State Board of Community Colleges, UNC Board of Governors Sign Uniform Articulation Agreements for RN to BSN and for Engineering Programs

RALEIGH – Building on the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) already in place between the University of North Carolina system and NC Community Colleges, the UNC Board of Governors and State Board of Community Colleges have approved two supplemental articulation agreements that will provide seamless education pathways for students wishing to pursue specialized degrees in the high-demand careers of nursing and engineering.

These agreements create uniform requirements for students moving between North Carolina’s two public higher education systems and will help students avoid course duplication, shorten the time to degree completion, and eliminate the need for multiple agreements between institutions. In the process, they will help address the needs of both employees and employers by building a pipeline of skilled, talented citizens for promising careers.

The new Uniform Articulation Agreement between Associate Degree Nursing Programs and the RN to Bachelor of Science Nursing Programs promotes a more seamless, concise pathway for moving from community colleges to public universities, while also responding to the health care industry’s increasing demand that nurses pursue BSN degrees. A report published in 2010 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and
The Uniform Articulation Agreement between Associate in Engineering Programs and Baccalaureate Engineering Programs allows students to begin engineering studies at a North Carolina community college and then have the opportunity to transfer seamlessly to one of the UNC system’s engineering programs. The new agreement outlines a pathway that includes an Associate in Engineering degree designed specifically to meet the prerequisite requirements of those UNC programs.

Engineers are often listed among the positions that industry struggles to fill. The development of this new articulation agreement stemmed from the Building Engineering Pathways grant, which was funded by the Golden Leaf Foundation with the goal of expanding the pipeline to four-year engineering degrees. By providing a unified, seamless pathway to an engineering degree, the two public higher education systems are increasing students’ opportunities to pursue engineering, while also responding to industry’s workforce needs.

Five of UNC’s 16 constituent universities currently offer Bachelor of Science in Engineering programs. The Associate in Engineering Program is a specialized college transfer degree for engineering majors and requires higher-level math courses, along with other general education and pre-major courses designed to prepare students to enter universities as juniors.

“These articulation agreements are the work of dedicated faculty, staff and partner organizations who sought ways to expand educational pathway opportunities for our state’s future nurses and engineers,” said NC Community College System President, Dr. Scott Ralls. “Through these agreements, our institutions are ensuring that students have opportunities not only to transfer to a public university, but to pursue specialized degrees in the most efficient and cost effective way possible.”

“One out of every four UNC students is a transfer student, and our faculties are committed to creating more seamless pathways for students who hope to pursue
specialized degrees in high-demand fields such as nursing and engineering,” said UNC President Thomas W. Ross. “More than 24,000 students who began their studies at a NC community college are now undergraduates on a UNC campus. By working together, our two systems can continue to grow that number and better meet North Carolina’s future workforce needs.”

While these agreements streamline education pathways, they do not guarantee entrance into these rigorous bachelor programs of study. However, these articulation agreements will keep costs lower for students by offering more course work at community colleges, eliminating course duplication and reducing time for those who continue toward their bachelor degree goals. Both articulation agreements go into effect for the fall 2015 semester.