21-1B-1. Short title.
Chapter 21, Article 1B NMSA 1978 may be cited as the "Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act".


21-1B-2. Definitions.
As used in the Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act:

A. "articulation" means the transfer of courses that fulfill a graduation requirement for a student's chosen degree program;
B. "department" means the higher education department;
C. "general education core curriculum" means the group of lower-division courses approved by the department as fulfilling general education requirements that are accepted by all institutions for transfer purposes;
D. "institution" means an accredited, public post-secondary educational institution operating in the state;
E. "meta-major" means fifteen credits of lower-division courses that are developed in consultation with the faculty and approved by the department and that include general education courses and prerequisite courses and that can articulate to multiple degree programs and can include courses across the institution that address diversity;
F. "transfer" means the transfer of course credits from one institution to another; and
G. "transfer module" means a list of lower-division courses established by the department that fulfill graduation requirements for a specific degree program.

History: Laws 1995, ch. 224, § 2; 2005, ch. 272, § 2; 2015, ch. 29, § 1; 2017, ch. 18, § 1.

21-1B-3. Initial articulation planning and development of meta-major and transfer module.

A. The department shall establish and maintain a comprehensive statewide plan to provide for the articulation of educational programs and facilitate the transfer of course credits between institutions.

B. In establishing a statewide articulation plan, the department shall:

   (1) by August 1, 2017, establish a common course naming and numbering system for courses identified as substantially equivalent lower-division courses; provided that the department shall establish an interim mechanism of a statewide equivalency table that uses a universal taxonomy to identify substantially equivalent courses until the common system is in place;

   (2) establish a process to identify courses as substantially equivalent. The process shall:

      (a) include a procedure for each course whereby faculty members from each segment teaching the academic discipline will reach mutual agreement on the material to be taught and the competencies to be gained;

      (b) ensure that the content of each course is comparable across institutions offering that course;

      (c) ensure that substantially all the content agreed to among the institutions as the content to be covered by a course is in fact covered in that course and that students successfully completing the course will achieve like competencies with respect to the content covered; and

      (d) ensure that the content requirements for each course will be sufficient to prepare students for upper-division coursework in that field;

   (3) maintain a list of lower-division courses offered at higher education institutions in New Mexico. All courses assigned the same number shall transfer between institutions as that course name and number; and

   (4) develop a process for reviewing, updating and maintaining the common course numbering system.

C. The department shall, in consultation with the faculty, facilitate the development and approval of statewide meta-majors and transfer modules by August 2019.
D. The department, in consultation with faculty, shall develop a statewide general education core curriculum of not less than fifteen hours for an associate in applied science degree, thirty hours for an associate degree other than in applied science and thirty hours for a bachelor degree. The statewide general education core curriculum shall include a comprehensive array of lower-division college-level courses designed to provide a foundation for a liberal education and courses that include the interdisciplinary study of differences that recognize and respect New Mexico's diverse cultures, histories and identities. The department shall develop a process for maintaining and updating the statewide general education core curriculum. The department shall review and approve proposed statewide general education core curriculum requirements. For every institution, each approved course in the general education core curriculum shall be transferable, and its credit hours shall count toward fulfilling general education core curriculum requirements at any institution to which they are transferred.


21-1B-4. Transfer of credits.
A. Courses that have a New Mexico common course number shall be accepted as the equivalent courses offered at the receiving institution.
B. Courses taken as part of an approved meta-major or transfer module shall be accepted to meet lower-division graduation requirements of a degree-granting program to which the meta-major or transfer module articulates.
C. An institution shall not increase requirements for degree-granting programs as a result of the use of a meta-major or transfer module or acceptance of a course that is part of a meta-major or transfer module. An institution may specify additional lower-division or upper-division requirements not included in a meta-major or transfer module for one or more programs of study; provided that those requirements apply equally to transfer students and students originating their study at the institution.


21-1B-5. Oversight of articulation programs; complaint procedures.
A. The department shall establish and maintain a process to monitor and improve articulation through frequent and systematic consultation with institutions.
B. The department shall establish a complaint procedure for transfer students who fail to receive credit for courses that have a common course number or are contained in an approved meta-major or transfer module taken at another institution. The department may set standards for determining bona fide complaints, including a requirement that students follow institutions' internal procedures for resolving complaints prior to submitting them to the department. The department shall investigate all articulation complaints and render decisions as to the appropriateness of the actions of the participants.
C. Prior to December 31 of each year, the department shall summarize all articulation complaints filed with the department and the decisions of the department with regard to those complaints.
D. If a student's articulation complaint regarding commonly numbered courses or courses contained in a meta-major or transfer module is upheld, the receiving institution shall reimburse the student the complete cost, including tuition, books and fees, of each course the student was required to repeat at the receiving institution.


21-1B-5.1. Articulation complaint process; notification.
The receiving institution shall publish in the student handbook or otherwise notify transfer students of the complaint process to be followed in the event that a transfer module course is not accepted for credit. The notification shall include the remedy available to the student if the complaint is upheld.

21-1B-6. Reporting.
A. Prior to December 31 of each year, the department shall report to the legislative finance committee and the governor regarding the status of articulation programs and the transfer of students between institutions.
B. The report developed by the department shall include the statewide meta-major and transfer modules available, an analysis of the number of students transferring between New Mexico's higher education institutions, the graduation rates and time to earn degrees of transfer students at receiving institutions, the average number of credit hours earned by graduating transfer students compared to the average number of credit hours earned by graduates who originated at the institution and a summary of student complaints regarding articulation. The report shall include data and other information obtained on both a statewide and individual institution basis.
C. The report shall look at outcomes with regard to such factors as transfer rates, persistence rates after transfer and graduation rates.
D. The report shall identify each institution against which a meritorious complaint has been filed. The report shall summarize the recommendations of the department with regard to those complaints.
E. All institutions shall provide articulation information required by the department for the development of the annual report prior to September 30 of each year.