

The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) approved by the State Board of Community Colleges and the University of North Carolina's Board of Governors in February 2014 builds on current efforts to create viable career pathways for students and reduce the barriers to college completion.

In the fall of 2012, nearly 25 percent of all undergraduates attending a University of North Carolina institution were transfer students.^[1] As many still do today, some transfer students found their community college general education credits misaligned with those required by the university, forcing them to take time-consuming and costly additional courses to get on track for graduation. Transfer student graduation rates reflect these challenges. **Sixty-nine percent** of North Carolina's transfer students graduate with a bachelor's degree, but **86 percent of juniors** do so if they begin their college careers at a UNC institution.^[2]

North Carolina's economy depends on increasing post-secondary graduation rates. **By 2018, 59 percent of all jobs in North Carolina will require some type of postsecondary degree or training,**^[3] yet in 2013, **only 36 percent of North Carolinians had an associate's degree or higher.**^[4]



Having recognized the looming labor shortage, North Carolina's education systems are giving students more options than ever before to gain valuable job skills for the emerging economy. Recent legislation incentivizes public/private partnerships for career pathways; new college and career ready standards align K-12 skills with the expectations of institutes of higher learning; and innovations such as early college high school and community college remediation reform are smoothing the transition from high school to post-secondary education. By addressing the structural impediments that make transfer difficult, the CAA represents an important piece of the college completion puzzle.

The CAA's development was a collaborative effort, according to Tenita Philyaw-Rogers, Director of Transfer Articulation at UNC General Administration. Core faculty workgroups representing all 16 UNC universities negotiated, debated, and ultimately, determined which community college course credits should be accepted across the UNC system. The 41 general education courses selected make up the University General Education Transfer Component or UGETC. Unlike the previous CAA which was approved in 1997, the new agreement calls for biannual reviews and yearly reporting to ensure continued course alignment and the promotion of additional UGETC courses as academic and workforce requirements change.

The CAA reflects a strategic partnership among North Carolina's post-secondary institutions that addresses the needs of transfer students and reflects the demands of the emerging economy. By removing barriers to graduation, the CAA will benefit thousands of North Carolina's students.

^[1] The University of North Carolina Transfer Student Report 2012. UNCGA

^[2] *Ibid*

^[3] Carnevale, A., N. Smith and J. Strohl. (2010) *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University.

^[4] *Carolina Business Journal*: NC ranks 27th when it comes to higher education. June 13, 2013.