

# Frequently Asked Questions

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### **When can I transfer, and when should I apply?**

Different schools have different policies in this regard. Some require a minimum number of completed transfer hours; others do not. In some instances, it may be necessary to complete certain coursework due to coursework that was not completed during high school. Admissions officers at the colleges can advise you in this regard.

Admissions deadlines vary from institution to institution. Students should contact the admissions office or consult the catalog of the particular institution to which they are applying to find out application deadlines. In general, students should begin the application process two semesters before they intend to transfer. Students applying for financial aid and/or scholarships are strongly encouraged to begin the application process as soon as applications are available.

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### **How can I determine if my credits will transfer? Does the CAA apply to NC private colleges and universities?**

If you are enrolled at a community college or a private two year college in North Carolina, you should review the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA), which guarantees that certain specified courses will transfer to any state university to which you are accepted, or to any of the private four year colleges and universities that endorse the Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA): Barton, Belmont Abbey, Bennett, Brevard, Campbell, Catawba, Chowan, Gardner-Webb, Johnson C. Smith, Lees-McRae, Livingstone, Louisburg, Mars Hill, Montreat, Mount Olive, NC Wesleyan, Pfeiffer, Queens, St. Andrews University, Saint Augustine's, Salem College, Shaw, Warren Wilson, and Wingate.

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### **What courses should I take before I transfer?**

If you plan to transfer from a two year college in North Carolina to a four year college, it is generally best to take courses that lead to a college transfer degree. Within the college transfer programs, there are about two dozen pre-major articulation agreements which are designed to parallel the courses taken by students in similar majors during their first two years at a four year college.

If you are transferring from one four year college to another, or from a four year college to a two year college, you should contact the admissions office at the receiving institution to determine which courses you should complete prior to transfer.

Merely meeting minimum standards does not guarantee admission to any college, and you should check with the schools you are considering to determine your admissibility.

Students who are considering transfer to a UNC system campus who did not meet the MAR requirements in high school can complete a college transfer (AA or AS) degree at a community college, or can complete certain other course requirements at a two year or private four year college to gain admissibility. For details, you should contact the UNC system school you are considering.

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## **What is the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement?**

The North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) is a statewide agreement governing the transfer of credits between N.C. community colleges and N.C. public universities and has as its objective the smooth transfer of students. This agreement has been approved by the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and the N.C. State Board of Community Colleges. The CAA provides certain assurances to the transferring student; for example, the CAA identifies community college courses that are appropriate for transfer as electives. Courses that will satisfy pre-major and general education requirements are also specified.

The CAA defines a 44-semester credit hour general education core which, if completed at the community college, is fully transferable to UNC institutions and will satisfy general education requirements. This means that a transfer student who completes the general education core at a North Carolina community college will not be required to take other general education courses at a UNC institution, even if his/her 44-semester credit hour core does not completely match the university's. Students should be aware that some universities have graduation requirements that transfer students must satisfy -- such as physical education or a foreign language.

North Carolina community college students who earn an associate's degree according to the guidelines of the CAA will be treated as juniors at the receiving UNC institution. Students graduating from North Carolina community colleges under the guidelines of the CAA will have 64 semester hours of credit transferred to the UNC institution to which they are admitted. Because UNC institutions differ in their admission requirements, students intending to transfer should contact the UNC institution(s) of their choice to learn about specific admissions requirements.

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## **What is a college transfer program?**

A college transfer program is a set of courses that has been designed to transfer to most four-year colleges and universities in North Carolina. The set of courses includes a 44-semester hour general education core and 20 additional semester hours of transfer credit. In the North Carolina Community College System, the Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degree programs are included in the CAA as college transfer programs.

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## **Who is a community college transfer student?**

Community College transfer students are those who wish to transfer from a community college to another community college or to a senior-level college or university.

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## **What is a bachelor's degree?**

A bachelor's degree is a four-year degree granted by a college or university. Typically, the community college student completes two of the four years of work at his/her community college and transfers that work to the senior-level institution where he/she completes the last two years of work. Agreements that govern the transfer of coursework from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities are called "articulations."

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### **What makes up a bachelor's degree?**

A bachelor's degree consists of three parts. The first is "general education," which consists of courses in English composition, humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences and natural sciences/ mathematics designed to give the student a broad academic foundation. General education classes are typically taken during the freshman and sophomore years.

The second part of a bachelor's degree is a "major." This set of courses is designed to make the student knowledgeable in a particular field of study. Typically, these courses account for one to two years of study and are usually taken in the junior and senior years.

The third part of a bachelor's degree is "elective" coursework. Electives allow students to broaden their academic horizon and explore subjects of interest. These courses may be taken at any time.

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### **What is the difference between the Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degrees?**

The AA degree is designed for students who want to pursue a four-year degree in one of the liberal arts disciplines or at a professional school that requires a strong liberal arts background. The mathematics and science requirements for the AA degree are usually fewer than for an AS degree.

The AS degree is designed for students who want to pursue a four-year degree in areas of study such as computer science, engineering, mathematics, the sciences or professional programs that require strong mathematics and science backgrounds.

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### **What is the General Education Core?**

The general education core is a set of 45-semester hours (SH) of courses which when completed will meet the freshman/sophomore general education requirements at all UNC institutions.

The core specifically includes the following for the AA degree:

English Composition 6 SH  
Humanities/Fine Arts 9 SH  
Social/Behavioral Sciences 9 SH  
Mathematics 3-4 SH  
Natural Sciences 4 SH  
Additional GEC Hours 13-14 SH  
ACA 122 1 SH  
Total 45 SH

The core specifically includes the following for the AS degree:

English Composition 6 SH  
Humanities/Fine Arts 6 SH  
Social/Behavioral Sciences 6 SH  
Natural Sciences 8 SH  
Mathematics 8 SH  
Additional GEC Hours 11 SH  
ACA 122 1 SH  
Total 45 SH

**Is it necessary to finish the General Education Core before transferring to a university?**

Completing the general education core before transferring is not necessary but advisable. Students who do not complete the general education core as stated in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement will have to complete the specific general education requirements of the college or university to which they transfer.

**Is it necessary to finish the associate's degree before transferring to a university?**

Completing the general education core before transferring is not necessary but advisable. Students who do not complete the general education core as stated in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement will have to complete the specific general education requirements of the college or university to which they transfer.

**Is admission to a UNC institution guaranteed?**

Yes, the CAA includes a Transfer Assured Admissions Policy (TAAP), which assures admission to at least one of the 16 UNC institutions with the following stipulations:

- Admission is not assured to a specific campus or specific program or major.
- Students must have graduated from a NC community college with an AA or AS degree.
- Students must meet all requirements of the CAA.
- Students must have an overall GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, as calculated by the college from which they graduated, and a grade of "C" or better in all CAA courses.
- Students must be academically eligible for re-admission to the last institution attended.
- Students must meet judicial requirements of the institution to which they applied.
- Students must meet all application requirements at the receiving institution including the submission of all required documentation by stated deadlines.

**How do the UNC Minimum Admission Requirements (MAR) apply to transfer students?**

Transfer students will be considered to have satisfied the UNC Minimum Admission Requirements (MAR) in effect at the time of their graduation from high school if they have:

- Received the AA, the AS, the AFA, the baccalaureate or any higher degree, *or*
- Completed the 44-hour CAA General Education Core.

If you do not complete one of the above requirements, then your high school Grade Point Average (GPA) and SAT/ACT score will be used to determine eligibility.

### **How do the UNC Minimum Course Requirements (MCR) apply to transfer students?**

Transfer students will be considered to have satisfied the UNC Minimum Course Requirements (MCR) in effect at the time of their graduation from high school if they have:

- Received the AA, the AS, the AFA, the baccalaureate or any higher degree, *or*
- Completed the 44-hour CAA General Education Core, *or*
- Completed at least six semester hours in degree-credit in each of the following subjects: English, mathematics, the natural sciences, social/ behavioral sciences, and (for students who graduate from high school in 2003-04 and beyond) a second language.

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### **Will "D" or "F" grades transfer?**

No, under the CAA, only courses in which a grade of "C" or higher is earned will transfer.

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### **How many semester hours will transfer?**

If a student transfers to a University of North Carolina institution under the statewide CAA, a maximum of 64 semester hours will transfer. The student should consult an academic advisor/ counselor since special program articulations may exist between community colleges and four-year colleges or universities in North Carolina or elsewhere that may permit the transfer of additional credit hours.

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### **What is a credit hour? What if my previous coursework is in quarter or trimester hours?**

A credit hour is the unit of measure that colleges and universities assign to courses. Most institutions in North Carolina utilize the semester system; other systems include trimester, quarter, and four-one-four. When transferring credit, a student's credit hours are adjusted based upon the systems used between the two institutions.

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### **Will an Associate in Applied Science (AAS), Associate in General Education (AGE) or Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) degree transfer?**

At present, the CAA does not articulate the AAS, AGE or AFA degrees for college transfer. Individual universities and community colleges have very specific program articulations, which govern the transfer of credit earned in these degree programs. Information on these programs is available from the academic advisor/counselor or the college catalog.

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### **When is it best to select a major?**

As early as possible. Some students may not be ready to select a major in their freshman year; this is not unusual. However, the longer a student takes to decide on a major, the more likely it is that some of the courses taken may not apply to the major. This could result in the student having to earn more than the maximum number of semester credit hours transferable to a four-year college or university.

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**Should I speak with an academic advisor/counselor?**

Yes! It is a good idea to speak with an academic advisor/counselor. The information found on these pages is merely a guide, and does not replace the expert guidance that can be provided by an academic advisor or counselor.

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**Can I change majors?**

Yes. However, changing majors may lengthen the time it takes to earn a degree and may also result in the accumulation of more community college semester credit hours than will transfer to a four-year college or university.

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**Is a placement test needed when transferring to a university?**

The university will decide if a placement test is needed upon transfer. Most senior-level institutions will use successful performance in English and mathematics at the community college as proof of skill level and will not require additional testing.

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**What are pre-major courses?**

Pre-major courses prepare students for their intended majors. Each major has its own list of required and recommended courses. Some of these courses may also be used to meet general education requirements.

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**What courses will transfer to UNC institutions?**

The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) - Transfer Course List provides a list of courses that have been approved for transfer to the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina. Transferring students must have earned a grade of "C" or better in a course in order to get transfer credit for the course.

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**What is a transfer articulation agreement?**

Generally, articulation agreements document a pathway between two or more schools and their academic programs. From one sense, they narrow the range of course options by providing a checklist – or sequence of what courses should be taken to satisfy requirements. From another sense, they simplify the complexity of determining what courses to take – while eliminating the guess work regarding transferability. Following articulation agreements, will save students time and money – an important benefit coping with the escalating cost of higher education alternatives.

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### **Can I get in as a transfer applicant?**

The selectivity of an institution, your prior courses completed, your grades, the source of learning and the number of open positions will predict the probability of acceptance. The general requirements and specific requirements for the program will also play into the probability of acceptance. The best method to get in to your target institution is to follow transfer agreements which highlight the checklist for entry.

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### **Will my credits transfer in?**

Determining transferability begins with identifying if prior courses completed are comparable to one or more courses offered by your target institution. If there are comparable courses, then check to see if the prior courses completed are applicable to the area of study, major or program. For instance, a course you may have completed and passed for Marketing may be comparable to a Marketing course, but not be applicable to a major in Pre-Med or Economics. How an institution rates transferability depends upon their review of the rigor, depth and learning outcomes expressed on the Catalog, Syllabi, and use of Text Book for instance – as well as the faculty level, the method of instruction, seat time, credits earned, method of assessment, and source instruction. Institutions do vary on the level of analysis weighing or ranking elements differently based upon perceptions and inferences taken through surrogates such as accreditation or comparable courses with other institutions.

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### **Should I apply to my target institution?**

There are many characteristics one should consider before applying to an institution such as the minimum GPA for transfer courses; does the program of study fit well with your aptitude, interest and motivation? Do you have a chance of getting in given the selectivity of the institution you are targeting? How many applications do they receive from transfers? Do they have transfer from your institution before? If you get in may not mean you should apply when the program or area of study does not fit your interests, aptitude or prior coursework does not transfer. You should assess your circumstances before applying or ask for help.

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### **Should I wait until I receive my Associate degree to transfer, or can I transfer without it?**

You may certainly apply to transfer without having received an Associate degree. But, we would recommend finishing your two-year degree because the courses would be generally accepted as a block, avoiding course transfer evaluation.

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### **Are there any scholarships available for transfer?**

Some schools offer academic, athletic and talent-based institutional scholarships. Not all. Transfer students can also receive merit-based scholarships from outside organizations (state grants/scholarships, local/national merit-based awards, etc.).

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