



## Full Steam Ahead

LEVERAGING OUR WINS TO FUEL SYSTEM CHANGE

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The following presentation was given at the 22nd Annual Conference for the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students. Please cite responsibly and direct questions to the original presenter(s).

### *Facilitated Discussion*

## **3283 - Developing Local Articulation Pathways: Why They Matter More Than Ever**

Maximizing Credits and Streamlining Pathways, Leading and Advocating for Change

In Florida, the AA serves as the primary transfer degree; Miami Dade College and Florida International University expanded their long-standing partnership to develop responsive and innovative “local” articulated AS to Bachelor pathways and Bachelor to Master pathways. In doing so, they are strategically addressing enrollment needs, identifying and addressing barriers to transfer, developing a transfer-going culture among graduates, and fostering intentional faculty collaborations. The presenters will share how these agreements are developed, formalized, and evaluated, as well as the lessons drawn from the work.

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# > Planning on pursuing a bachelor's degree?



*pathways to success*

*Florida's higher education system is designed to allow students to successfully pursue a bachelor's degree by first earning an Associate in Arts (AA) degree at a Florida College System institution and then transferring to a four-year institution. This approach to earning a four-year degree is commonly referred to as the 2+2 system. The state of Florida guarantees that students who complete an AA degree at a Florida college have the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree at a state university or Florida college offering four-year degrees.*

# Florida's policies help ease student transfer

Florida's Statewide Articulation Agreement, general education requirements, common prerequisites, Statewide Course Numbering System and the Florida Virtual Campus (FLVC) assist students in transitioning smoothly from two-year to four-year college or university programs. Students are provided certain guarantees and protections to ensure the Associate in Arts (AA) degree program is comparable to the first two years of a four-year program.

## Statewide Articulation Agreement

The Statewide Articulation Agreement guarantees the transfer of 60 credits earned as part of the AA degree. However, **students are not guaranteed transfer into the college or university of their choice**. Admission to certain limited access programs and high-demand universities is very competitive. Admission can be based on GPA, completion of common prerequisites and completion of foreign language requirements, among other requirements.

The articulation agreement guarantees transfer students will have an **equal opportunity** to compete against native students to enter limited-access programs. It is the student's responsibility to know the transfer admission requirements and be as prepared as possible to compete for a place in the four-year program. Students can find these requirements and track progress at [www.FLVC.org](http://www.FLVC.org).

## General Education Requirements

Each public institution has a 36-hour general education program that is part of the AA degree and uniquely designed to introduce students to the fundamental knowledge, skills and values essential to the study of academic disciplines.

The articulation agreement guarantees the **36-hour general education block** of credit earned at any public college or university will be accepted in **total** by any other public institution in Florida and no further courses will be required to meet the general education component. However, if students transfer prior

to completing the 36-hour general education requirement, the student may be required to take additional courses to meet the general education requirement at the receiving institution. If students must transfer prior to receiving the AA degree, it is recommended they complete the 36-hour general education block prior to transferring. Starting in 2015-16, courses taken to fulfill the general education core requirement are guaranteed to transfer and fulfill core requirements at receiving institutions.

## Common Prerequisites

Most bachelor's degree programs require that **specific coursework** be completed prior to admission. The amount of coursework varies depending on the program. These courses are referred to as common prerequisites and they are published annually in the **Common Prerequisite Manual**, which can be found at [www.FLVC.org](http://www.FLVC.org).

Students working toward an AA degree should decide upon a baccalaureate program of interest as early as possible so they can identify and complete the prerequisite courses.

The Florida Virtual Campus offers four advising audits that can help students in the 2+2 option.

- **Graduation check** - compares a student's transcript to the program requirements.
- **Impact of changing majors or schools** - compares a student's transcript to a different program at the student's current school or a different school.
- **AA transfer evaluation** - compares a student's transcript to the requirements for a four-year program. This audit indicates

whether or not the courses taken and GPA earned match the prerequisites required for entrance to the bachelor's degree program.

- **Degree program requirements** - provides the requirements for any program at any public college or university.

## Statewide Course Numbering System

The Statewide Course Numbering System **facilitates the transfer of credit** among all Florida public postsecondary institutions and participating private institutions. Courses with similar academic content that are taught by faculty with comparable credentials are given the same prefix and number. These courses are considered to be equivalent. By Florida law, an institution accepting a transfer student from another participating institution must award credit for equivalent courses. Credits awarded must satisfy the receiving institution's requirements as though the student took the courses at the receiving institutions.

Excluded from this guaranteed transfer are:

- Career and technical preparatory courses;
- Applied courses in the performing arts;
- Clinical courses in health-related areas;
- Skill courses in criminal justice.
- Graduate courses;
- Courses with the last three digits ranging from 900-999; and
- Courses not offered at the receiving institution.

# Additional options for pursuing a bachelor's degree in Florida

## Bachelor's Degrees from Florida College System Institutions

Several colleges offer their own bachelor's degrees in select program areas with high needs (e.g., education, nursing and information technology). Information can be found at [www.FLVC.org](http://www.FLVC.org) using the program search tool.

## Transfer Agreements with Nonpublic Institutions

The Florida College System has transfer agreements with many of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) and other nonpublic institutions. These allow Florida College System graduates to transfer into private institutions with the guarantee the student will enter as a junior, receive at

least 60 credit hours toward the bachelor's degree and receive recognition for the general education core. Visit the Florida Virtual Campus's [Advising Manuals](#) to view the agreements.

## Associate in Science to Bachelor's Degree Programs

The Associate in Science (AS) degree is the two-year degree offered by Florida colleges to prepare students for direct entry into the workforce. Some programs offer transfer options into related bachelor's degree programs. Visit the Florida Virtual Campus's [Advising Manuals](#) for more information on how to transfer with an AS. Many Florida college baccalaureate programs accept the AS degree in 2+2 transfer.

## Concurrent- or Joint-Use Programs

Florida offers unique opportunities for earning a bachelor's degree at a Florida college campus. In some cases, these bachelor's degrees are offered through partnerships with state universities or accredited private institutions. The coursework may be offered through traditional classroom instruction at the college or through distance learning options.

*\* It is important to remember for students who plan to immediately pursue a bachelor's degree after completing an associate degree, the AA will provide the best option for transfer. Students should discuss options with their academic advisors.*

## Public colleges & universities

### Florida College System

1. Broward College, Fort Lauderdale
2. Chipola College, Marianna
3. College of Central Florida, Ocala
4. Daytona State College, Daytona Beach
5. Eastern Florida State College, Cocoa
6. Edison State College, Fort Myers
7. Florida Gateway College, Lake City
8. Florida Keys Community College, Key West
9. Florida State College at Jacksonville, Jacksonville
10. Gulf Coast State College, Panama City
11. Hillsborough Community College, Tampa
12. Indian River State College, Fort Pierce
13. Lake-Sumter State College, Leesburg
14. Miami Dade College, Miami
15. North Florida Community College, Madison
16. Northwest Florida State College, Niceville
17. Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth
18. Pasco-Hernando Community College, New Port Richey
19. Pensacola State College, Pensacola
20. Polk State College, Winter Haven
21. Santa Fe College, Gainesville
22. Seminole State College of Florida, Sanford
23. South Florida State College, Avon Park
24. St. Johns River State College, Palatka
25. St. Petersburg College, St. Petersburg

26. State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota, Bradenton
27. Tallahassee Community College, Tallahassee
28. Valencia College, Orlando

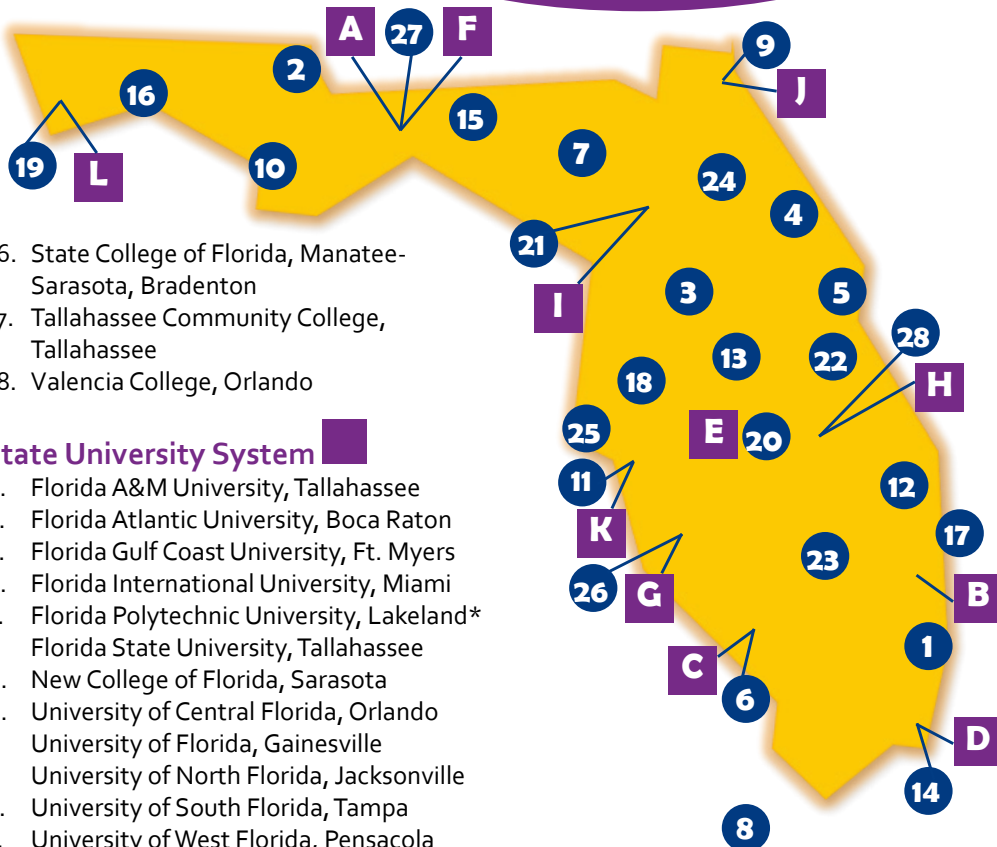
### State University System

- A. Florida A&M University, Tallahassee
- B. Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton
- C. Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers
- D. Florida International University, Miami
- E. Florida Polytechnic University, Lakeland\*
- F. Florida State University, Tallahassee
- G. New College of Florida, Sarasota
- H. University of Central Florida, Orlando
- I. University of Florida, Gainesville
- J. University of North Florida, Jacksonville
- K. University of South Florida, Tampa
- L. University of West Florida, Pensacola

\* Classes begin August 2014

## Be proactive!

The best way to make a smooth transition is to reach out to the college or university to which you intend to transfer and ask questions. Find an advisor who can help you stay on track.



# Tips for transfer students

When applying for admission to a state university, transfer students who have not yet completed the AA degree will be evaluated on their high school transcripts as well as college coursework. Transfer students without an AA degree and less than 60-credit hours must compete with all entering freshman applicants to the college or university.

Each undergraduate transfer student admitted to the State University System (SUS) is expected to demonstrate **competency of foreign language or American Sign Language** equivalent to the second high school level or higher (Spanish 2, Haitian Creole 2, etc). Students transferring to a state university without meeting the foreign language admissions requirement in high school may meet the requirement by successfully completing a postsecondary foreign language or American Sign Language elementary 2 course; demonstrating equivalent foreign language competency on the basis of scores determined by the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) Credit-By-Exam Equivalencies, as adopted by

the Board of Governors and accessible at [www.fldoe.org/articulation/](http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/); or demonstrating equivalent foreign language or American Sign Language competency through other means approved by the university.

It is strongly recommended that a **student complete the AA degree** prior to transferring. If this is not possible, students are encouraged to at least complete the 36-hour general education block at their initial institution.

**Students wishing to receive accommodations** for a disability have a responsibility to inform the disability services center at the four-year institution. A student with a disability may be eligible for a special admission review under Florida law.

**A special admission review** may apply if documentation can be provided that failure to meet an admission requirement is related to the disability and failure does not constitute a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program. Contact the admissions director for more information.

## Transfer checklist

- ✓ Identify a baccalaureate program of interest early in your AA degree path (by 30 hours).
- ✓ Meet with your academic advisor to discuss degree requirements and transfer options.
- ✓ Use the advising audits on [www.FLVC.org](http://www.FLVC.org) to find requirements and track progress toward AA graduation and transfer.
- ✓ Check with the transfer service office at the institution to which you are transferring to obtain information on transfer policies, financial aid opportunities and other assistance.

## Resources

The Florida Virtual Campus offers free access to online advising tools. In addition to the advising audits described earlier, students can use the system to:

- Complete interest inventories and other career assessments;
- Research careers, including the education-level required;
- Search for colleges and programs;
- Apply online for admissions to Florida institutions;
- Find and apply for financial aid;
- Use the transient form to make it easier to take courses at other institutions; and
- Access advising manuals, including the Common Prerequisites Manual, Statewide Articulation Manual and nonpublic articulation manuals.

## Excess Hours Advisory Statement

Section 1009.286, Florida Statutes, establishes an "excess hour" surcharge for students seeking baccalaureate degrees at state universities. It is critical that students, including those entering Florida College System institutions, are aware of the potential for additional course fees. For first-time-in-college students entering in the 2012-13 academic year and thereafter, "excess hours" are defined as hours that go beyond 110 percent of the hours required for a baccalaureate degree program. For example, if the length of the program is 120 credit hours, the student may be subject to an excess hour surcharge for any credits attempted beyond 132 credit hours (110 percent x 120).

All students whose educational plan may include earning a bachelor's degree should make every effort to enroll in and successfully complete those courses that are required for their intended major on their first attempt. Florida College System students intending to transfer to state universities should identify a major or "transfer program" early and, by the time the student earns 30 semester hours of college credit, be advised of admission requirements for that program, including the approved common prerequisites. Course withdrawals and/or repeats, as well as enrollment in courses nonessential to the intended major, may contribute to a potential excess hours surcharge.

# General education core

Beginning in fall 2015, Florida students enrolling in associate in arts and bachelor's degree programs at public colleges and universities will be required to complete the general education core.

To complete the general education core, students must complete at least one identified course from each of the general education subject areas of communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities and natural sciences.

The general education core will ensure all public colleges and universities will have the same core requirements that can be accepted in transfer.

## 30-hour advising

Florida College System associate in arts students are required to identify the bachelor's degree program and college/university of interest by the time they earn 30 hours.

Once a student identifies the program and institution of interest, the Florida college will let the student know about the common prerequisite requirements.

The purpose of the 30-hour advising rule is to improve articulation and reduce excess credit hours.

## What if I have problems or questions related to transfer?

Prior to contacting the Florida Department of Education, the student should pursue all available appeal options at the institution level. The student should keep a copy of all correspondence and a log of all telephone contacts. If the denial is upheld at the institution level and there is still a question of potential violation of the articulation agreement, the student may contact the Office of Articulation for assistance. The Office of Articulation, in consultation with the Articulation Coordinating Committee, will review and attempt to resolve all student transfer difficulties.

Florida Department of Education  
Office of Articulation  
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Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400  
850-245-0427