

## 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT

# PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM ARTICULATION AGREEMENT IN Political Science

## I. Introduction and Overview

Political Science is an academic field of study focusing on key questions of political power, processes, and the authority of the institutions of the state. Analysis of governmental organizations and processes often involves understanding the political system (actors, institutions, and law) as a whole – in other words “politics” – “who gets what, when, and how”. The study of politics also requires examining the role of citizens and how they can influence (and are influenced by) governmental institutions, processes, and the law. Political Scientists study such processes in an effort to develop general principles or theories about the way the world of politics works. Subfields within Political Science include: US institutions and government, international relations, comparative politics, political theory, public administration, public policy, and the law. Overall, Political Science as a discipline is housed within the larger academic sphere of the social sciences and thus employs an array of research methodologies in the development of said principles and theories.

In accordance with Act 50 of 2009, institutions participating in Pennsylvania’s statewide college credit transfer system agree to the following policies governing the transfer of credits from a participating associate-degree granting institution into a participating four-year college or university. This agreement specifically ensures that a student who successfully completes an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree in Political Science or any AA or AS degree that incorporates the required courses and competencies at a participating institution can transfer the full degree into a parallel bachelor degree program in Political Science at a participating four-year institution.

In order for students to transfer the full associate degree into a parallel bachelor degree program at a participating four-year institution, with full junior-standing to be granted, all of the following criteria must be met:

- The associate’s degree must include, at a minimum, 12 credits of major-specific coursework as outlined under Major requirements.
- Successful completion of an associate degree that includes all of the required major competencies.
- Successful completion of at least 30 credits of foundation courses from the Transfer Credit Framework (See Appendix A).
- The maximum number of major-specific coursework in the associate’s degree does not exceed 50% of the major-specific coursework required by the parallel bachelor degree program offered by the four-year institution.

See Appendix B: Program-to-Program Articulation Model for Political Science

It is therefore understood that students meeting these requirements will be considered by both the associate degree granting institution and the receiving four-year institution to possess the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for entry as a junior into a parallel bachelor degree program in Political Science.

## **II. REQUIRED MAJOR-SPECIFIC COURSEWORK (12 credits)**

Under this Agreement, a fully-transferable associate degree in the field of Liberal Arts: Political Science must include courses in the following four courses and content areas:

### **1. American (or United States) Government (or Politics)**

#### **Content:**

Students will examine the government and politics of the United States as emanating from the theoretical principles that underlie the Constitution. Examine political development through assessment of the structure, and organization of the executive, legislative, judiciary, civil liberties and civil rights. Focus on the political factors and dynamics of democracy and actors within the system: citizens, political parties, interest groups, the media, and electoral process. Public policy will be considered with respect to its impact on ethnic minorities throughout history.

### **2. International Relations (or World Politics)**

#### **Content:**

Students will examine the nature and roots of the interstate system and the international system, with a strong focus on the role of the state. The nature and roots of this relationship between states and within the international system will analyze processes of conflict and cooperation. Students will study theoretical principles of international relations and their application in historical modules. Particular focus will be placed on the formulation of foreign policy as well as the political-diplomatic, economic (globalization), military-security, and cultural interaction of nation states. Students will examine the fundamental concepts, functions and process of politics of international organizations such as the United Nations and World Trade Organization will be also covered. Additional topics include human rights concerns, i.e. those emanating from the global economy, environment, minority subjugation and the nature of civic opposition and international response.

### **3. Comparative Politics (Government)**

#### **Content:**

Students will examine via comparative study the governance of nations in the developed and less-developed regions of the world. The processes by which political systems are shaped through historical forces, political cultures, the international environment, economic conditions, ideologies, and the decisions of leaders and public participants in politics will be evaluated. Comparative institutions, electoral and voting processes, political systems, public policies, and political and economic development are topics included in this course. Identify and analyze significant political issues confronting governmental units, interest groups, and individuals. The roles of ethnic, religious, and other minorities within the global community as related to decision-making and power relations. Utilize scientific methodologies within the Political Science discipline to construct typologies and assess those political systems.

### **4. Political Philosophy (Theory or Thought)**

#### **Content:**

Students will examine the key ideas such as order, human nature, freedom, justice, community, and equality that animated the great thinkers of modern political thought. Course content will include fundamental tenets of major ideologies and the impact of these ideologies on political reality and historical development. Special emphasis will be placed on the continued relevance of considered historical ideas and how they grapple with perennial problems of politics, for example, examining the extent to which past ideas can aid the understanding of the present political landscape.

**OR**

### **State and Local Government (or Politics)**

#### **Content:**

Students will examine those theories and historical circumstances that have shaped the organization of federalism, its functions, and the politics of the interactions between the state, and federal levels including analysis of politics in counties, cities, and towns in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Assess the functional operation of state and local governments with an analysis of their powers to tax and finance; enforce laws; regulate commerce and business, and promote the social and economic welfare.

### **III. REQUIRED COMPETENCIES**

Students transferring with an AA degree shall attain and be able to demonstrate, as measured by a variety of learning outcome and assessment mechanisms, the following essential competencies. These competencies can be integrated and demonstrated within the required and recommended major coursework in Political Science and/or within the general AA degree requirements.

- I. **Critical Thinking:** Students will develop the ability to apply, synthesize, and analyze materials (e.g., data or texts) and to think critically. We pull apart complex issues into their basic components and then assess these issues or arguments on the basis of reasoned application of a variety of methodological approaches (e.g., quantitative or qualitative analysis, case studies, logical analysis, etc.).
- II. **Knowledge:** Students will demonstrate knowledge of the discipline of Political Science and the required four-course framework in terms of content, purpose and methods.
- III. **Research Methods:** Students will be able to explain research methods used in the discipline of political science, and social science broadly, and evaluate conclusions derived from these methods.
- IV. **Information literacy**<sup>1</sup>: Students will develop skills that include the ability to identify, locate and access sources of information, the ability to critically evaluate information (legitimacy, validity, and appropriateness), the ability to organize information to present a sound central idea in a logical order, and the ability to use the work of others accurately and ethically.
- V. **Communication Skills:** students will demonstrate the necessary oral and written skills (English and Public Speaking) to convey their knowledge about political science or other appropriate topics to others.
- VI. **Diversity and Globalization:** students will demonstrate the ability to compare and contrast similarities and differences in the experience of humans in diverse cultures, nations (comparative government and international relations), and civilizations across time (history) and space (geography, anthropology, foreign language, and sociology).

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<sup>1</sup>This definition comes from the 2006 Middle States Report: “Information literacy is the array of knowledge and skills necessary to identify the information needed for a task and then to locate, understand, evaluate, and use that information efficiently and effectively within appropriate ethical and legal limits.”

#### **IV. RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL POLITICAL SCIENCE CONTENT AND COURSEWORK (credits toward eventual transfer into 4-year Political Science program)**

It is recognized that many 2-year institutions teach a wide variety of Political Science courses. It is recommended that students take additional Political Science courses and transfer those courses (on top of the 12 credits taken under Required Major-Specific Coursework) to a four year-institution. However, the total number of Political Science credits cannot exceed 50% of the major-specific coursework required by the parallel bachelor degree program offered by the four-year institution. Many of these recommended courses are critical elements of the Political Science BA at four year institutions. Students should check with their advisor and consult the four-year institution requirements for transfer equivalencies. Some recommended courses include:

##### **1. Research Methods**

###### **Content:**

Students will be introduced to the logic and the skills of social science research as well as the process of writing for an academic audience. Students will discuss various research methods and applications as they relate to the practice of political science research. This course will include in-depth discussions of causation, research design, conceptualization and measurement, operationalization, research models, and quantitative and qualitative analysis so that students will become familiar with the exploration, description, and explanation of political and social phenomena. Students will also be introduced to data collection and introductory statistical concepts and consider current political events as well as ongoing political questions as a means of investigating various methods of inquiry.

##### **2. State and Local Government (or Politics)**

###### **Content:**

Students will examine those theories and historical circumstances that have shaped the organization of federalism, its functions, and the politics of the interactions between the state, and federal levels including analysis of politics in counties, cities, and towns in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Assess the functional operation of state and local governments with an analysis of their powers to tax and finance; enforce laws; regulate commerce and business, and promote the social and economic welfare.

##### **3. Public Administration**

###### **Content:**

Students will consider public administration in the United States as a process of implementing public policy and as an overview of the concepts and frameworks necessary for public service. Key concepts such as organization theory, organization structure, bureaucracy, human resource and public management, personnel, budgeting, and processes of public administration will be examined.

##### **4. Constitutional Law**

###### **Content:**

Students will examine the power relationships among branches of government (checks and balances) and between levels of government (federalism). Important constitutional provisions, historically critical Supreme Court decisions, as well as areas of contemporary interest will be examined. Further examination of the relationship between government and its citizens, including restrictions on interference with individual freedom (civil liberties) and obligations to prevent discrimination and ensure equality (civil rights) will be required. Students will be exposed to the primary arguments made by advocates on most sides of the controversies surrounding the structure, organization and functioning of government.

**5. Political Philosophy (Theory or Thought)**

**Content:**

Students will examine the key ideas such as order, human nature, freedom, justice, community, and equality that animated the great thinkers of modern political thought. Course content will include fundamental tenets of major ideologies and the impact of these ideologies on political reality and historical development. Special emphasis will be placed on the continued relevance of considered historical ideas and how they grapple with perennial problems of politics, for example, examining the extent to which past ideas can aid the understanding of the present political landscape.

- 6. Selected Political Science courses under advisement.** For a specialized course topic, students should contact the respective four-year transfer institution for equivalency.

**V. RECOMMENDED COURSEWORK OUTSIDE THE MAJOR**

In addition to the required content areas listed above, students transferring into a bachelor degree program at the junior level in Political Science would benefit from acquiring content and competencies in the three areas below. Since not all sending institutions offer courses in these content areas, it is understood that student would necessarily need to fulfill specific requirements of each receiving institution during the junior and senior years. Some of this coursework is covered under the Transfer Credit Framework (Appendix A).

1. **Foreign Language:** Students should begin their international language at their two year institution; it should be noted that many 2-year institutions offer language courses and/or require at least one year of foreign language study. In addition, many 4-year institutions require language study to a proficiency level for a Bachelors of Arts (B.A.) degree in Political Science

Example might include two to four semesters of language study:

SPA 101, SPA 102 (or equivalencies) – first year  
SPA 201, SPA 202 (or equivalencies) – second year

2. **Economics:** Recommend students complete one or two courses of economics. Such courses would include micro and macro economics.
3. **Geography:** Recommend students take one course in geography if available; note that not all institutions include geography as a Political Science requirement.
4. **History:** Recommend students take one course in history.

**Transfer Credit Framework**

Under Act 114 of 2006, the Commonwealth's statewide college credit transfer system includes an advising tool called the "Transfer Credit Framework." The Framework allows students to seamlessly transfer up to 30 credits of foundation courses from one participating college or university to another and have those courses count toward graduation. Students who successfully complete courses from the approved categories below can have their credits transferred and counted towards graduation at any of the participating PA TRAC colleges and universities. Please be aware that certain majors may have specific requirements prescribed by external agencies. It is the student's responsibility to work with an advisor to select appropriate courses as they relate to the major.

The Framework consists of a menu of courses that fall within six broad categories: English, public speaking, math, science, fine arts and humanities, and the behavioral and social sciences. To fully benefit from the Framework, students are advised to select a range of courses according to the criteria for each category. Under this Agreement, students may select courses according to

the criteria indicated for Framework Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6. In Framework Category 5, students may apply a maximum of 3 credits (1 course, American National Government) completed as part of the Required Major-Specific Content Area. In addition, other courses in Framework Category 5 may satisfy major requirements as determined by the individual institution. (See Appendix B Program-to-Program Articulation Model for Political Science.) Students are advised to work with an advisor to select courses related to their associate degree program, transfer major and personal interests.

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## Appendix A: Transfer Credit Framework - 30 credits

Category 1 (Select 1 course)	Category 2 (Select 1 course)	Category 3 (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 4 Must include lab (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 5 (Select no more than 2 courses)	Category 6 (Select no more than 2 courses)
English Composition	Public Speaking	Calculus I	General Chemistry I (majors & non-majors courses)	General Psychology	Introduction to Music
		Precalculus	General Chemistry II (majors & non-majors courses)	Introduction to Sociology	Introduction to Philosophy
		Elementary Statistics	General Biology I (majors & non-majors courses)	American National Government	Elementary Spanish I
		College Algebra	General Biology II (majors & non-majors courses)	Educational Psychology	Elementary Spanish II
		Foundations of Mathematics	General Physics I (non-calculus)	History of Western Civilization II	Painting I
			General Physics II (non-calculus)	Principles of Macroeconomics	Elementary French I
			Anatomy & Physiology I	Principles of Microeconomics	Elementary French II
			Anatomy & Physiology II	U.S. History I	Drawing I
		Introduction to Astronomy	U.S. History II	Ethics	
			History of Western Civilization I	Introduction to Art	
		Contemporary Social Problems	German I		
		Introduction to Anthropology	German II		
		Human Growth & Development	Introduction to Literature can also be known as Introduction to Poetry, Interpreting Literature, Reading Literature, Theses in Literature, Topics in Literature, Current Themes in Literature		
			Child Psychology	Survey of American Literature	
		Literature of the Western World			
		World Literature			
		American Literature			
		Survey of English Literature			
		Introduction to Theatre			

## Appendix B: Program-to-Program Articulation Model for Political Science

<b>REQUIRED Major-Specific Course and Content Areas</b>	<b>Transfer Criteria</b>
<b>American (U.S.) National Government</b>	
<b>Political Theory (Philosophy/Thought) or State and Local Government</b>	
<b>International Relations/World Politics</b>	
<b>Comparative Politics</b>	
<b>REQUIRED Major-Specific Competencies (as measured by Learning Outcomes/Assessment)</b>	
<b>I. Critical Thinking</b> <b>II. Knowledge</b> <b>III. Research Methods</b> <b>IV. Information Literacy</b> <b>V. Communication Skills</b> <b>VI. Diversity and Globalization</b>	Assessed in major courses or within the general AA degree requirements
<b>RECOMMENDED Major-Specific Course and Content Areas</b>	<b>Transfer Criteria</b>
Students are strongly advised to acquire knowledge and competencies in the following Political Science courses: <b>1. Research Methods</b> <b>2. State and Local Government (Politics)</b> <b>3. Public Administration</b> <b>4. Constitutional Law</b> <b>5. Additional PSC Courses under advisement</b>	
<b>RECOMMENDED Coursework Outside the Discipline</b>	<b>Transfer Criteria</b>
1. Economics 2. Geography 3. Foreign Language 4. History	Student should consult an advisor before enrolling in the recommended coursework.
<b>TRANSFER CREDIT FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>Transfer Criteria</b>
<b>Category 1</b>	<b>1 course</b> to be selected by the student with the assistance of an advisor
<b>Category 2</b>	<b>1 course</b> to be selected by the student with the assistance of an advisor
<b>Category 3</b>	<b>1 or 2 courses</b> to be selected by the student with the assistance of an advisor
<b>Category 4</b>	<b>1 or 2 courses</b> to be selected by the student with the assistance of an advisor
<b>Category 5</b>	<b>American National Government and one other course</b> selected by the student with the assistance of the advisor. Political science majors may use up to 6 credits of coursework from the major content area to satisfy Category 5 requirements
<b>Category 6</b>	<b>2 courses</b> to be selected by the student with the assistance of an advisor

**ADDENDUM**  
**GENERAL STATEWIDE PROGRAM-TO-PROGRAM**  
**ARTICULATION in PENNSYLVANIA**

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted Act 114 of 2006, which added to the Public School Code of 1949, Article XX-C entitled “Transfers of Credits Between Institutions of Higher Education” (referred to in this Agreement as the “Statewide Transfer System”);

WHEREAS, Act 114 of 2006 requires all community colleges in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) universities to participate in the Statewide Transfer System;

WHEREAS, Act 114 of 2006 permits independent and state-related institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania, as each is defined in Article XX-C, to elect to participate in the Statewide Transfer System;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted Act 50 of 2009, which requires institutions participating in the Statewide Transfer System to accept the transfer of Associate of Arts and Associate Science degrees into parallel baccalaureate programs and recognize all competencies attained within the associate degree program;

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 defines an Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree containing a minimum of 60 college-level credits and designed primarily for transfer to a baccalaureate institution;

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 requires the Transfer Articulation Oversight Committee (TAOC), as established in section 2004-C of the Public School Code of 1949, to identify Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs for transfer with full junior standing into parallel baccalaureate degrees annually; and,

WHEREAS, Act 50 of 2009 requires members of the Transfer Articulation Oversight Committee established in section 2004-C of the Public School Code of 1949, to identify modifications that may be required in existing associate or baccalaureate degrees to satisfy external accreditation or licensure requirement;

All Institutions participating in the Statewide Transfer System enter into this Articulation Agreement and mutually agree as follows:

1. The statewide program-to-program articulation agreement ensures that students who complete an AA or AS degree from a participating institution will have their coursework and credits transfer into a parallel baccalaureate program with full junior standing and without the need for course-by-course equivalency.
2. Students are subject to the admissions and transfer credit policies of the participating institutions. The admissions and transfer credit policies for all of the institutions participating in Pennsylvania’s college credit transfer system can be found at [www.PAcollegetransfer.com](http://www.PAcollegetransfer.com).
3. The AA or AS degree must include a minimum of 60 college-level credits designed and acceptable for transfer, not including developmental or remedial courses or career, technical or applied courses.
4. The transfer of coursework with a grade less than a C (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) in the AA or AS will be consistent with the policies of native students at the participating college or university.
5. Students and institutional personnel will be able to find out which institutions offer articulated programs by accessing a searchable database located at [www.PAcollegetransfer.com](http://www.PAcollegetransfer.com). PDE will maintain this database through program information provided to TAOC by the individual participating institutions.
6. **Responsibilities of Associate Degree Institutions**
  - a. The AA or AS degree leading to a parallel bachelor degree will include the minimum number of credits and competencies of major-specific coursework as defined by the Agreement.

- b. Any remaining AA or AS degree requirements will be accepted from arts and sciences electives designed and acceptable for transfer, not including developmental, remedial, career, technical or applied courses.
- c. By awarding the AA or AS, the Associate Degree Institution is validating that the student has met the competency requirements outlined in the Agreement.

**7. Responsibilities of Bachelor Degree Institutions**

- a. The Bachelor Degree Institution will recognize all competencies attained within the AA or AS degree and accept a transfer student who has earned the associate degree with full junior standing into a parallel baccalaureate degree program.
- b. All decisions made with respect to the transfer process shall be based on the principle of equivalence of expectations and requirements for native and transfer students.
- c. A transfer student's admission into the parallel baccalaureate degree will be subject to the Bachelor Degree Institution's specific requirements for admission to that major and be consistent with such requirements for native students.

**8. Agreement Revision and Assessment**

- a. Once a statewide program-to-program articulation agreement has been approved by TAOC, no amendments to the agreement can be offered by any party within the initial six (6) months of the agreement. After that time, a TAOC member with a proposed amendment to an approved agreement should submit the change to PDE.

Amendments that are offered as clarifying or technical but do not alter the substantive portions or intent of the agreement must be forwarded to TAOC. TAOC representatives will have at least thirty (30) days to review, comment and approve or deny the proposed amendments.

Amendments that seek to alter the substantive nature or intent of the agreement in any part must be forwarded to the appropriate PAC for review and consideration. The PAC will then make a recommendation to the TAOC, and TAOC shall approve or deny the proposed amendments.<sup>2</sup>

- b. PDE and TAOC will exercise responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the Agreement and its implementation.
- c. PDE shall collect data annually from the participating institutions that will enable the Department and TAOC to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Agreement in fostering a seamless transfer process and the academic success of transfer students at the senior institutions.

**9. Transfer Appeal Process**

- a. In accordance with Pennsylvania's Statewide Transfer System, each Bachelor Degree Institution shall have a procedure through which a transfer student can appeal a decision that he/she believes is not consistent with this Agreement.
- b. The Transfer Appeal Process shall be published, at minimum, in the institution's catalog and posted to the Commonwealth's official website of the Statewide Transfer System, [www.PAcollegetransfer.com](http://www.PAcollegetransfer.com).

**10. Institutional Resolution of Disputes**

- a. In the event that an Associate Degree Institution considers the decision of a Bachelor Degree Institution to be inconsistent with this Agreement, the Associate Degree Institution shall consult directly with the Bachelor Degree Institution and attempt to resolve the matter.

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<sup>2</sup> Approved by TAOC and added to agreement on August 18, 2011.

- b. If the institutions are unable to resolve the issue, the Associate Degree Institution may submit their concern to PDE for consideration by the TAOC Dispute Resolution Committee. The Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will act according to the policies and procedures developed by TAOC as part of the Statewide Transfer System. The determination made by the Dispute Resolution Subcommittee will be binding upon the parties.

#### 11. **Implementation Date and Applicability**

Having fulfilled the requirements outlined in the Program-to-Program Articulation Agreement, students transferring with an AA or AS degree from a participating institution will be considered by the receiving baccalaureate degree institution to have received adequate preparation in the field of study at the foundation level and therefore eligible to transfer as a junior into advanced major coursework.

Participating institutions will enact the Agreement in accordance to the timeline outlined by the TAOC, but no later Fall 2013.<sup>3</sup>

Continuation of the agreement remains in effect until such time as all cooperating institutions of the Statewide Transfer System formally approve any revisions.

### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Articulation:** The aligning of curriculum between institutions of higher education to ensure the efficient and effective movement of students among those institutions.

**Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) Degree:** A degree consisting of at least 60 college-level credits and designed for transfer into a baccalaureate degree program.

**Foundation Coursework:** Courses at a level of comprehension usually associated with freshman and sophomore students and typically offered during the first half of a baccalaureate degree program. Such coursework typically does not have course prerequisites.

**Native Student:** A student who entered a given college or university without first matriculating at another college.

**Parallel Baccalaureate Degree:** A bachelor degree program in a comparable field of study and with similar foundation-level major-specific competencies as an associate degree program.

**Receiving Institution:** The college or university where a transfer student plans to enroll and to apply previously earned credit toward a degree program.

**Transfer Credit:** The credit granted by a college or university for college-level courses or other academic work completed at another institution.

**Transfer Student:** A student who enters a participating college or university after earning college-level credit at another college or university.

**Transfer:** The process by which a student moves from one postsecondary institution to another. Also refers to the mechanics of credit, course and curriculum exchange between institutions.

**Advanced Coursework:** Courses with advanced depth of content knowledge in the field of study and carry the expectation of more complex competencies identified in the expected student learning outcomes is referred to as

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<sup>3</sup> Agreements approved by TAOC prior to August 31, 2011 must be implemented by the institutions by Fall 2012. Agreements approved by TAOC after August 31, 2011 but before May 1, 2012 must be implemented by the institutions by Fall 2013.

advanced coursework. These courses often have prerequisites and are usually beyond the “Introduction to...” or “Foundation of...” level.

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