are asked to provide the most current and reliable information about career options, degree transfer opportunities and estimations of time and money needed for completion. The student and the student's parents are often in need of accurate information as they begin the college experience. Currently, in 2013, the majority of people begin searches for degree choices via the internet. The institutions providing exemplary articulation are the ones with websites that offers easy navigation from

career choices to degree options and follow up suggestions for transfer of courses. These websites should have all the most current and up-to-date information to best meet the needs of students shopping for a college education.

The tools provided in the following sections will outline the steps in collecting the needed information and agreements. The tools will also suggest and prompt the institution to put necessary information on the website; many students begin their search for information on the college website and proceed based on the information provided. For the institution, developing the agreement is the first step but it is important to note that the last step, updating information on the college website, is the first place a student will likely begin to explore options. Stephen Covey is famous for pointing out, "Begin with the end in mind!" With these tools in hand, the institution should be sure to include web designers and the technical team early in the process of offering exemplary articulation.

In the college setting, the recruitment and registration of students is a team effort. In some institutions, the department chair and faculty do dual duty as advisors and recruiters of the students most interested in the academic area or expertise offered in the department. In others, this process is compartmentalized such as advisors that help students choose the best program to match a career goal. Recruiters visit high schools and career centers offering information on applications, transfer, and connections to the process and people on campus. Registrars provide information on the system of formal acceptance and completion. Financial Aid staff offer a great deal of support to students on grants and scholarships. Depending on how the institution is organized to attract and enroll students the development of articulation can be a small team of people or possibly a very large team that negotiates carefully exactly what can be presented in the full articulation agreement.

The tools will help the institution move closer to exemplary articulation if the team is identified carefully with inclusive intentions in the beginning of the conversations. The person who begins to use the tools will likely need a significant amount of time to discuss in detail all the steps and permissions a student will need to follow an articulation plan to completion of a bachelor degree. If articulation does not exist or has not been updated in several years efforts to calendar the process will be needed. The result of exemplary articulation can increase the retention of students and the completion of degrees in the most timely and cost efficient use of resources. Exemplary articulation is worth the effort an institution will invest in the process.

In practice, some colleges have some departments with strong articulation practices and some departments that have not begun the process. The tools will help in either case. Strong programs with many years of transfer experience will be able to identify any gaps in services for the department and begin improvements at that point. Departments with no agreements can start at the beginning. Even programs where some steps may appear unlikely to reach exemplary articulation, completing and offering as many aspects as possible will help the students. The student can have accurate information and therefore may make more informed decisions leading to retention and completion. Another point to consider is articulation agreements are best when they capture the priorities of the students. If 90% of the students transfer to the same university concentrate on good agreements with that IHE. Add more agreements per student interest as the demand for articulation is recognized.

Exemplary agreements begin with conversations between departments and the people who work directly with students.



Articulation Development Tool

The Task List (Part A) and the Worksheet (Part B) of the Articulation Development Tool are designed to work together to capture information about each institution that will be articulating and help ensure that all aspects are considered in making the agreement. Time spent in working on the Task List will go a long way toward ensuring an accurate and efficient process when developing or improving an articulation agreement and making it exemplary. While it may be tempting to skip this step to speed the process, doing so may lead to a completed agreement that needs to be amended as soon as it is published. Abraham Lincoln said, "If I had only 8 hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend the first 6 hours sharpening my ax." Completing the Task List is part of sharpening your ax. The answers you obtain as you go through these steps will be used to complete the Worksheet (Part B), the MOU, and the Articulation Agreement.

The Worksheet is designed to complement the Task List and help capture the information obtained from the Task List. The Worksheet includes sections where you can either fill in information or check/circle options you want to include in the agreement. It does not necessarily contain an option for each and every topic in the Task List but instead is focused on matching the information that will be included in the MOU to ease the transfer of information.

As an example of how the forms work together, the corresponding sections are color matched below. The green wording below on each item on the task list corresponds to the green item on the worksheet. The blue wording on the task list sample below corresponds to the blue wording section of the worksheet.

Task List

___ 1. Assess the need for articulation for the associate's degree to bachelor's degree.

What is the student's career path - Child Development or Early Childhood Education? Refer to the decision map to clarify student goals. **What are the needs of students? Reverse transfer? Close proximity to where they live and work? Is a total online option critical to success? What is the cost of coursework? What part time or full time work situations would support the transfer student success?** Are they Head Start teachers on a fast track? Are they working in licensed centers and using other scholarships such as T.E.A.C.H.®? Are they full time students transferring to full time schedules on campus? Be ready to discuss with the upper division university the top three needs of students who are likely to transfer.

WorksheetDegree program: **Child Development** **Early Childhood Education** **Other** _____Transfer parameters (Y or N): **Renewal** _____ **Accept full A.A.T. or A.A.S.** _____
Accept core complete _____ **Dual enrollment** _____
Credit transfer limits _____ **Reverse transfer** _____

Notice that there is more information in the Task List concerning Head Start teachers and T.E.A.C.H.[®] scholarships. If your institution is dealing with these situations, you should consider adding the information into the published Articulation Agreement to help inform those prospective students. As you work through and complete the Task List, capture as much information as possible to facilitate the next steps.

Memorandum of Understanding Tool

This toolkit contains a Memorandum of Understanding Template to provide an example layout of the MOU. While your MOU will be specific to your agreement, the template is provided to give examples of wording and layout that covers aspects of exemplary articulation agreements. The provided template is an agreement between two IHEs named Four-Year University and Two-Year College. The MOU is a basic legal document between two or more institutions and should be specific about all aspects of the articulation. If your school will only accept specific courses toward a degree, then those courses should be specifically stated. Some MOU agreements will reflect a program to program transfer and can be written to show a semester-by-semester plan for each of the four years. If you allow dual enrollment and simultaneous coursework or reverse transfer, then it too should be specifically stated. It is recommended that each MOU should be program-to-program, meaning all of the courses in the associate's degree will be accepted and transferred into the bachelor's degree. If your institution offers both child development and early childhood education degrees, there should be an MOU for each degree. When program-to-program transfer is not possible, the MOU can still show which classes are accepted and used at the receiving university. This is commonly referred to as the crosswalk of courses.

An important aspect of the MOU is the inclusion of a defined term of the agreement and a description of the renewal options for the agreement. The defined term of the agreement will ensure that the MOU and entire articulation agreement will be regularly reviewed and updated. If

all parties agree that the existing documents are still accurate and still agree to all terms, then

the renewal option can be used to extend the agreement without requiring a total rewrite. A new defined term and renewal date should then be amended to the document and published on the college web site.

Articulation Tool

The published articulation agreement is the public face of the whole process and should be easily accessible to any interested person. This document spells out what the student can expect if he or she decides to articulate to a partner school. The document should be specific to the degree program and describe the articulation agreement in simple language easily understood by the student, including contacts and dates. Exemplary agreements will help the student navigate application processes, enrollment procedures, financial aid, and additional student support services. There should never be a surprised student when it comes to articulation.

This toolkit includes a sample document titled - An Example of a Transfer Handbook: A Guide to Articulation or Transfer of Credits that should be published on the school web site. This is a template document that can be used to format your specific articulation agreement. The individual sections of this document include descriptions of the type of information to include in each. As each articulation agreement will be unique, only descriptive text is included in the template. This document should be updated at least annually to ensure that all contact and date information is correct for each semester.



Articulation Development Tool – Part A Task List

_____ to _____ Date _____

- ___ 1. Assess the need for articulation for the associate's degree to bachelor's degree.
What is the student's career path - Child Development or Early Childhood Education? Refer to the decision map to clarify student goals. What are the needs of students? Reverse transfer? Close proximity to where they live and work? Is a total online option critical to success? What is the cost of coursework? What part time or full time work situations would support the transfer student success? Are they Head Start teachers on a fast track? Are they working in licensed centers and using other scholarships such as T.E.A.C.H.[®]? Are they full time students transferring to full time schedules on campus? Be ready to discuss with the upper division university the top three needs of students who are likely to transfer.
- ___ 2. List most likely four-year school options for transfer students in your area.
- ___ 3. Check for current articulation agreements or MOUs that may exist between your college and the identified partners.
- ___ 4. Locate contact information for the department chair and advisors related to child development or early childhood education.
- ___ 5. Make the initial contact to the IHE identified by phone, email or visit.
- ___ 6. Share the need for a new or renewal of agreement for students in child development or early childhood education. Provide an example of a student wishing to pursue a career in early care and education.
- ___ 7. Share a list of current course names, numbers and objectives (or the website) as a list of courses that are part of the program to transfer and articulate.
- ___ 8. Discuss the possibility of agreeing to accept the entire associate's degree as a program articulation.
- ___ 9. Discuss how a course would transfer as an equivalent to a course in the four-year degree and or reverse transfer.
- ___ 10. Outline the suggested sequence of courses to take for each year of study such as freshmen courses, sophomore courses, junior courses and senior courses. List both the community college course name and number and the university course name and number if possible.
- ___ 11. Share dates and contacts related to enrollment for the desired semester.
- ___ 12. Share dates and contacts related to registration for the desired semester.
- ___ 13. Share dates and contacts for any transfer visits or group advising organized for the desired semester.
- ___ 14. Share any information supporting the student in the transfer process: website address, events, locations, tours, mentoring, tutoring, clubs or department connections.
- ___ 15. Consider sharing a token to transferring students such as small back pack, mug, magnet, t-shirt.
- ___ 16. Set a deadline for sharing the articulation agreement in a formal format.
- ___ 17. Meet the deadline and share the agreement at both college departments and advising divisions.
- ___ 18. Correct any needed changes on the forms. Verify changes with each college.
- ___ 19. With the corrected articulation agreement, send forward at community college for signatures from department, division and president signatures.
- ___ 20. Signed agreement sent forward to the university department for signature and advanced through the university for additional signatures.
- ___ 21. Post signed agreement on department and college websites and use for advising in the current year.

- 22. Maintain transparent articulation practices for both colleges and for students.
- 23. Refer students to the resource location.
- 24. Ask instructors to post the link to articulation agreements in course syllabi.
- 25. Share new agreement with college departments as needed: financial aid, registrar office, advising division and content areas.
- 26. Provide opportunity for feedback by students and staff.
- 27. Calendar for following year annual review and renewal of agreement.

Four-Year University proposes to accept from Two-Year College, technical-vocational and academic courses applied toward a bachelor of arts in Child Development as described below. This partnership is created to increase student success in transferring courses to the university and raising associate's degree and university completion rates at the college and university. The student will be empowered to obtain courses on schedule effectively managing an associate's degree and a bachelor's degree in a seamless career path.

Up to NN hours of college level credits earned at Two-Year College are acceptable in transfer and applicable to said degree. The common course numbering system will assist students in transferring core requirements. CDEC courses which do not appear on the common course numbering system will be credited to Four-Year University equivalent courses as indicated in the course crosswalk presented in this document.

Four-Year University and Two-Year College agree to exchange information, within legal guidelines, about individual students with the goal of making students aware of the potential to satisfy associate's degree requirements by transferring course work between both institutions. This exchange of information includes, but is not limited to, the electronic transfer of transcripts at no charge to either the school or the student and providing contact information to school personnel relating to administrative issues and transfers.

Bachelor of Arts in Child Development

Description of the degree and graduation requirements including required credits, required courses, advanced work, and minimum grade requirements. A minimum of NN semester hours must be completed in residence at Four-Year University and students must meet all Four-Year University graduation requirements.

Admissions

Description of admissions at Four-Year University including the types of admissions such as concurrent registration or guaranteed acceptance. This section should also include any contact information, links or websites for both schools, especially if there is concurrent registration.

Credit Transfers

Describe the agreed credit transfer procedures and types

- Full acceptance of associate's degree toward bachelor's degree
- Reverse transfer to credits for completion of associate's degree
- Acceptance of "Core Complete"
- If the student transfers with less than an associate's degree, acceptance of credits applied toward the bachelor's degree and elective credits.
- Acceptance of online credits or work experience credits

Core Curriculum Requirements

Include a description of the required core curriculum and the full curriculum requirement for completion of the Child Development bachelor's degree. This can be easily presented in tables with recommended courses by semester.

Course Requirement Exceptions

Include a description of any exceptions that may exist from the required list of courses such as substitution of courses to meet ADA accommodations.

Sample crosswalk of courses related to the bachelor of arts degree in Child Development for Two-Year College and Four-Year University. This crosswalk represents course equivalencies based on course content and structure.

Two-Year College Course Number	Four-Year University Course Number
CDEC 2304 Child abuse and neglect	FS 3613
CDEC 2326 Administration of Programs for Children I	FS 3583
TECA 1303 Family, School, & Community	FS 1603
Etc.	Etc.

Degree Plan

A degree plan for Four-Year University can be included to illustrate the degree requirements.

Term of Agreement and Renewal Options

This section should be included to delineate the term for this binding agreement with a description of renewal options for both schools should they wish to renew the agreement with or without amendment. It is important to include this section as it will increase the likelihood that the agreement will be regularly reviewed and updated with current information.

20__/20__
An Example of a Transfer Handbook
A Guide to Articulation or Transfer of Credits

A Partnership Between

Four-Year University
and
Two-Year College

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Scholarship Forms

Academic Information

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Recommended Course Plan
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Articulation Agreements are available online at www.4-yrUniversity.edu/admissions/transfer.asp

*All plans are subject to change. Always check for program updates.

Introduction

Provide an introduction to the student about your programs and what they can expect from each school.

Concurrent Admission

This is some sample text that could be used in this section. Two-Year College students who meet Four-Year University's admission requirements or complete the associate of arts or associate of science degree will receive automatic admission to Four-Year University. A student may apply for concurrent admission (dual enrollment) status at the time of first enrollment at Two-Year College, or at any time thereafter by completing a Four-Year University application. The student's application will be activated when the student has completed the transfer Apply Texas application for admission (www.applytexas.org) within 12 months of anticipated enrollment at Four-Year University and when the university determines that the student meets the transfer admission requirements.

Your dual enrollment benefits

This is an explanation of the benefits a dually enrolled student may receive at each institution. Students will receive the following student benefits at Four-Year University with their student identification card:

1. Examples: Access to library with ability to check out books and use computers
2. Complimentary NN visits to the activity center
3. Complimentary NN entry passes to sporting events
4. Etc.

Campus orientation/visitation

The following information is sample text that could be used to develop the document and provided to the students. Information can be provided on:

- Weekday campus visits
- Weekend campus visits
- Open house

Also include any other way a student could get information such as:

- Register for any of these at www.4-yrUniversity.edu
- Or by phone at 1-800-call-now
- Or email wewantyou@4-yrUniversity.edu

Department Contact Information

Names and contact information for the designated contacts and department chairs for Four-Year University.

Transfer Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

List application deadlines for all types of admission, especially if they are different dates – priority, regular, late, transfer, and special programs. Be sure to reference any change in cost based on the type of application.

Types of Admission: General transfer: College, School or Program

Describe the types of admission that are available – dual enrollment, general transfer, or automatic transfer and any special admission requirements for the individual college, school or program. You should also include any specific transfer information or restrictions including situation such like reverse transfer of credits or transfer of online credits.

Advising Department Contact Information

Name and contact information for the advising section handling transfers to the Child Development/Early Childhood Education programs.

Application Checklist and Applications

- Application and fee
- Transcripts
- Application address
- Other supporting information

Other Application Information

Anything else the student needs to know about applying to the school such as special educational programs (i.e. Texas Success Initiative), housing requirements, or links to codes of conduct or other required attendances.

Frequently Asked Questions

Advisors and department staff hear many of the same questions each semester. This is a place where some of those questions can be answered before the student ends up in your office.

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Scholarship Information and deadlines

Information about any scholarships available and deadlines

Special Transfer Student Scholarships

Emphasize any special transfer student scholarships if available

Financial Aid Process for Transfer Students

Provide information about the financial aid process for the incoming student. This includes aid deadlines, FAFSA information, and student loan information

Scholarship Forms

Post all scholarship forms and URLs to access them

Academic Information

Advising

Information on how often the student will meet with their advisor and when they will need to file their degree plan or graduation application. Information on upper division course prerequisites should also be provided.

Academic Major/Minor

Provide the requirements for academic majors and minors in the degree program such as minimum number of required credits, 25% of coursework must be completed at Four-Year University, core credit requirements or limitations, and any advanced hour requirements.

Recommended Course Plan

Since this is from a completed MOU, the schools should be able to provide a complete recommended course plan and include the names and numbers of all classes for both schools. The tables below can be used as a template for listing the recommended courses. Include a list of all electives that will be accepted into the degree and electives at Four-Year University that are available to complete the degree requirements.

The curriculum should be designed for students who have completed an Associate's degree in an early childhood degree program (Child Development or Early Childhood Education) who then will transfer to complete a B.S. in the same degree program. Minimum grades should be specified and core courses indicated.

Freshman Fall	
Two-Year course	Four-Year equivalent

Freshman Spring	
Two-Year course	Four-Year equivalent

Sophomore Fall	
Two-Year course	Four-Year equivalent

Sophomore Spring	
Two-Year course	Four-Year equivalent

Junior Fall	Junior Spring

Senior Fall	Senior Spring

Listing of elective courses.

Core Curriculum Transfer Policy

This is where Four-Year University would post their policy about core complete transfers. Use of a transfer core guide in conjunction with the recommended course plan would help to ensure the student met all the degree requirements without incurring extra expense for additional classes. Posting a transfer core guide would help reduce any confusion.

Example:

Students who complete the state’s core curriculum and whose transcripts are labeled “Core Complete,” will not be required to take any additional core curriculum courses. Students who do not bring a completed core curriculum will receive credit for core courses passed with a grade of C or higher and will be required to complete the remaining core courses.

Transfer Core Guide	
Four-Year core requirements	Two-Year core equivalent
Humanities	
Natural Science	
Math	
Etc.	

Application Forms

Post all application forms and the URLs to access them

Resources and Bibliography

Resources

Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS)

http://www.adhe.edu/divisions/academicaffairs/pages/aa_acts_faqs.aspx

Board of Regents of the State of Louisiana Transfer Course Guide

<http://www.latransferdegree.org/whatistdg.html>

Mississippi State University

[http://www.rcu.msstate.edu/Portals/1/Documents/Public/CUR/Validation/2011/\[P\]_Articulation_Agreement_\[2011\].pdf](http://www.rcu.msstate.edu/Portals/1/Documents/Public/CUR/Validation/2011/[P]_Articulation_Agreement_[2011].pdf)

Missouri Department of Higher Education

<http://www.dhe.mo.gov/cota/credittransfermain.php>

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education

<http://www.highereducation.org/reports/transfer/transfer11.shtml>

New Mexico Higher Education Department

http://hed.state.nm.us/PR_cip.aspx

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Student Transfer Policies

<http://www.okhighered.org/transfer-students/policies.shtml>

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, State of Higher Education in Texas, 2012 Address delivered by Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund A. Paredes, Ph.D.

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/download.cfm?downloadfile=56B2E543-92CA-267C-917F4BD95543DF67&typename=dmFile&fieldname=filename>

University of Central Florida Transfer and Transition Services

<http://www.transfer.sdes.ucf.edu>

University of North Carolina, Academic Affairs

<http://www.northcarolina.edu/aa/articulation/index.htm>

University of Wisconsin Transfer Information System

<http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acis/>

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Appendix 1: History

What has Texas done in the past to increase articulation?

The following section is excerpted from the “Report to the Texas Legislature in Response to House Bill 1863, Section 7.05 on the Texas Early Care and Education Career Development System (Texas Head Start Collaboration Project, 1997)”. The information presented provides a history of the early attempt to develop an articulation model for the education of early care and education practitioners. The project was initially envisioned to be a complete system that was supported and managed by a state agency and implemented all over the state. However, practices between institutions remained disconnected and articulation for students was not fully realized.

Gwen Chance was a member of this committee and worked across the state to build consensus and energy around articulation and other key issues facing early care and education practitioners. This work is included to provide some continuity and perspective on articulation study and action in Texas for those who research issues in early care and education.

Participating Agencies of the Texas Head Start Collaboration Project

Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services
 Texas Education Agency
 Texas Department of Human Services
 Texas Workforce Commission
 Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
 Texas Interagency Council on Early Childhood Intervention
 Texas Department of Health
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 Administration for Children, and Families, Region VI Head Start Bureau
 Texas Head Start Association
 Texas Association of Community Action Agencies

History and Overview of Current Career Development Effort

The Texas Head Start-State Collaboration Project (THSSCP), began studying the application of a career development system in early care and education in 1992, as part of the federal Head Start State Collaboration Projects to coordinate child care, public school prekindergarten, and Head Start programs. Texas was one of the first twelve states to receive funding in Wave I of the federal effort. The THSSCP Task Force was appointed by then Governor Ann Richards to advise the project which was placed under the Governor’s office with the Texas Women’s Commission. The Task Force was charged with formulating a plan for the coordination of services to young children and their families. A critical barrier identified by the Task Force, was the lack of a statewide professional preparation system coordinated through a single umbrella structure for all practitioners working in early care and education programs. After careful review of state and

national issues, research and policies, a draft of the first concept paper was developed for circulation and discussion (Appendix A). The participants that developed the draft represented early care and education professionals from all areas of the state. The group included college instructors and professors, classroom teachers, parents, Head Start staff, consultants, state agency staff, private trainers, child care providers and family life educators.

In the fall of 1996, THSSCP held fourteen regional meetings to present a draft of the career development system components developed by the subcommittee members to the early care and education community around the state and receive their feedback. A summary of the feedback from the focus group meetings is available in Appendix B. Based on their response, the draft components were again revised. Limited implementation of the system components began in October 1997 in six communities in Texas. The six communities include Austin, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Houston, Wichita Falls and Permian Basin (Midland/Odessa area).

During the initial planning of the model for career development in early care and education many Texas Head Start-State Collaboration Project career development subcommittee members believed that when the career development system was ready for implementation, it would be a complete system, supported by state authority, managed by a state office and implemented all over the state simultaneously. Changes occurred in the administration of state programs, such as the Texas Workforce Commission's Child Care Management System, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Child Care Licensing Division. In order to stay abreast of the changes taking place in state government it was necessary to modify the initial design of the proposed career development system in keeping with the government reform direction. The system model was modified to feature a locally-administered, locally operated system that relies upon a set of statewide standardized system components which are carried out at the local level. The current components in use by local child care training networks are:

- a standardized set of core knowledge and skills for early childhood practitioners,
- a standardized career path model for practitioners working in the classroom,
- a standardized tracking system of training hours and trainer registration, and
- the development of local agreements between institutions of higher education, vocational education schools, and public schools to issue credit across institutions based on consensus of content and skill demonstration.

Rather than a state licensing authority to implement the system, the Career Development Initiative Subcommittee decided that the field itself should design and regulate the professional

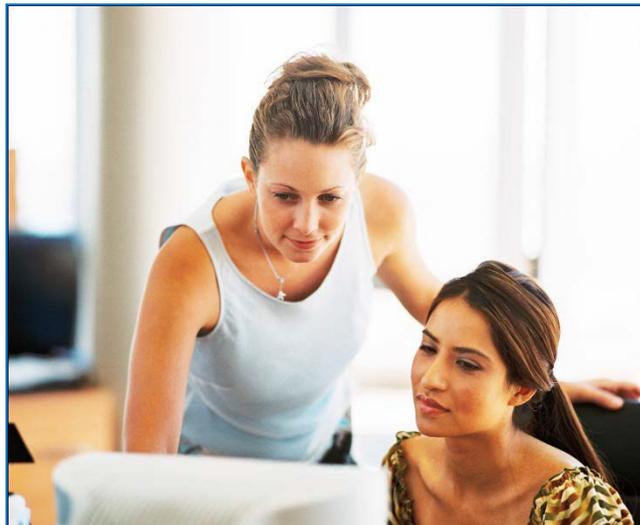
development and continuing education of their peers. Historically, professional preparation systems operated out of state agencies experienced uneven attention, focus, and funding support based on the goals of different government administrations at different times in history. The Subcommittee expressed concern that a system operated and funded solely through a government agency may have difficulty with institutionalization as the focus of government reform shifts. Therefore, the subcommittee recommended that the initial implementation of the system strive to institutionalize the components of the system at the community level, where it can have the greatest impact on people working on the field and create benefits based on the unique characteristics of each area. So each community and region has been provided the opportunity to implement a career development system in their area based on sound child development and educational principles, using tools standardized statewide, but having the freedom to customize the program to meet local needs. Thus the limited implementation in six communities described above was chosen for initial implementation. This approach is consistent with the trend to place a greater and greater emphasis on local control. Such an approach is currently being utilized in regard to public education and workforce education and support. The career development system initiative is linked to both the public education system and the workforce education system through the individuals who participate in professional preparation; therefore it is advisable that the model fit the existing infrastructure for maximum effectiveness.

The subcommittee recommended that in order to be effective, each community or region needs to put together a child care training network --if they do not have one already through the Child Care Training Project of the Texas Workforce Commission Child Care and Development Program. The network brings together a broad complement of professionals in early care and education whose interest and commitment is the professional preparation and development of their peers. The network needs to have representation from the following types of roles and professionals in the field of early care and education:

- community college instructors
- private trainers
- classroom practitioners
- family child care practitioners
- Head Start Education Coordinators
- child care administrators
- university professors
- parents
- Child Care Training Project Coordinators

- Child Development Associate trainers
- National Administrator Credential administrators and;
- prekindergarten teachers or early childhood education coordinators in local education agencies

The goal is to put together a diverse group of professionals in communities that include representation from all types of early care and education programs and professional preparation programs which are present in the community. This type of partnership is truly inclusive and creates a representative network that can effectively address the early care and education professional preparation needs in a community. The local career development team would oversee (1) local needs and resource assessment, (2) coordination and access to local training, credentialing and certificate programs, (3) implementation of the local personnel and training registry, (4) provide public information about the career development initiative, and (5) coordinate with local workforce development boards, school districts, educational service centers, private trainers, and colleges to promote continuity of training and access to training for the early care and education practitioners in their area (Appendix D).



Appendix 2: Articulation Case Studies

What do student voices reveal?

The following three case studies present information from student perspectives and how their educational experiences have been impacted by the transfer experience. While the studies are individual experiences, within these we can see how the transfer decisions were made and how that experience impacted the individual. We can also examine the barriers faced in striving for success in higher education.

Jessica Muro demonstrates the impact individual connections had on her transfer experience and that her ability to take courses online strongly impacted her decision. The majority of practitioners in early care and education are on the low end of the pay scale and often have their own families to care for (Child Care Services Association 2011), so they are unable to quit working to take courses full-time. Wide-area articulations with a variety of learning environments would be a boon to students wishing to continue their education. As you read Jessica's account, note that she was ready to discuss transfer at the end of her associate degree course work.

Ginny Love is clearly a motivated student. Her experience is an example of how career opportunities shaped the choices of majors and the conflict of child development focused work and the early childhood education focus. Although both the Child and Family Development Degree and the Early Childhood Education Degree were in the same School of Education, she had to completely alter her degree plan to change between the degrees in order to achieve the chosen career path.

The experience of Kenya Wolff in obtaining her Master's Degree and moving on to her Ph.D. illustrates that a friendly transfer experience is a strong asset to a student. Her ability to transfer all of her classes from out of state university to Texas Woman's University was the result of a personal research. The connection of a responsive faculty member was a strong influence in the decision about where to attend school. As she became aware of opportunity and career development, her move to the doctorate program at University of North Texas utilized both her education and her network of people from early care and education. Kenya Wolff is an example of opportunity taken in the area of Texas that has strong transfer partnerships among community colleges, universities and programs that span certificates to doctorate degrees.

Community College Student Transfer to a Four-Year University

Author Information: Jessica Muro, Amarillo College, graduate, with an associate in Child Development/Early Childhood Education. She is an early childhood teacher at Buttercup House in Borger, Texas. She is now a student at Stephen F. Austin State University 2013 (SFASU)

When deciding on which school I would transfer to after I graduated from Amarillo College there were a lot of choices that I needed to make. Where? What is the cost of courses? Will my classes transfer? These were just some of the questions that I had to consider when making that choice.

I began by talking to two of the teachers at Amarillo College. With their help and encouragement I was able to not only go back to school but also obtain my Associates in Child Development/Early Childhood Education. They helped me come up with a list of colleges that were located around this area. I knew I didn't want to go to West Texas A & M (no major is offered in Child Development) and the classes that Wayland offered in Amarillo were not the ones I needed. The closest college was going to be Texas Tech University which is about 3 hours from where I live. I have significant obligations to my family and I didn't want to move to attend school. At the spring PAEYC conference I saw a pamphlet about Stephen F. Austin State University offering students a Bachelors of Human Science in Early Childhood Studies/Family Development online. At first I was a little hesitant about going to school online because some of the schools that are advertised are not accredited and in the case of my friend, the cost of the courses and degree out-weigh the benefits obtained in the real life job. The pay can be very low for classroom teachers.

I needed an online bachelor's degree in early childhood education.

Jessica Muro

Attending classes online is a very big decision to make. I thought about it for a while but then as I looked back on the classes I attended at Amarillo College I noticed that 80% of the classes I took were online. My grades were very good, too. I made the Dean's List every semester and

graduated "With Honors" from Amarillo College August 2012. I really liked the freedom that online classes offered. You do have to be very disciplined in your studies and be able to be a make the time and effort to do your work on time. You have to be sure to stay on top of your class requirements.

I began to research accredited colleges online that offered what I was looking for in child development and early childhood education. Some colleges offered only half the classes that I needed and others required that I would have to go to the campus up to four times a semester. I couldn't travel because of my job and the traveling expenses that I would accumulate were not in my budget. After researching, I narrowed my choices of colleges down to two, Stephen F. Austin State University and Sam Houston State University. Both colleges sent out great information and answered all of the questions I had. Both colleges offered the degree plan, majority of the classes were online, visits to the campus were just once before graduation, the cost was fair, and all my classes would transfer easily.

There was one thing that ended up making all the difference when I made my choice. That difference was that Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) set me up with Laura Smith, an enrollment specialist. As my enrollment specialist, Laura not only contacted me but she kept me on track. She would tell me what papers and forms I needed for registration, helped me with financial aid, helped me fill out the SFASU Transfer student application, made sure that I turned in my paperwork before the due dates. Even when she was out sick, she called to ask if I had turned some papers in. Laura worked with me until I was completely admitted into the college, all my papers were turned in, and she still calls and emails me to see how I am doing.

After being admitted to SFASU, my counselor helped me get my fall semester classes and books ordered. I also found out that I still needed about five classes to fulfill my "Core Complete" classes. The only classes I couldn't take online were the 8 credit hours of science to fulfill my core requirement. My counselor and I have worked on my class list for each semester and were able to find a time this summer for me to continue to take classes at SFASU and still take my science class at Amarillo College and not feel overwhelmed. The teachers at SFASU are really helpful and even though I am online and not anywhere near the campus, they are there to answer questions and offer any type of assistance that I need for my classes. If I continue on the pace that my counselor and I agreed upon, I will be graduating either in the spring or summer of 2014.

I am very happy with the choice I made. Online college courses are not for everyone but it was the right one for me. SFASU was the answer to all my concerns and issues I had when I began to look for a college to continue my education. I also couldn't have made it to this point without the love and support from my family and the encouragement and guidance from the people whom I feel that God put in my path like Mrs. Rochelle Fouts, and Laura Smith.

Bachelor's Degree Student Selects Master's Degree Program

Author Information: Ginny Love is an Early Childhood Teacher, Janice Pattillo Early Childhood Research Center at Stephen F. Austin State University. She holds both a Bachelor and Master's degree from Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas.

I first chose to go to Stephen F. Austin State University for nursing. After a year in pre-nursing school I realized that my interests did not lie in nursing and biology, but with children. My options at this point (if I intended to stay at SFA- which I did) were to go toward Social Work, Special Education, Education, or Child and Family Development. During the fall of 2006 I took one class that fell under social work, one under education, and one that worked for Child and Family Development as well as for Education. In choosing to take a class under each section I made sure that no class would be 'lost' and that they met different criteria for each degree that I was tentatively seeking. Through this I found that social work was interesting but I did not feel that I was ready to take on the stress of what my job would be in that field. In special education,

My work greatly influenced the choice of my degree program.

Ginny Love

I found that what I would learn would be beneficial, but I was not sure this is what I wanted for my career. I knew that I did not want to be a 'teacher,' like the teachers I had in school. I believed there was more to education than just reading out of a book, so I had one option left. I knew that I was interested in children. I loved working with families

and people of all ages. When I looked into child development, I realized that it covered many areas, and it took the whole family into account. I knew at this point that I would not be limited to teaching but would have endless options in schools and in agencies or organizations serving families.

In Child and Family Development (CFD) I learned how children grow, learn, and develop both cognitively and physically. I also learned how families develop around a child. We studied theorists and created our own theories. The most beneficial thing I found was that at SFA there is a lab school, where teachers teach children in a constructivist manner. On a weekly basis we would observe the interactions of the children, how they grew developmentally, and how the teachers interact with the children. I found this very beneficial, noticing how an NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited school operated and the expectations that were established for the staff and children. As part of a CFD degree it is a requirement that students do a 125 hour internship at a facility that met the criteria of the degree. The options were to work at local preschools, Head Start, camps, in nursing homes, and any

other appropriate facility to earn the hours. I chose to work at First United Methodist Church Preschool. As part of my internship I learned how to run a classroom, do administrative work, develop documents, create projects for children, and learn the 'ins and outs' of a preschool program.

Following my graduation I began work on my Master's Degree in Human Sciences. I chose this degree because it was most in line with my Bachelor's Degree. At SFA, Child and Family Development is within the School of Human Sciences. The School of Human Sciences is a part of the School of Education. My plan was to work on a Master's Degree in Human Sciences and focus on Child and Family Development. This is where I personally thrived. I found that I was most interested in how people grow and develop. Three classes into this degree I was hired by the Early Childhood Laboratory School ('The Lab') in the Janice Pattillo Early Childhood Research Center at Stephen F. Austin State University. This is the same Lab that was previously mentioned where students would observe the interactions of teachers and children. When I took this position, I knew immediately that I had to change my Master's Degree focus to Early Childhood Education. This completely changed my Master's Degree. While Early Childhood Education and Human Sciences are both in the Education Department, I had to completely change my degree plan. In order to work at the Lab School, I had to start working on my Post Baccalaureate Teaching Certification through SFA, and continue until I finished my Master's Degree. I had to get my teaching certification EC – 6, for the requirements of my position. The two are separate in Early Childhood Education. If you are a regular Master's student then a person would pick their choice of focus. For students who are not a certified teacher, they must choose Post Baccalaureate with EC-6 certification as their focus. In this degree, I learned about teaching in a constructivist manner. We talked about theorists, and discussed different trends in education. It was at this time that I learned how to be a teacher using theories I believed in and not just teaching as I had been exposed to in the past. I found at this time that what was being taught at SFA was exactly the kind of teaching I wanted to do. I found encouragement to try new theories, and to become an activist in my community for topics such as nutrition and reading, for which I have a passion. The journey has been challenging. Today my work, my education and my interests are aligned and I feel fortunate to be a practitioner in early care and education.

Master's Degree Student Selects Doctoral Program

Author Information: Kenya Wolff is a Doctoral Candidate, University of North Texas. She serves in leadership with the Denton Association for the Education of Young Children and sits on the board of Texas Association for the Education of Young Children.

My name is Kenya Wolff and I am currently a Doctoral Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Early Childhood Studies at the University of North Texas. The journey from classroom teacher to PhD student has been a long process fraught with joy, tears and above all a lot of hard work. In 2002, the birth of my first child had a profound impact on me. As a working woman, I searched for a suitable child care for my daughter and was shocked at what I found. My husband and I toured center after center and I felt uncomfortable with most. It was also a shock to learn that the monthly tuition would equal the cost of our mortgage payment. After trying several centers and being dissatisfied, I decided to leave my job and stay home.

The more I learned and connected to my profession, the more opportunities I found.

Kenya Wolff

When my daughter turned three I began to worry that she needed the socialization that preschool provides. Without two incomes I could not afford a good preschool. I decided to go to work as a two-year-old teacher for a corporate child care provider who was known for quality educational programming. This was a win-win, as tuition was discounted for employee's children. Another main reason I chose to work there, (although the pay was very low and I had a Bachelor's Degree) was because the employer was part of the TEACH program. This is a college scholarship program that covers roughly 90% of tuition for early childhood teachers. I wanted a Master's Degree and found an online certification program in Special Education at the University of North Carolina. This certification was made up of six classes that could be credited to a Master's Degree once completed or as a stand-alone certification. The online aspect of the program appealed to me because I was pregnant with my second child and knew I would need to be able to have a flexible class schedule. As fate would have it, just after completion of the certification portion of the program my husband was offered a job in Dallas and we had to move from North Carolina. We chose to move to Denton because after I researched the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, I discovered that there were two universities in Denton that offered a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education.

I chose Texas Woman's University (TWU) for my Master's Degree because it was relatively small and their staff was very responsive to all of my questions. Of most importance, TWU was able to accept all of my classes from UNC and apply them to their Master's program. Furthermore, the application process seemed less intimidating than the one at the University of North Texas (UNT). Specifically, TWU did not require any kind of graduate college entrance exam such as the GMAT. I also liked that TWU offered a mix of online and face-to-face classes. I was able to finish my Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education in a year while working part time as a director for a private half-day preschool.

While I was working on my Master's Degree I was approached by a faculty member at UNT who explained that they had several graduate assistantships open for students in the Doctoral program. This faculty member explained that these assistantships would not only cover 100% of my tuition but also could offer me a stipend of roughly \$15,000 per year and pay for health benefits. After doing the math, I realized that this amounted to more than my annual salary. I also realized that if I were going to remain in the early childhood field and be able to support my family in the way I desired, I would need to become a teacher at the college level. This would require a Doctoral Degree.

I decided to meet with the head of the program and discuss the possibility of being granted an assistantship. She explained to me that I would have to quit my job in order to accept the position, as it was required for all graduate assistants to focus full time on school with no outside employment. It was very difficult making the decision to leave my position as director because I felt very committed to the preschool. In retrospect, I understand why this was a requirement. I expected the Doctoral program to be like a continuation of my Master's Degree; however that has not been the case. My Doctoral classes have been far more time consuming and intense. Each class has come with hours of readings each day, as well as lengthy (30 page) research papers, requirements for submitting multiple conference proposals and expectations for participating on research teams. To be honest, I am not sure that if I had known just how much work and sacrifice would be required, I may not have chosen this path. However, I am confident that the countless hours of studying, writing and class time will be worth it.

Beyond the financial benefits (salary, retirement, health insurance, etc.) that a PhD can provide, I am motivated by the promise of being able to positively influence the field of Early Childhood Education. As someone who has always been interested in social justice, UNT's Early Childhood Program, which specifically changed its program name from Early Childhood

Education to Early Childhood Studies, focuses on the social aspects that influence a child's life. Moving beyond simply accepting mainstream Early Childhood Education, this program emphasizes Critical Qualitative Research as a way to affect policies that affect children's lives beyond the classroom.

I now realize that I was lucky to have "fallen" into this unique program basically because it was in Denton and offered Graduate Assistantships. What I did not realize when I started is that a good doctoral program trains educational researchers. It is not designed to serve practitioners. I find that this is a big misconception in the field. If my goal was to continue as a practitioner, I would be grossly overqualified as well as have wasted my time, because the majority of my classes focused on research methods, philosophy and practices.

In retrospect, if I had been better informed before I entered the PhD program, I would have realized that I should have studied the research of the faculty and chosen a program that best fits my own research agenda and educational philosophy. Furthermore, it is important as a student to know with whom you want to work and learn from for an extended period of time. Faculty advisers are known for mentoring their protégées. This means that it is important to be well matched. As it turns out, I ended up in a place that is a wonderful fit, but this was more luck than an educated decision on my part. In the end, location and financial concerns took priority in my decision of where to go for my Doctoral program. I believe that because this program is a good fit philosophically, I will continue and complete my PhD degree.



Case Studies – Field Perspective

How do we know that the community colleges teach high quality curriculum at each college?

In 2007, the community college faculty who work in the Child Development/Early Childhood Education Departments across Texas were asked to participate in a grant funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board with Perkins funds in partnership with the professional association Child Development Educators Association (CDEA). The CDEA under the leadership of Debbie Simpson-Smith, reviewed every course offered at the two year level for the Child Development/Early Childhood Education courses. Within the scope of the work, each course was redesigned to match state standards and also meet the national standards and competencies needed to achieve national accreditation of the associate degree programs. Each community college received the notebook of the resulting work on the course redesign and a digital copy.

This project helps to support articulation in Texas because each CDEC program has coordinated curriculum across the state and developed rigorous content. Community colleges have programs and courses with proven merit to offer as a first step in articulation discussions with universities.

Child Development Educators Association Curriculum and Rubrics Manual

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Reviewed and updated September 2017

During the spring, 2007, information was received that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board planned to release a request for proposals for Carl Perkins funds for Leadership Grants. San Jacinto College – central campus received the information and posted the idea to develop a Curriculum and Rubrics Manual on the Child Development Educators Association (CDEA) list-serve. The CDEA list-serve is composed of Child Development faculty that teach in community colleges in Texas. The feedback was positive from the faculty across the state and a letter of intent was submitted to the THECB. In May, 2007, San Jacinto College began work on writing the grant and notification was received in late August that the grant has been approved for \$105,417.

The purpose of the Child Development Educators Association Curriculum and Rubrics Manual project was to serve as a catalyst to align existing CDEA syllabi in the WECM to meet the

national accreditation program standards that had been developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in Washington, D.C. This project raised the bar for our student's skill levels, which could help them; meet the challenging demands of the job market. In addition, those students that transferred to four- year institutions of higher education could be more successful in their careers based upon the higher accreditation standards at the community college. This partnership with Child Development Community College faculty across the state impacted the careers of the future early childhood teachers in Texas. Thirty-two colleges and seventy-seven child development faculty members agreed to participate in the project.

Each of the 24 child development courses found in the WECM had their student learning outcomes, (SLO's) aligned to meet the five core standards published by NAEYC. For the first time, a national accreditation process was available for Associate of Applied Science Degree programs. The five core standards (2003 edition) included the following: 1) Promoting Child Development and Learning, 2) Building the Family and Community Relationships, 3) Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families, 4) Teaching and Learning, and 5) Becoming a Professional. Each CDEC course had a corresponding student assessment description and grading rubric that ensured consistent grading procedures, requirements and expectations. In this manual each syllabi measured levels of proficiency and methodology.

The Child Development Educators Association Curriculum and Rubrics Manual addressed the following Closing the Gap goals and targets:

Goal 2 Increase by 50% the number of degrees, certificates and other identifiable student successes from high quality programs.

#4 Create seamless student transitions among high schools, community colleges, and universities.

As more and more information and awareness about the new national accreditation program developed by NAEYC, Child Development faculty teaching at community colleges in Texas could pursue this national accreditation for the A.A.S. degree. The Child Development and Rubrics Manual documented and referenced all of the current courses and syllabi that are being taught to child development students in Texas. This manual served as a model program for the state and through the promotion of excellence, articulation between community colleges and four-year colleges could be enhanced which benefited the students. Once an A.A.S. degree had received

accreditation, faculty may find it easier to articulate agreements with four-year colleges due to the alignment of nationally recognized content standards. Currently Baccalaureate and graduate teacher education programs are accredited through (NCATE) the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. The NAEYC Associate's Degree program completed the cycle as it includes the first two years of coursework. More students may be attracted to enrolling and completing their studies at accredited programs at community colleges and as a result more employers may be more willing to hire those students due to their quality of instruction.

Goal 3 Increase the number of nationally recognized programs or services at colleges and universities in Texas.

#1 Require each public college and university to identify one or more programs to improve to a level of nationally recognized excellence and prepare a strategic plan to accomplish this goal.

Through the development of a Curriculum and Rubrics Manual by the Child Development faculty in Texas, the curriculum will be in alignment with nationally recognized content standards.

The first presentation was held at the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TAEYC) in Fort Worth, October 11-13, 2008. At the first meeting, the Project Director presented the CDEC courses that had been reviewed and how the NAEYC core standards fit into the existing WECM courses and SLO's. Faculty selected 1-2 courses to evaluate at the beginning of the fall semester as titles of the courses were put on the List Serve. These drafts were brought to TAEYC and discussed in both small and large groups and were assigned according to interest and/or areas and regions of the State. This served as a way to encourage mentoring and peer collaboration among the college faculty.

The second presentation at the Texas Community College Teacher Association, (TCCTA) was in Dallas on February 21-23, 2008; the Project Director presented the results of all of the WECM courses that had been reviewed according to the NAEYC core standards by faculty work groups across the state. The director of the national accreditation program, Alison Litton, at NAEYC attended and presented at this meeting in Dallas and was impressed with the collaboration among the faculty as we all were working toward the same goal. Both small and large group activities were conducted during TCCTA to discuss key assessment descriptions and grading rubrics, similar to the methods used during the fall meeting at TAEYC. The CDEA list-serve was

utilized throughout the year by sending drafts of course syllabi, key assessment descriptions and rubrics to subscribers to receive instant feedback.

The Project Director collected all drafts by May 2008. The CDEA had their annual retreat at Austin Community College on May 16th, 2008. Copies of the syllabi, rubrics, and assessment were distributed and faculty members had a final opportunity for additions, corrections and/or deletions to the Curriculum and Rubrics manual. All of the syllabi, key assessments, descriptions and grading rubrics were available on the Perkins website funded through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the CDEA website.

Funding for travel, \$75,000 was a major part of this grant with \$1500 for each faculty member that attended the three meetings and submitted the required syllabus and rubric. The Curriculum manual with an accompanying CD was mailed to 85 Child Development Faculty Members in the Texas representing 34 community colleges during August, 2008.

As of September 2017, nine Child Development programs in Texas have earned NAEYC accreditation for their A.A.S. degree programs: Austin Community College District, Collin College, Eastfield College, Grayson College, Houston Community College, San Antonio College, San Jacinto College-Central Campus, St. Philip's College, and Wharton County Junior College. Additionally, Texas Southern University has earned accreditation for its Bachelor's program, and University of Houston-Clear Lake has earned accreditation for its Master's program.

Accreditation is constantly changing and will continue to change in the future. It is important that we all continue working to remain accredited.

How do we know that community colleges offer programs and degrees of merit?

Trust in the quality of the education offered in the community college will help support the transfer and articulation agreements between two year and four year colleges. In the following discussion, the progress of the child development and early childhood education programs in Texas is outlined. Achieving national accreditation is strong evidence of this high quality. Both the work of aligning curriculum and the successful accreditation of programs should give confidence in the articulation of courses and programs.

National Accreditation of Community College A.A.S. Programs for CDEC Students in Texas

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Reviewed and updated September 2017

National standards that define what early childhood teachers should know and be able to do create a framework for advancing the profession and a pathway for articulation across programs that prepare teachers to meet these standards. National accreditation of higher education programs for the preparation of early childhood professionals assures that program graduates are well prepared for their work with young children and families.

National guidelines for Associate's Degree granting programs for the preparation of early childhood teachers were first introduced in 1985. However, a voluntary national accreditation for early childhood Associate's Degree programs based on a set of standards only began in 2006. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) established the Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation (ECADA) in 2006 with the mission to award "...accreditation to associate degree programs the demonstrate evidence of meeting the Professional Preparation Standards (<http://www.naeyc.org/ecada/>)" At this point 173 programs in 29 states have earned ECADA accreditation and more than 100 programs are in self-study, the first step toward accreditation.

The standards established by NAEYC as the foundation for accreditation have been subject to continuous review and refinement; the most recent revision was in 2009. The standards articulate

A shared set of outcomes for early childhood professional preparation. These cores standards outline a set of common expectations for professional knowledge, skills, and

dispositions in six core areas. They express what tomorrow's early childhood professionals should know and be able to do (Lutton 2012).

Covering a comprehensive range of knowledge and skills, each standard has an overarching theme with key elements that clarify the learning outcomes expected for that area. The 2010 NAEYC Standards for Initial and Advanced Early Childhood Professional Preparation with a brief explanation are listed below:

- **Standard 1** – Promoting Child Development and Learning. A comprehensive grounding in the child development knowledge base is needed for students to understand the characteristics and needs of young children, as well as the multiple influences on their development, and then use that understanding “to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments” (Lutton 2012).
- **Standard 2** – Building Family and Community Relationships. Best practice in working with young children recognizes the vital role of families and communities in supporting positive outcomes for children; this standard focuses on students understanding of characteristics of diverse families and communities, establishing respectful relationships and involving families and communities in young children's learning.
- **Standard 3** – Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families. Central to students' ability to work effectively with young children is a strong grounding in the responsible use of data about young children in collaboration with families and other professionals
- **Standard 4** – Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families. This standard identifies the importance of positive relationships and supportive interactions with young children as foundational to good outcomes. It further articulates the importance of developing a repertoire of strategies, tools, approaches to teaching and learning appropriate to children's developmental levels and the use of reflective teaching to continuously improve their results.
- **Standard 5** – Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum. Understanding the key concepts and tools of inquiry in a wide range of content areas and how to use this knowledge to design meaningful, challenging curriculum for young children is a key skill for students.
- **Standard 6** – Becoming a Professional – This standard focuses on the skills needed as a professional including identification with the profession, upholding ethical standards of the profession, continuous learning, critical evaluation of the field and informed advocacy for children and the profession.

These six core performance standards are used for accrediting associate degree early childhood teacher preparation programs through ECADA and for NAEYC recognition of baccalaureate and graduate programs as part of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This creates an opportunity for more seamless articulation across systems, since “NAEYC accredited associate degree programs are expected to be of high enough quality to transfer into NAEYC recognized baccalaureate programs...” (NAEYC 2011).

With its focus on use of student learning outcome data for continuous program quality improvement, ECADA serves as a national catalyst for data-informed decision-making and improvement of the preparation of early childhood teachers. To achieve accreditation, programs must demonstrate that they are using student learning outcome data related to the six standards on an ongoing basis to examine the results of their curriculum and develop strategies to improve weak areas.

Examples of successful community college accreditation in Texas

Texas community college early childhood programs have a long history of collaboration to establish course level learning outcomes for courses in the State of Texas Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM), the document that governs general course learning outcomes for Associate of Applied Science degrees in Early Childhood or Child Development in Texas. The Child Development Educators Association (CDEA) offers a forum for dialogue and collaboration amongst associate degree early childhood programs in Texas. In 2007 – 2008 CDEA members, headed by Debbie Simpson-Smith, collaborated to create a Curriculum and Rubric Manual to align existing CDEC syllabi in the WECM to the NAEYC national standards, create a student assessment and grading rubric for each course. This level of commitment and collaboration creates a positive climate for shared learning. All of the programs that have achieved accreditation have faculty who are active members of CDEA. This was an excellent forum for support for the accreditation process.

Texas currently has nine programs with an ECADA accredited AAS degree in Early Childhood Studies, Early Childhood or Child Development. San Antonio College of the Alamo College District was the trailblazer for ECADA accreditation in Texas, achieving this recognition in April 2009. In addition to San Antonio College, Austin Community College District, Collin College, Eastfielf College, Grayson College, Houston Community College, San Jacinto College-Central Campus, St. Philip’s College, and Wharton County Junior College have earned accreditation. Additionally, Texas Southern University has earned accreditation for its Bachelor’s program,

and University of Houston-Clear Lake has earned accreditation for its Master's program.

These Texas ECADA accredited programs share many common elements:

- Most serve major urban centers in Texas; Wharton Junior College serves rural and suburban areas.
- All except Wharton County Junior College have a lab school program to serve as a site for student's observation and application of teaching skills.
- All have at least two full-time faculty members (Both Wharton and St. Phillips used the accreditation process to obtain a second full-time faculty member).
- All have current articulation agreements with a variety of four-year institutions in Texas and at least one in Oklahoma.

Successful practices leading to accreditation of programs in CDEC at the community college

Through interviews with each of the department chairs for ECADA accredited programs in Texas, several themes were identified as successful practices that resulted in accreditation. First and foremost, support of the college administration was essential--the cost of accreditation alone would be a barrier without college support. The investment of time and energy in the process required high-level administrative understanding of the value of discipline specific accreditation and support for the program as it went through the process. For some colleges, discipline specific accreditation was very important. These colleges expected all of their programs to seek discipline specific accreditation if one was available. Others were encouraging and supportive, but did not have a policy mandate for accreditation at the discipline level.

Engaging in the self-study process that leads to accreditation demands a high level of commitment of time and energy from the program faculty. Consequently, faculty buy-in for this voluntary process of program self-examination and improvement is one of the most important factors. All of the programs designated a primary coordinator for the effort, but then assigned a variety of tasks to other faculty to complete the process. Some of the coordinators had release time to allow for the extensive time involved in the process.

Regular meetings (weekly or biweekly) to keep the process moving forward was a valuable strategy for this complex self- study that included developing a conceptual framework, examining the key learning opportunities for each course, aligning the course outcomes with the national standards, creating key assessments with rubrics that demonstrate how the program is meeting the standards, implementing the use of the key assessments and then analyzing and

using the results of the key assessments for program improvement.

Training and peer support were valuable ways that programs used to understand and develop the competencies needed to complete the accreditation self-study. Many programs sent one or more people to NAEYC training at their Professional Development Institute that focused on accreditation. Several faculty members became peer reviewers for the ECADA accreditation process to get a better understanding of the expectations for accredited programs. The Texas professional organization for associate degree early childhood/child development programs, CDEA and the related national organization for associate degree teachers, ACCESS were forums used for sharing and peer support.

Successful programs engaged their key stakeholders—students, advisory board members, and community partners—early in the process and kept them informed as the program progressed through the self-study. A strong community advisory board that was committed to the process provided programs with a necessary sounding board as they completed the self-study process.

Having a lab school for students to practice their skills was instrumental for most of these programs to meet these high standards. One of the programs without a lab school had well-established relationships with local Head Start and public school programs that allowed them to demonstrate how students were meeting the standards. Another program had a child development center on campus that served as a practice site for some students, but was not a lab school directly connected to the program.

The intentional process of carefully examining each course in the curriculum, aligning the course outcomes and learning opportunities with the standards, collecting and examining data from the key assessments has strengthened each of these programs, by clarifying gaps in the curriculum and challenges students have completing the coursework successfully. The benefits of the accreditation process for the programs include: 1) a conceptual framework that clearly defines the program; 2) a more thoughtful, better aligned curriculum that identifies where key concepts and skills are introduced, practiced and mastered; 3) consistency across the program through the use of rubrics; 4) increased respect from their college and other community partners; 5) positioning the program well for the increased focus on student learning outcomes required by

the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the college-wide regional accreditation body and 5) the possibility for increased articulation opportunities with four-year programs. Benefits for students include 1) a better quality curriculum that is aligned with national standards; 2) exposure to NAEYC and the national standards from the very first course; 3) better feedback on learning outcomes through the use of rubrics; and 4) possible increased transfer options through graduating from an accredited program.

Recommendations for increasing evidence of excellence in the education of students in Child Development/Early Childhood programs

The process of self-study that leads to national accreditation promotes continuous quality improvement focused on how to help students meet national standards for early childhood professionals. Using ECADA accreditation as a catalyst for quality improvement of associate degree early childhood and child development program in Texas will lead to students with better knowledge and skills. The following recommendations are offered for increasing evidence of excellence in education of students:

1. Establish a goal to increase the number of ECADA accredited associate degree programs in Texas.
2. Offer financial and training and technical assistance to small programs to eliminate barriers to engaging in the ECADA process.
3. Share information about ECADA and its benefits for programs and students to all associate degree early childhood preparation programs in Texas.
4. Use ECADA as a framework for developing a statewide articulation agreement between associate degree child development/early childhood programs and four-year Bachelor of Applied Science programs and other Early Childhood Education programs. Make the transfer process as seamless as possible for early childhood teachers.
5. Consider establishing an Early Childhood Certificate that aligns skills with these national standards for use in all early childhood settings.

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Does credential coursework (such as CDA) count in early childhood education degree plans?

Articulation of specific and proven training is part of the existing practices in the community college. The following information provides insight into the blending of competencies offered in training and in course work that support high quality education. Training and higher education courses designed to meet national credentialing is an example of how articulation supports the achievement of educational and career goals.

Training and Courses for the CDA Credential in the CDEC Degrees

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The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE), and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in ECE. The nationally transferable Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is based on a core set of competency standards, which guide early care and education professionals as they work toward becoming qualified teachers of young children. Candidates must complete 120 hours of formal early childhood education training, covering the growth and development of children, with no fewer than 10 training hours in each of the following subject areas:

- Planning a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Advancing children's physical and intellectual development.
- Supporting children's social and emotional development.
- Building productive relationships with families.
- Managing an effective program operation.
- Maintaining a commitment to professionalism.
- Observing and recording children's behavior.
- Understanding principles of child development and learning.

While formal education hours can be for credit or noncredit, the hours must be earned through an agency or organization with expertise in early childhood teacher preparation. The agency or organization must verify the candidate's education in the form of an official transcript, certificate, or letter. (www.CDACouncil.org)

The CDA credential is a required qualification in national ECE standards of quality. By September 30, 2013, all teaching assistants in center-based Head Start programs must have a

CDA credential, be enrolled in a CDA credential training program that will be completed within 2 years, or have an associate or baccalaureate degree or be enrolled in a program leading to such a degree. NAEYC Early Childhood Program Accreditation Criterion 6.A.06 for Assistant Teachers/Teacher Aides requires that 50% of assistant teachers–teacher aides have at least a CDA credential or equivalent and that 100% of assistant teachers–teacher aides who do not have at least a CDA are enrolled in a training program leading to a CDA or equivalent, are actively participating in the program, and are demonstrating progress toward the CDA or equivalent.

Thirty-seven Texas community colleges are listed in the CDA Council National Registry for CDA Training. Community Colleges are the most common source for CDA Candidates to get their training either through credit or continuing education courses. The Higher Education Coordinating Board's Workforce Education Common Course Manual (WECM) lists four credit courses designed specifically to train CDA Candidates: CDEC 1317/1417 -Child Development Associate Training I, CDEC 2322/2422 – Child Development Associate Training II, and CDEC 2324/2424 – Child Development Associate Training III and CDEC1241/1341 CDA Preparation for Assessment. These courses are most frequently taught in a face-to-face format, but are sometimes offered in an on-line or self paced format. The courses may be paired with external learning experiential courses to provide laboratory experiences for candidates and opportunities for instructors to observe students in their workplace and provide specific feedback related to meeting the CDA competencies. Some colleges use other courses within their Child Development/Early Childhood Associate degree plans to train CDA Candidates instead of, or in addition to, these four courses. CDA courses are usually part of a child development training certificate or award which can range from 12-39 credit hours. The benefits of offering the courses within a certificate or award are that students are usually waived from taking testing of reading, writing, computer and math skills required of students seeking an Associate's Degree until they have finished the certificate coursework, students can graduate with a certificate much more quickly than it takes to earn an Associate's Degree and the coursework contained within the certificate/award plan is usually part of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree.

Still other community colleges offer CDA training through continuing education classes. WECM lists CDEC 1016 Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Training as well as CDEC 1017, CDEC 1022, CDEC 1024, and CDEC 1041 which are the Continuing Education versions of the credit classes listed above. Continuing Education offers more flexibility in the course

delivery methods and locations as well as ease of registration and enrollment, but does not automatically translate into college credit which can be applied to an AAS degree.

CDA candidates can also complete their preparation through a variety of other sources such as military training modules, the Agriculture Extension Agency, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, and non-profit or private training organizations. These training options range from providing the required 120 hours of training on the 13 CDA functional area topics to also providing help with developing the required CDA resource file to additionally doing on-site mentoring of students to prepare for the formal CDA observation. For example, the Texas A & M Agriculture Extension Agency has prepared a list of their on-line training sessions that will help candidates meet the required training, but the sessions are not a cohesive course curriculum and do not offer help in preparing the CDA Professional Resource File or on-site mentoring. On the other hand, the military CDA training modules are designed specifically to prepare candidates to meet the CDA competencies and prepare the CDA Professional Resource File while military trainers mentor candidates as they prepare for assessment.

Some community colleges do offer credit for specific courses within their AAS degree plan for students once candidates have obtained their CDA Credential no matter how or where they did their training preparation. For example, the Dallas County Community College District offers credit for CDEC 1317, 2322 and 2424 for a student who holds a current CDA Credential and has completed 12 credit hours toward an AAS in Child Development at either Brookhaven College or Eastfield College.

Most CDA candidates are already working with children in child care settings, so they bring that experience, whether good or bad, with them when they start training. This can be an instructional challenge if what they have been implementing does not match the practices identified in the CDA Competencies. In addition, many candidates have had negative educational experiences and have never been to college before. This means that they do not see themselves as learners and may struggle with the concept of homework, particularly the writing required in preparing the six CDA Competency statements. A third barrier to success is that the students are working and usually have family responsibilities, so time for homework and professional reflection is limited and many do not own cars, so transportation is an issue in getting to classes. Some students get behind in their work and drop out before completing the training or the child care program where they are working will not change the environment or practices to ones in better alignment with CDA Competencies, so the candidate cannot pass the formal observation.

CDA candidates who seem to be the most successful not only complete the 120 hours of topical training required, but also are provided with resources and feedback to help them successfully complete the CDA Professional Resource file as well as on-site observation and technical assistance that supports them in putting what they are learning into practice in their child care setting. These three components are essential, but may be delivered in a variety of methods unique to the community and may involve different community partnerships to implement successfully. In April, 2013, the CDA Council will introduce CDA 2.0, which will change the way the assessment system operates. The competencies will remain the same, but community colleges that offer CDA preparation will have to adjust their instructional practices to accommodate these changes.

Resources:

<http://www.cdacouncil.org/the-cda-credential>

<http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/aar/undergraduateed/workforceed/wecm/>



Do universities find articulation valuable for transfer students?

Articulation is working well in regional areas across Texas. The University of Houston at Clear Lake has years of practice in recruiting and facilitating the completion of degrees involving students transferring from community colleges seeking non-certification early childhood education degrees. The following discussion explains the benefits that have been emerging from the partnerships developed in the Houston area with community college students.

Benefits of Excellent Articulation Agreements for Child Development and Early Childhood Students

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Reviewed and updated September 2017

Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another.

~John Dewey

Since inception in 2009 the University of Houston Clear Lake's (UHCL) Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Early Childhood Education, has witnessed numerous students successfully completing the program. In a field where degreed employees are in a minority this was no small feat. But in addition to receiving their BAS, our eclectic group of students have transformed from a cohort of reluctant non-traditional students into informed, passionate professionals who have become graduate students, published authors, conference presenters, trainers and advocates in the field. The foundation of a seamless program has ignited aspirations and achieved realities in students who admit they never imagined pursuing higher education or career advancements to the level they have. This is possible due, in part, to the strong relationship between UHCL and its community college partners.

Examples of successful transfer from a two-year program to four-year programs Because UHCL had traditionally been an upper-level university since its establishment in 1974, the relationship with community colleges has always been imperative to its success. Though

UHCL now offers full four year programs, including a new Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Care and Education (BSECCE), our partnerships with community colleges remain a critical factor in ensuring our student-focused mission. Transfer advisors are assigned to recruit and assist potential students at each of the 10 local community colleges. Two plus Two (2+2) agreements (documents articulating coursework to be taken at the community college and at the university) and transfer policies are available so that students can seamlessly move from the community college to the university. UHCL has “Hawk Connection,” our transfer program and system, that allows students to lock into their UHCL degree plan (and access UHCL resources) while they are still pursuing their Associate’s Degree. Without these relationships and coordinated systems, UHCL would struggle for enrollment.

The Early Childhood Education program at UHCL has long maintained a working relationship with the 10 community college districts in the Houston area. The Early Childhood Program at UHCL has hosted Community College Collaborative meetings biannually since 2000. At a meeting in the mid 2000s, one community college professor suggested that UHCL create a program for students in Early Childhood Education who did not plan to pursue public school teaching but a program in which individuals could continue their education associated with Early Childhood. After collaborating with the community colleges and researching the literature on similar programs, the BAS program began in 2009. Over 60 students have enrolled in the program over the last 8 years. The faculty continually engage in reflection and self-study for the purpose of ensuring the program meets the needs of students and our community while maintaining a unified, relevant program that minimizes repetitive content while always seeking to provide personalized advising and learning experiences.

As the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start and other leaders in early childhood increase educational requirements in an attempt to professionalize Early Childhood Care and Education; it is imperative that universities actively recruit nontraditional students who are currently working in the field. The need to work around the unique needs and experiences of nontraditional students has impacted the UHCL Early Childhood Education program in two important ways:

- Scheduling and coursework must be conducive to working adults.
- Curriculum must be practical, relatable, relevant and differentiated to respect the diversity of backgrounds and experiences of the students.

The background information we needed to create a successful program came from our students and our community college partners. At UHCL, we have learned to view agreements with the

community colleges not as a product but an ongoing process. As the field changes and we learn to understand the needs of our students and their employers, we realize that the articulation agreements and 2+2 plans are not just documents, but living breathing relationships between institutions.

Successful practices in the articulation process leading to completion of a Bachelor's Degree

It is our position that successful relationships which lead to successful program completion require the following elements that directly contribute to the success of UHCL's articulation agreements:

- *On-going, two-way communication between community colleges and universities.* At UHCL, this occurs through biannual Community College Collaborative meetings, faculty serving on the advisory boards at the community colleges, regular e-mail communication and visits between campuses.
- *Willingness to adapt to continual changes in the field.* The BAS program at UHCL was created in response to a perceived need from the community colleges and a call for increased professionalism in the field from entities such as NAEYC and Head Start.
- *Personalized advisement.* Advisement begins at the community college with transfer advisors and community college professors who assist students in making educational plans based on their experiences and career goals. When they arrive at UHCL, they are assigned an advisor who will assist them through their program. Based on feedback from students, this is frequently a faculty advisor, who is familiar with the field of Early Childhood Care and Education.
- *Scaffolding courses and systemic planning.* Creating alignment among and between institutions is essential. Creating courses that scaffold and do not duplicate community college coursework helps students to build greater depth of knowledge and honors their previous coursework.
- *Constant Reflection.* In order to honor and maintain a strong relationship between institutions and with students, critical and consistent reflection must be implemented. Using feedback from advisors, students, and professors from all institutions creates a constructive cycle of reflection and improvement.

Challenges to establishing strong articulation

Creating successful articulations can be challenging. The following items, among others, may create barriers to successful transitions between community colleges and universities:

- Ineffective relationships and communication.
- Reluctance to adapt to changes in the field.
- Advising that is not personalized or advisors that are not informed about the field.
- Inability or reluctance to make program changes.
- Unwillingness to reflect on practices and student needs.

Guidance for Schools interested in establishing articulation agreements

As emphasized above, relationships with effective communication are the foundation for establishing effective articulation agreements. Developing articulation agreements is a process that requires listening, compromises, and a shared vision.

- One of the first steps involves all parties collaborating to review each School's existing coursework.
- Mindful of the degree requirements (120 hours), systematic planning can commence to develop an appropriate scope and sequence of learning.
- Assurances of general core requirements must be made.
- It is most effective when partnering institutions utilize same course identification numbers. Guidance can be found through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's resources.
- Advising staff, faculty, and administrators from the different higher education programs must reach agreement on all transfer course components.
- A Memorandum of Understanding should be drafted and signed by collaborating institutions.
- Documents need to be developed that are visually appealing and easy for students to interpret the requirements.

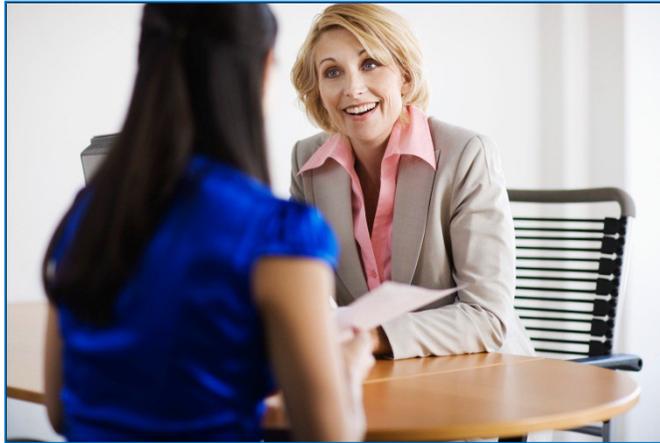
Recommendations for increasing and maintaining excellent articulation practices

In order for students to move seamlessly and comfortably between the community college and university, open collegial relationships are essential. Not just between institutions, but between the faculty who students know and see on a regular basis. The move to a four-year university can be intimidating to non-traditional students who work in a field where degreed employees are in a minority. When students see that faculty at both institutions are there to work *with* them and *for* them, the students are more likely to take the initiative to enroll at the university. In addition, a climate that is engaged in consistent reflection and improvement benefits students and the program. Open communication among and within institutions, willingness to adapt, flexible scheduling, personalized advising and individualized coursework can lead to successful

articulations, which benefit the students, faculty and institutions involved.

Future Student Engagement

While UHCL Clear Lake does not have formal agreements between High Schools, we do partner and support numerous efforts of the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE), Ready, Set, Teach (RST), and Bridging the Educational Scene for Teachers of Tomorrow (BESTT). These programs for high school students serve to acclimate potential future educators to the process and requirements of seeking a college degree as well as the realities of community service and teaching responsibilities. Expanding awareness of the existing articulation agreements between UHCL and our community college partners with high school students offers future students a clear vision of their path to working with children.



How do students at the high school experience seamless transfer opportunities?

Articulation of courses based on knowledge and skills is encouraged among high schools. Specifically for the child development/early childhood education students in the junior or senior grades, earning some credits early in high school can encourage the career and educational goals of students. Career clusters offer a partnership between community college programs and high school courses and programs. Based on competencies and standards, early articulation of content allows students to get high quality curriculum and an early start in higher education.

Vertical Alignment from Secondary – High School - to Post Secondary

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Reviewed September 2017

Guidance and Advice for Successful Articulations

The articulation process really involves three phases. Each phase must be clearly defined and well thought-out.

- **Phase one is the implementation of the agreement.** High school teachers and college professors must meet and discuss course objectives, books, supplies, and final assessment piece. This must be done for each school that wishes to enter into an agreement.
- **Phase two is monitoring.** College teachers are asked to stay in communication with high school teachers to ensure all course objectives are met. We have a transitional advisor that visits all the articulated credit classrooms to answer questions about how the credit is awarded, what the students next steps are to matriculate to AC and general advising.
- **Phase three is awarding credit.** This requires a well thought out plan to ensure students get the credit for the courses they have met the objectives in before they graduate from high school. How will credit be awarded, how do we verify they met the requirements of the agreement, how long after they graduate could they potentially claim the credit.
- **Key Component for Successful Articulation:** Continual communication with the high schools through all three phases. Communication with the students to ensure they have an understanding that they are earning the credit.

- **Major Challenges:** Scheduling of meetings for all parties involved. Ensuring the communication is taking place. It only works when everyone is communicating, so the success depended on overcoming our greatest challenges.

Career Cluster Initiative

(Information provided May 2013; Amarillo College has since transitioned away from the career cluster initiative, but continues to support articulation through a similar process with high school programs, including offering dual credit and level one certificates for students while still in high school.)

The Career Clusters Initiative began in 1996 in the U.S. as the Building Linkages Initiative and was a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Education, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), the National School-to-Work Office (NSTWO) and the National Skill Standards Board (NSSB). The purpose was to establish linkages among state educational agencies, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, employers, industry groups, other stakeholders.

At Amarillo College, we started our career cluster development internally before looking to our secondary partners. The first step was to look at all of our programs of study and place them in the appropriate cluster. After deliberating with program managers and deans, Amarillo College implemented eleven of the sixteen clusters. The next step was to create a cluster core curriculum. Within each cluster six to eleven hours of course work were identified that was common to all programs of study within the cluster. The final step then was to look to our secondary partners to create vertical alignments. This happened to coincide with the defunding of Tech Prep (technical preparation courses offered at high schools) by the U. S Congress in 2011. With Tech Prep no longer an option for creating articulated credit options from secondary to postsecondary, each community college was left to decide how they would handle the partnerships.

In the fall of 2012 Amarillo College hosted two articulation meetings for area high schools. To prepare for these meetings, internal training was offered by the career cluster director for any Career and Technical Education faculty interested in pursuing articulations. An articulation worksheet was created by Amarillo College and used in the articulation meetings to ensure rigor in high school classes. Amarillo College faculty met with area high school teachers and discussed the content, outcomes, and assessment methods used in both settings. The worksheet was used to coordinate books, content, software, supplies, and most importantly accountability measures. All articulated courses required specific, agreed-upon accountability

measures. Accountability measures would vary depending on the course and could include comprehensive finals, demonstration of skills (i.e. welding), and portfolios. Other articulation criteria included only allowing junior or seniors to take the courses for credit if they passed with a final grade of B or higher. The overall goal was to create articulated courses that align with the cluster core curriculum. If a student completed these courses at the high school level, they would have up to nine hours of college credit.

The benefit to students is an introduction to several career options within their career cluster of choice. It introduces students to college level work and gives them early successes that they can carry on to the college setting.

Resource:

<http://www.theworksuite.com/id30.html>

Can continuing education credits ever be used for an academic credit?

Training done in communities by people meeting the requirements for national competencies and standards required in earning credentials is another way to value articulation. Many practitioners begin with continuing education training. When this training is aligned with high quality expectations and proven trainers, the credits can be articulated into the community college certificate and degree plans. Capturing the work done in training and using it to build credits in the community college also supports and encourages practitioners to move forward on career goals.

Training That Can Be Accepted in the CDEC Coursework for Academic Credit

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This position paper is a discussion elaborating how clock-hours and Continuing Education Unit (CEU) trainings on Core Knowledge and Skills, now identified as Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators, can be accepted into academic programs at community colleges in the State of Texas. The following is our experiences and how our company, Creative Trainers and Consultants, has approached 2- year colleges in the Gulf Coast Consortium, namely, San Jacinto College, Houston Community College, Brazosport College, Alvin Community College and Wharton County Junior College. We are currently offering the Director Credential and other Early Childhood Education (ECE) classes in the Austin, San Antonio and Dallas markets and asking two-year colleges in those cities about their articulation policies and requirements.

We have learned that each community college has its own policies regarding accepting clock hours and CEUs; however, several colleges are giving college credits to students that have a current Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. Each college has their own guidelines and makes decisions on how this credit can be included on the student's transcript.

Some high school courses have been identified statewide as articulated courses that cover the same materials and/or teach the same skills as courses in the college's own programs. We have learned articulation agreements between some colleges and high schools have been developed.

Students who take the designated Career and Technology Education (CATE) courses in high school may be eligible to receive credit for a corresponding college course.

We have had most success with articulation agreements for accepting college credits for CDA clock hours with San Jacinto College Central and Houston Community College. We take pride in helping each of our students achieve confidence and knowledge and encourage them to continue their education. This opportunity gives them a jump start on working toward their A.A. or B.A. Degree in ECE. This is very helpful when working with Head Start and Early Head Start Programs because they are mandated to have a minimum of a CDA Credential. This is their first step towards ultimately achieving their A.A. and B.A. in ECE.

Successful Practices: We discuss and define our articulation steps as THE BRIDGE—CDA CLOCK HOURS INTO COLLEGE CREDIT at the last CDA class scheduled. First step needed to make this happen was to successfully align our curriculum with the guidelines of CDEC 1313/1314. We worked closely with Dr. Debbie Simpson-Smith, Chair, Child Development/Early Education Department, San Jacinto College-Central. Our CDA curriculum and classes were developed and approved. The CDA classes are scheduled using the approved curriculum and include 12 classes, scheduled twice monthly for a total of 120 clock hours of ECE in all Core Competencies. We then developed and explained the NEXT STEPS toward receiving the National CDA Credential and the NEXT STEPS toward receiving college credits for the clock hours received taking our CDA classes. We invite Chairs of ECE Departments, San Jacinto Central College, Dr. Debbie Simpson-Smith and Houston Community College, and Dr. Vanese Delahoussaye to attend our last CDA class. The students have an opportunity to hear and understand the process needed to receive 6 to 8 college credits for the 120 clock hours and work completed in our CDA classes. They are then able to ask specific questions about their personal situations from the actual leaders and decision makers of the colleges involved. We have a video clip of Dr. Delahoussaye on our website explaining the NEXT STEPS and the opportunities available to potential candidates.

Challenges to delivery and completion of training: Most ECE programs in the State of Texas do not require ECE teachers to have but a minimum of training hours each year. Except for some programs, NAEYC Accredited, and Head Start programs, teachers are required to have minimum education and training. Requirements for Texas are teachers must be 18 years of age, high school diploma/GED and 24 clock hours of training per year. Most teachers and staff are not required, expected or rewarded for obtaining higher education and professional development

trainings. Many CDA classes offered do not make the extra commitment of aligning their curriculum to meet the standards of colleges. Many also have no restrictions, offer substandard Core Competency classes and few actual hours teaching Developmentally Appropriate and Best Practices. Some ECE owners/directors do not encourage or assist their staff in pursuing advanced education. Many students have transportation, family obligations and cultural restriction that prevent them from attending classes. Some owners and directors appear to be fearful of losing teachers to other programs offering more benefits and money for those with CDA Credentials. Many programs do not offer scholarships and there are few opportunities offered for those interested in attending quality classes.

Recommendations for successful use of training hours in academic programs:

1. More quality training opportunities that align with requirements of 2- year colleges offering articulation agreements for clock hours. Opportunities that are more than “drive by trainings”.
2. More scholarships offered to programs for CDA and Professional Development classes with accountability requirements.
3. Increase practitioner awareness of T.E.A.C.H.[®] scholarship opportunities and other scholarships offered through TAEYC. This research-based professional development system is currently used in 24 states. In Texas, the scholarships are available through the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children.
4. Programs/Schools should develop mutually agreed upon terms for teachers/staff receiving their CDA Credential and college courses. The terms could include payment for a portion of the cost of the extra classes. It could mean the program/school would agree to reimburse the teacher for the cost of the classes. If the program/school pays for the classes, teachers/staff could/should agree to make a commitment to the school/program for a minimum of 2 years. Salary increases should be in place and given when the CDA Credential or advanced education is achieved. T.E.A.C.H.[®] could be the model.
5. Texas Early Learning Council has developed a career lattice describing how additional training, education, and experience can foster additional professional opportunities throughout a career and will hopefully establish a common baseline of expectations for continuous improvement and guide for professional planning at the teacher and

administrative level. It is recommended that practitioners use the lattice to guide and direct the development of a satisfying career. The lattice is a:

- Tool used as a common set of standards to evaluate progress in career development or advancement;
- Serve as a guide in early childhood settings for professional development goals; and
- Tool for self-evaluation and to chart progress of professional registered trainers.



Appendix 3: Partners

What articulation partners might be available?

Data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board web site (<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/apps/programinventory/ProgSearch.cfm>) accessed 6 October 2017. Key to awards given in Table 1:

C = Certificate

E = Enhanced Skills Certificate

T = Advanced Technical Certificate

P = Professional

A = Associate's Degree

B = Bachelor's Degree

M = Master's Degree

D = Doctoral Degree.

Table 1. Institutions offering Child Development/Early Childhood Education degrees

Search parameters: **Institution:** All
CIP Code: All
Program Level: ANY
Program Name: "child"

Institution	Program Name	Award Given			
Universities					
Abilene Christian University	Early childhood elementary		B		
Baylor University	Child and family studies		B		
East Texas Baptist University	Child development		B		
Hardin-Simmons University	Interdisciplinary generalist-EC-grade 6		B		
Lubbock Christian University	Early childhood education		B		
McMurry University	Early childhood education		B		
Our Lady of the Lake University of San Antonio	Early childhood education		B		
Schreiner University	Multidisciplinary studies EC-6		B		
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	Child and family studies		B		
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	Children and family ministries		B	M	
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	Early childhood education	A			
Southwestern Assemblies of God University	Early childhood/elementary			M	
Stephen F. Austin State University	Child development and family living 2019		B ¹		
Stephen F. Austin State University	Early childhood education			M	
Texas A&M University-Commerce	Early childhood education			M ²	
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	Early childhood education			M	
Texas A&M University-Kingsville	Early childhood			M	
Texas A&M University-San Antonio	Child development		B		
Texas A&M University-San Antonio	Early childhood			M	

Texas Christian University	Child development		B		
Texas College	Early childhood education	A			
Texas State University	Family and child development		B		
Texas State University	Family and child studies			M	
Texas Tech University	Early child care		B		
Texas Tech University	Early childhood		B		
Texas Woman's University	Child development		B	M	
Texas Woman's University	Child life			M	
Texas Woman's University	Early child development and education				D
Texas Woman's University	Early childhood education			M ²	
The University of Texas at Arlington	Child studies 2018		B ³		
The University of Texas at Arlington	Child/bilingual studies 2018		B ³		
The University of Texas at Dallas	Child learning and development		B		
The University of Texas at Dallas	Human development and early child disorders			M	
The University of Texas at San Antonio	Early childhood and elementary education			M	
The University of Texas at San Antonio	Infancy and childhood studies 2020		B ³		
The University of Texas at San Antonio	Multicultural early childhood development		B		
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin	Child and family studies		B		
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Early care and early childhood studies		B		
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Early childhood			M	
Trinity University	Master of arts in teaching-early childhood/elementary education			M	
University of Houston-Clear Lake	Early childhood care and education		B		
University of Houston-Clear Lake	Early childhood education			M	
University of Houston-Downtown	Early childhood and family strengths		B		
University of North Texas	Early childhood studies			M	
University of North Texas at Dallas	Child development and family studies		B		
Wayland Baptist University	Early childhood development		B		
Wiley College	Early childhood education		B		
Health-Related Institutions					
Baylor College of Medicine	Child Life		C		
Community Colleges					
Alamo Community College - Northeast Lakeview College (ACCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Alamo Community College - Northwest Vista College (ACCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Alamo Community College - Palo Alto College	Early Childhood Education		A		

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(ACCD)	and Teaching				
Alamo Community College - San Antonio College (ACCD)	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Alamo Community College - St. Philip's College (ACCD)	Child Development	C	A		
Alvin Community College	Child Development	C	A		
Alvin Community College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Amarillo College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Amarillo College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Angelina College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
Angelina College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Austin Community College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Austin Community College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Blinn College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Brazosport College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Central Texas College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Central Texas College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Cisco College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Cisco College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Coastal Bend College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
College of the Mainland Community College District	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
College of the Mainland Community College District	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Collin County Community College District	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Collin County Community College District	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - Brookhaven College (DCCCD)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Dallas County Community College - Brookhaven College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - Cedar Valley College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - Eastfield College (DCCCD)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Dallas County Community College - Eastfield College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - El Centro College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - Mountain View College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Dallas County Community College - North Lake	Early Childhood Education		A		

College (DCCCD)	and Teaching				
Dallas County Community College - Richland College (DCCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Del Mar College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Del Mar College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
El Paso Community College District	Child Development	C	A		
El Paso Community College District	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Frank Phillips College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Grayson College	Child Development	C	A		
Grayson College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Hill College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Hill College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Houston Community College System (HCCS)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Howard College (HCJCD)	Child Development	C	A		
Kilgore College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
Kilgore College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Laredo Community College	Child Development	C	A		
Lee College	Child Development	C	A		
Lone Star College - Cy-Fair (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Lone Star College - Kingwood (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Lone Star College - Montgomery (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Lone Star College - North Harris (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Lone Star College - Tomball (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Lone Star College - University Park (LSCS)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
McLennan Community College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
Midland College	Child Development	C	A		
Navarro College	Child Development	C	A		
North Central Texas College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Northeast Texas Community College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Odessa College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Odessa College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Panola College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C			

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Paris Junior College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Ranger College	Child Care Provider/Assistant		A		
San Jacinto College Central Campus (SJCC)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
San Jacinto College North Campus (SJCC)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
San Jacinto College South Campus (SJCC)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
South Plains College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
South Texas College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
South Texas College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf (HCJCD)	Child Development		A		
Southwest Texas Junior College	Child Development	C	A	E	
Southwest Texas Junior College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Tarrant County College - Northeast Campus (TCCD)	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		T
Tarrant County College - Northeast Campus (TCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Tarrant County College - South Campus (TCCD)	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Temple College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A		
Temple College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Texarkana College	Child Development	C	A		
Texas Southmost College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Texas Southmost College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Trinity Valley Community College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
Trinity Valley Community College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Tyler Junior College	Child Care and Support Services Management	C	A	E	
Tyler Junior College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Vernon College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Weatherford College	Child Development	C	A	E	
Weatherford College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Western Texas College	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
Western Texas College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		
Wharton County Junior College	Child Development	C			
Wharton County Junior College	Early Childhood Education and Teaching		A		

State Colleges					
Lamar Institute of Technology (TSUS)	Child Care Provider/Assistant	C	A		
For Profit Colleges & Universities Authorized by Certificate					
Brightwood College - San Antonio (San Pedro)	Early Childhood Development	A	B		
University of Phoenix - Dallas	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
University of Phoenix - El Paso 4	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
University of Phoenix - Houston	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
University of Phoenix - Killeen Learning Center	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
University of Phoenix - San Antonio	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
University of Phoenix - Woodlands Learning Center	Education: Early Childhood Education		B		
Other Institutions Authorized by Certificate					
Southeastern Oklahoma State University	Early Intervention & Child Development		B		

¹ Being Consolidated

² Federation of North Texas Area Universities Program-Degree Granting Role

³ Being Phased Out