

# Undergraduate Articulation Agreement Approval and Review Process

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the process for the development, review, approval and termination of articulation agreements. Prior to the work conducted by the Articulation Agreement sub-committee to the Transfer Student Task Force, although Marquette University had a policy on articulation agreements, the policy and associated procedures were not adequately documented nor understood by departments and colleges. Additionally, the existence of agreements was typically not marketed or promoted beyond a statement in the Bulletin or on a college website. Marquette University is taking steps to improve enrollment management strategies including plans for increasing the number of transfer students. The creation and promotion of articulation agreements can be a valuable tool to attract transfer students. The work of the sub-committee consisted of a review of existing policy and the development of the following proposed process.

The process for Articulation Agreement development, approval and review consists of four general phases:

1. the development/review/approval phase
2. the communication, signing ceremony and promotion phase
3. the review and updating phase
4. the termination phase

## Phase 1 – Development/ Review/Approval

### Development of Articulation Agreement Document

The articulation agreement begins with contact between a Marquette University department or college with that of another institution to discuss the possibility of forming an articulation agreement involving a specific degree program.

Courses from the other institution are evaluated to determine the appropriate Marquette equivalent course. In some cases, for example, with some associates degree programs at technical colleges, there is not a direct match between the course at the other institution and Marquette University courses so the agreement allows for the awarding of credit for a set of Marquette University courses.

This is one way an articulation agreement differs from a scenario involving a typical transfer student. For a typical transfer student, individual courses at a source institution are made equivalent to an individual Marquette University course. With some articulation agreements, if a student satisfies the requirements of the articulation agreement he/she is awarded credit for a set of Marquette University courses which may not match one-to-one with source institution courses.

The course evaluation process will follow the procedure established by the [Transfer Credit policy](#).

Another step in developing the articulation agreement is to lay out the terms of the agreement including whether there is a minimum GPA requirement for courses taken at Articulating Institution, which degree programs are targeted in the agreement, which courses and number of credits will transfer from the source institution and which Marquette University courses and number of credits

will be awarded. The agreement document must also state that the agreement is subject to regular review. The Articulation Agreement sub-committee proposes a template for Articulation Agreements including a list of signatories for the final agreement document. UPP1-06 requires the Provost signature be on the agreement and the Dean of the college will also sign the document as well as the counterparts at the other institution.

As they are developed, the agreement documents are reviewed at each institution. If at any stage of the development or review/approval process changes are requested, they should be communicated, in writing, between both institutions. The initiating department or college at Marquette University will facilitate and update the document as appropriate.

Throughout the development stage the department and/or college will be in communication with the Office of the Registrar, Admissions Transfer Coordinator, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of the Provost for assistance in developing the agreement document. If the articulating institution is international, the Office of International Education will be consulted. The Office of the Registrar will review the document terms including courses, credits, and degree requirements. The Office of Admissions Transfer Coordinator will also review the document at this point for readability and make recommendations that will make the document understandable to potential students.

Having a common template to be used will promote consistency across the university. The template would need to have a centralized location accessible across the university. It is suggested that the Office of the Registrar Faculty Resources website would be the appropriate place for the template and policy statement on articulation agreements. The Office of the Provost website will provide a link to the articulation agreement documents.

### **Review/Approval of Articulation Agreements**

The following offices shall review the agreement documents, as needed: Department, College, Office of the Registrar, General Counsel, and MU Transfer Coordinator.

Once the Articulation Agreement document has been developed by the department, the document will be sent to the college to be scanned into ImageNow and for review and approval. After the college review, the articulation agreement document is routed to the Office of the Registrar for review routing for approval. If the college, not the department, initiates the articulation agreement, the document will be scanned into ImageNow by the college and forwarded to the Office of the Registrar for review. The Office of the Registrar forwards the document to the Chief of Staff to the Provost. The Chief of Staff to the Provost will route the document as appropriate for review. Upon completion of the review the Chief of Staff to the Provost will route the document with accompanying "Contract Processing and Approval Form" to the Office of General Counsel for approval as to form.

After Office of General Counsel approval, the Office of General Counsel then returns the approved documents to the Chief of Staff to the Provost. The Chief of Staff to the Provost coordinates the final review and approval of the document.

The Chief of Staff to the Provost then routes the document back to the Office of the Registrar for retention. The Office of the Registrar notifies the initiating department or college.

This approval process is distinct from the actual signing of the final Articulation Agreement document which is the next step to be discussed.

## **Phase 2 – Communication, Signing Ceremony, and Promotion**

### **Communication**

In the Communication phase, plans will be made for strategies to communicate the agreement both internally and externally. Internally, departments and offices at Marquette University will be notified of the articulation agreement. External communication includes media releases and coordination of efforts to promote the agreement at the partner institution and throughout the community. Office of Marketing and Communication will coordinate the promotion and advertising of the agreement.

Following the signing of the agreement the agreement is disseminated:

- a. Original – Office of the Registrar to scan into ImageNow
- b. PDF Copy – Admissions Transfer Coordinator will post PDF to MU Articulation Agreement website (hosted on Admissions Transfer student website)
- c. Word Document – Office of the Registrar to include in the University Bulletin

### **Signing Ceremony and Promotion**

The signing event can be used as a marketing tool for promoting these transfer opportunities for prospective students. With a new enrollment management strategy targeting an increase in transfer students, Marquette must promote the signing ceremony and coordinate marketing efforts with OMC so that media coverage and press releases are available.

Ideally all persons signing the form must be present at the signing ceremony. This includes the Provost and the college Dean as well as the counterparts from the other institution. If this is not possible, the signatures of those who will not be attendance must be obtained prior to the ceremony. An original for each institution must be available at the ceremony. The College Dean's office will coordinate the formal signing ceremony. Those faculty and staff invited to intend include: President, Provost, Dean, Associate Deans, Department Chairs/Program Directors, Advising/Admissions personnel, and agreement development members from both institutions. The location for the ceremony should be mutually agreed upon, preferably at Marquette University.

Promotion of the agreement will be determined by parameters of the agreement or with the discretion of OMC, Admissions Transfer Coordinator, department and college. If a formal signing ceremony is held, local press should be invited and a press release should be prepared by OMC.

Other means of promotion include:

- a. Admissions
- b. Alumni Newsletter
- c. MU website
- d. Social Media
- e. MU News Briefs

OMC and Special events should be involved in the coordination of a signing event in which the articulation agreement document is formally signed. Ideally this event will take place on Marquette University campus.

### **Phase III. Review and Update**

#### **Record-keeping and Document Storage**

Currently, signed articulation agreement documents are stored in the college offices. This decentralization of document storage can be problematic, if the documents are not stored in a readily accessible location.

The original signed documents will be scanned as PDFs and made available on a website similar to Transfer Planning Guides. Links to Articulation Agreement documents can be helpful to students considering transferring to Marquette. Likewise, the information will appear in the appropriate bulletin. The original signed documents will be maintained at a central location by the Office of the Registrar.

#### **Collect Data**

The Office of the Registrar will create a method in Peoplesoft for tracking students who transfer via articulation agreements. The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) will collect data on the number of students who transfer to Marquette under an articulation agreement as well as retention rates and graduation rates of these students, specifically:

- i. Number of students transferred from other institutions through articulation agreements
- ii. Number of students who transferred through articulation agreements who have completed their degrees at Marquette
- iii. Average time to complete degree at Marquette for students who transferred through articulation agreements

This data will be used in a review to determine whether an articulation agreement will continue or be terminated.

#### **Annual Updates**

Each fall term, Articulation Agreements will be reviewed and if updates need to be made due to course changes or curriculum changes, the document will be updated and follow the established approval process with a deadline/publication date of April 1. A new signing ceremony is not required.

#### **Three Year Review**

Every third year of the existence of an articulation agreement a special review will be conducted. The Registrar starts the review process by coordinating the collection of statistics with OIRA and requests review by the initiating Marquette department/college to make a determination will be made whether the agreement will continue or be terminated.

The criteria for determining whether an agreement will be terminated may depend on the enrollment expectations. If enrollment and graduation rates of students entering through an

agreement are lower than expected the agreement may be terminated. If a program has been discontinued or significantly modified such that an articulation agreement is no longer appropriate, the agreement will be terminated.

If a decision is made to continue the agreement a determination will be made whether updates to the agreement are necessary.

#### **Phase IV. Termination**

Once a decision is made to terminate an agreement, the college will notify the Office of the Registrar as well as the Admissions Transfer Coordinator. The transfer coordinator will facilitate removal of the agreement document from the website. The college will also notify the partner institution in writing. Appropriate websites (college/department) and the Bulletin will be updated.

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