

# Supporting Non-Traditional Teacher Education Students For Success through Community College Articulation

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**ABSTRACT:** *Today's college students have diverse needs with unique experiences and backgrounds. Community college students often face the biggest challenges, many of whom are first-generation and come from underrepresented communities. Educational systems have not always been designed to support these students' success as they navigate the complexity and responsibilities between school, work, and home. However, more institutions have embraced their diverse needs and designed cooperative arrangements to support students' transition from associate to bachelor's degrees. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to disseminate a process in two institutions of higher education (IHEs) that collaborated on an articulation agreement to ensure that community college students have access to a seamless pathway for completing both an associate and bachelor's degree in teacher education with embedded support structures in place for their success.*

**KEYWORDS:** *articulation agreement, community college students*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional routes of earning a bachelor's degree at institutions of higher education (IHEs) have been four years of full-time study encompassing 120 credit hours or approximately 40 college courses (assuming three credits per course on a semester system). While bachelor's requirements vary by institution concerning major and minor courses, in most cases, half the bachelor's degree consists of general education or liberal arts courses in areas such as English, history, psychology, mathematics, sciences, and history. Bachelor's degrees have been traditional transitions from high school graduation and, thus, a standard entry to many professional careers.

However, traditional four-year programs have only sometimes been accommodating to adult and working students due to various financial, personal, and professional needs. Many students chose community colleges to continue their education after high school, seeking alternatives to continue their educational trajectory. Community college students enroll more than 40% of first-time freshmen and are an important growing demographic population [1]. Recent enrollment data indicated the national average of student age at community colleges is 28, and of that, 56% are Hispanic/Latinx and 48.5% are Black, who come from underrepresented communities in higher education [2]. Data also indicated that more than 40% of community college students are first-generation, and many community college students are almost one-third of recipients of Pell Grants [1].

Community colleges offer several benefits to their students that are not available at four-year institutions. Zirkle, Brenning, and Marr [3] explained that community college students often complete requirements from one educational institution and can meet requirements for the next academic degree if courses are articulated well

between community colleges and four-year institutions, reducing the need for duplication as students move from one institution to the next. Preparing students for transfer to a four-year institution has constituted one of the primary roles of community colleges over time [4] given that over 80% of community college students have the desire to transfer to a four-year institution [5].

Thus, partnerships in IHEs between community colleges and traditional four-year colleges and universities were created to support students in fulfilling educational goals that extend beyond associate programs. These programs, often termed 2+2, cropped up across the country, and have made a targeted pathway for students who have a precise educational direction for starting their post-secondary education at a community college to earn their degree and then continuing through a four-year degree program to complete their bachelor's degree. Furthermore, a report from the Grand Island Independent defines a 2+2 program as one that begins in a community college with a two-year associate degree or certification program which allows for the transfer of coursework to a four-year program, allowing students to complete a bachelor's degree in the same amount of time as a traditional student who would have enrolled in the institution from high school. The partnerships between the two institutions are crucial to ensure that all courses complement each other for an overall comprehensive degree program and for a seamless transition process to reduce time and money, course duplication, and an ideal fit so that students can pursue their intended degree goals.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

A vast amount of literature exists regarding the impact of articulation agreements between community colleges and traditional four-year institutions of higher education and even more for programs specific to teacher education. However, a review of research does exist to inform the challenges and opportunities for students who transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions often face a myriad of hurdles. These include navigating the incoming college or university's complex systems, processes, and procedures coupled with disconnect and poor communication. Despite efforts to improve, navigating the transfer process can be cumbersome, time-consuming, and confusing for students, making the experience more painful and less ideal.

### **2.1. Challenges in Transitioning from Community Colleges**

Flaga's [6] research explored the experiences of 35 transfer students from a community college at Michigan State University and noted that improved communication and collaboration between community colleges and receiving four-year institutions lead to student's increased knowledge and helpful information that offer clarity for transfer credits, general education requirements, and the types of curricular programs and offerings to obtain the bachelor's degree. The study emphasized the importance of each institution having a designated contact person or advisor from the community college and four-year institution and focusing on a communication culture where advisors feel comfortable reaching out to each other as they support the specific needs of transfer students. Clear communication also involves training community college and university employees about transfer policies and procedures to give staff the accurate information needed to conduct advising sessions properly [7]. Personnel in terms of academic and student services at four-year institutions should also take initiative and stay proactive as university personnel conduct friendly transfer visits to provide helpful information and resources to prospective students to better prepare them for the transition [8].

Transfer students have also experienced a disconnect with grading patterns, loss of credits, additional financial burden, and making friends. The study conducted by Berger and Malaney [8] of community college transfer students entering the University of Massachusetts Amherst noted that faculty, staff, and advisors from incoming institutions were not well-versed in necessary documents such as transcripts or course syllabi from community colleges, and therefore, the misunderstanding often led to a loss of credits and equivalent credit hours for similar courses. For example, community college administrators from the Midwest expressed concerns and frustration about the limited number of transferable credits for students who transferred into the state's four-year institutions as part of the 2+2 agreements. The state system allowed a set number of total credits for transfer from community colleges, which created confusion during degree audits as many students were expected to fulfill extra

courses once they obtained their associate to their bachelor's degrees in social work [9]. In the case of the Texas public higher education institutions, the course numbering system for their state's core curriculum requirements was not as transparent for agreements between community colleges and universities; therefore, transfer students did not receive full credits for classes previously taken. In addition, most transfer students were unfamiliar with the incoming institution's appeal process, so they accepted the loss of credits which added financial implications and caused distress as they had to retake a course [7]. Thus, transfer students consistently reported that they had heavier course loads, sometimes to compensate for the credit loss or from poor advising from university advisors who suggested that they take additional courses to fulfill major requirements [10]. These not-knowing perspectives sometimes led to misconceptions about the content, knowledge, and skills that transfer students acquired. As a result, transfer students, especially students of color, reported receiving lower grades than their white non-transfer counterparts. Transfer students tend to experience a GPA decline immediately after their initial transfer due to a mismatch in the process as well as a range of out-of-school obligations that transfer students experience [10]. These include the balancing act with family responsibilities, full-time jobs, increased workload demands, and financial-aid problems given the requirements for full-time enrollment to receive federal aid, as well as the lack of funding with limited scholarships that were available for transfer students, continued to exacerbate an already complicated process [11]. In addition to these concerns, nontraditional-aged transfer students described challenges of establishing relationships given the lack of older-aged traditional undergraduate students. In contrast, traditional-aged transfer students mentioned the difficulty of making friends since most peer networks were already formed before their arrival [12]. While normal challenges can occur as all students build social capital, which could affect their overall satisfaction, four-year institutions must work to enhance support structures and mechanisms that are tailored to the needs of transfer students so that their backgrounds and experiences are validated, so that ultimately, every student reaps positive benefits for studying at a four-year institution.

## **2.2. Creating Successful Pathways for Transfer Students**

Students need help navigating the complex systems of higher education at community colleges and traditional four-year institutions. However, a range of successful practices exist to reduce the anxiety and obstacles that transfer students encounter and these practices fall predominantly under advising and institutional climate. Research suggests that appropriate and clear academic advising allows transfer students to enter the new college four-year environment with clear expectations concerning course credits, workloads, and degree requirements [6]. It is recommended that university advisors act as guides and meet with transfer students before they transfer into the institution to provide clear answers to students' questions about credit adjustments and course requirements, educate and share appropriate resources with prospective students, and ensure proper degree pathways as intended for transfer students to pursue a major or alternate discipline. Ultimately, the more information, knowledge, and resources transfer students have, the better their preparation experiences will be in the final years of the undergraduate program as they lean into their toolboxes when needed to complete their bachelor's requirements promptly [6]. In addition to before and during the transfer process, four-year institutions should assign academic advisors whose roles prioritize student success. Academic advisors must be proactive throughout the process to maintain a healthy relationship with transfer students orienting them to the new campus and interacting with them throughout their programs since often transfer students rely on their academic advisors as the primary source of campus information, social network and integration, and access to a range of educational services in the new environment [6; 10]. Finally, institutions must consider one-stop shops that are comprehensive of academic and student support services along with staffing and personnel who are responsive and efficient with communication so that transfer students have positive experiences at their new respective four-year institutions.

### **III. PARTICIPANTS & CONTEXT**

Trends and enrollment data of students' ethnic backgrounds from community colleges in the state of New Jersey somewhat mirror national averages. Data from the National Center of Educational Statistics indicated

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that out of an estimated 140,000 students who enrolled in community colleges across the state in 2018, 25% were Hispanic/Latinx, 14.5% were Black, 6% were Asian, and 40% were White. For this paper, the articulation agreement relied on enrollment data from two institutions in New Jersey, one a community college and the other a four-year institution.

The first institution is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), Borough Community College (BCC) (pseudonym), which is an open-enrollment community college that serves one of the counties in the state. Founded in 1965 to satisfy the region's need for a convenient, affordable, and comprehensive higher education destination, BCC now enrolls nearly 17,000 students in its academic degree programs. Of this student population, the diversity represented in the student body includes 30% Hispanic, 7% Black/African, 8% Asian, and 7% Other. BCC believes that access to high-quality education in an inclusive environment is the right of all individuals and imperative for the continued advancement of a strong democracy and workforce. Grounded in the principle of fairness, the core value and premise of equity refer to ensuring that each student receives what s(he) needs to be successful through the intentional design of the college experience. BCC believes that student access and success in higher education are influenced by the effects of structural racism and systematic barriers; therefore, it has developed a five-year strategic plan to address the achievement gap and eliminate the obstacles that have hindered such access, particularly for underrepresented student populations.

The second institution, another HSI, Mission University (MU) (pseudonym), the target four-year institution, received a Carnegie classification as a research doctoral institution R2 in 2019. Mission University's 11 colleges and schools serve more than 21,000 undergraduate and graduate students with more than 300 doctoral, master's, and baccalaureate programs. The university is committed to serving the educational needs of NJ with programs characterized by academic rigor and currency in knowledge development and application. It offers a wide range of baccalaureate, master's, and certificate programs and a focused portfolio of doctoral programs. The university also recruits faculty with exceptional academic or professional credentials with a commitment to advancing their development as teachers and scholars. Thus, the institution admits students with the potential for high achievement, diligence in pursuit of education, and high aspirations for using their education. With a commitment and maintenance of a learning community that reflects NJ's diverse population, the institutional programs seek to develop student's abilities to discover, create, evaluate, apply, and share knowledge in a climate of tolerance and openness. Curricular and co-curricular programs cultivate the ability to think critically, act ethically, and become informed citizen-participants prepared to assume leadership roles in a democracy. There is a focus on the educational endeavors of students and enduring disciplines that continue to constitute the knowledge base of an educated citizenry as well as on more specific and changing areas of study that have relevance to the region. Finally, the institution plays a role beyond the campus community, partnering and collaborating at local, state, national, and international levels to positively address issues of importance to society so that students can use knowledge constructively in the world.

One of the 11 colleges at MU houses teacher education, an increasingly popular field of study at the institution. The college graduates approximately 500 completers annually across 20 initial certification areas (e.g., P-3, K-6, content areas such as math, science, English, languages, arts, etc.), and candidates complete a single or dual certification as part of their undergraduate (by majoring in another discipline) or graduate program requirements within the Master of Teaching (MAT) degrees. Due to state policies and regulations, many students who elect teacher education as a discipline at traditional four-year colleges in the state major in a variety of other disciplines (e.g., family studies, child development, liberal arts, sciences, etc.) in addition to standard teacher education courses for certification in the state at the P-3, K-6, or P-12 level or content area. At about the same time as creating this curriculum agreement, NJ state mandated a 120-credit bachelor's program for all disciplines (and completable in four years but not required) to include all related coursework for the total 120-credit hours within that undergraduate degree pathway. As such, many public and private institutions were adapting and making changes to adhere to the new 120-credit requirement. Recognizing that teacher education was a popular degree, MU had concurrently developed a new educational foundations (EDFD) major that embedded education courses for candidates to achieve the major and teacher certification at the K-6 level—all within 120 credits. Thus,

the inception and approval of the new EDFD major for MU at the state became the focus major for the development of the 2+2 articulation with BCC since MU had previously entered into a series of agreements with nine local community colleges that guaranteed admission to students who earned a degree to pursue a variety of MU's bachelor programs (e.g., nursing, nutrition and food science, computer science, information technology, geography, chemistry, marine biology, and coastal sciences, etc. and with this initiative, education). Thus, the inception and development of the 2+2 agreement between BCC and MU for teacher education in EDFD originated from the author, who had prior experience formulating agreements for non-traditional students to earn teacher certification from another state. The author also served as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Mission University, whose scope of responsibilities included curriculum matters in the college, and was introduced to the Department Chair of Education by BCC's Vice President of Academic Programs from a collaboration meeting to discuss partnerships between the two institutions. The Department Chair of Education at BCC also served as the education advisor to many of BCC's students and advocated for resources for students to navigate the complex systems of teacher education at the state level. After the introduction, the two representatives met regularly to dialogue existing challenges that confronted students, faculty and staff, the respective departments and institutions, and to share the vision for establishing a tailored pathway that allows BCC's students access to Mission University's EDFD degree (as long as transfer students fulfilled standard teacher education admission requirements at Mission University) which had embedded teacher education certification within 120-credit hours.

### **3.1 Curriculum Focus**

To ensure a successful transfer agreement between the two institutions, the two representatives focused on the curriculum pathway by reviewing both the associate and bachelor's degree education plans side-by-side as well as independently of each other. This strategy was intended to support course parity across the two academic degree plans, course and program alignment, content preparation, competency of skills and knowledge gained, and to meet state teacher-education admission requirements (e.g., passing of Praxis Core (teacher certification exam) and a minimum 3.0 GPA) so that students can transition to core educational courses, practicum, and field experiences successfully. Other considerations included limiting the duplicity of courses and ensuring that prerequisites of educational foundation courses and particular content courses were acquired through BCC's associate degree, allowing for standard course equivalency as part of the general education plan. While an intentional effort was to create some flexibility in the associate degree with general education courses during the first 2-years of the student's enrollment, the plan did not compromise any teacher education requirement to maintain consistency, academic integrity, and quality of the teacher education core requirements and authentic experiences from the MU program during the last 2-years. Hence, the model of a 2+2 was utilized to split the 120-credit requirements between the two institutions with a structured semester-by-semester coursework breakdown throughout the four years. As a result, there were multiple iterations, including the sharing of syllabi between faculty at the two institutions which led to the necessary course and policy revisions alongside standard institutional curricular review and approval process until a final 2+2 education curriculum was approved through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and where both parties with its authorized institutional representative (e.g., President or Vice President of Academic Affairs) signed the agreement.

Table 1 represents the standard degree requirements for education students from BCC as they pursue the associate of science degree as a stand-alone option fulfilling the minimum requirement of 60 program credits. Table 2 represents the standard degree requirements for education students from MU pursuing the Bachelor of Arts degree as a stand-alone option fulfilling the minimum requirement of 120 program credits. Table 3 represents the merged pathway for students completing the associate of science degree requirements at BCC, meeting all prerequisite and teacher education entrance requirements to pursue the foundations of education major at MU, leading to a bachelor's degree and state certification at the elementary level for grades K-6. At the time of the partnership agreement, requirements for admission into teacher education at MU included a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 and a passing score of at least one standardized test from a) Core Praxis Exam of Academic Skills

(score at or above Reading-156, Writing-162, and Math-150), b) ACT Exam (score at or above 23), or c) SAT Exam (score at or above Reading-610, Writing-610, Math-520).

### **3.2. Implementation Strategies**

As part of the shared vision between the two institutions in creating a pipeline for community college students in teacher education, the two representatives recognized the complex challenges faced by community college transfer students and collaborated on tactics to reduce those barriers identified from existing literature such as clear course requirements, loss of transfer credits from one institution to the next, reducing financial implications, mismatch of grading patterns from one institution to the next, etc. [6; 8]. As such, one strategy was incorporating a dedicated staff or team member who served as a liaison or point person between the two institutions as s(he) would work closely with BCC's students so that community college students had accurate information related to the 2+2 articulation plan and fulfilled the exact courses recommended in BCC and MU's sequence to prevent duplicity of content or loss of credits. Beyond recruitment meetings with BCC students, this staff person would help to provide transfer students with a list of MU's comprehensive resources that included teacher education testing support, financial aid, access to campus peers through social networking, and specific connections to MU's Student Success Advisors (once they are official MU students) to reduce anxiety and ease a smoother transition to the institution. Thus, the Student Success Center advisors at MU would also be well-trained on the approved 2+2 curriculum pathway to ensure that all stakeholders were on the same page related to degree requirements since many of these advisors work closely with transfer students and have first-hand knowledge of the challenges that they encounter. Another strategy included sharing syllabi at both institutions so that faculty from BCC and MU understood the nature and philosophy of each program. In this way, faculty across the two institutions could collaborate, recommend content revisions, and serve as authentic resources for each other rather than exerting individual or content influence and letting go of territorial attitudes that they or the institution control the curriculum.

Since the inception of the first articulation of a 2+2 agreement with BCC signed in 2019, the target four-year institution has collaborated, developed, and signed a second curriculum pathway with another community college, Mead Community College (pseudonym), and another MOU agreement with a third community college was drafted, pending signatures of institutional representatives. The Covid-19 pandemic halted progress made with additional community colleges and data from students who took advantage of the agreement (effective Fall 2021 at BCC due to the pandemic) need to be collected as students' perceptions of their experience at BCC and at MU (effective Fall 2023 once they successfully transfer) along with different stakeholders (e.g., education faculty, staff and success advisors, and administrators) input all need to be incorporated as part of program evaluation and improvement.

IV. TABLES

Table 1 Borough Community College Education Plan Degree: Associate of Science (Education or Early Childhood)	
GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS	CREDITS
<b>Communication</b>	<b>9</b>
COM-100 Speech Communication or COM-102 Public Speaking	3
WRT-101 English Composition I	3
WRT-201 English Composition II	3
<b>Humanities Electives</b> Recommended LAN I, II in a sequence	<b>6</b>
<b>Mathematics, Natural Sciences &amp; Technology</b>	<b>12</b>
Required Natural Science Elective BIO 101 + Mathematics Elective Recommended MAT-130	4 4
Recommended Informational -102	3 1
<b>Social Science Elective</b> PSY 201 Child Psychology +	<b>3</b>
<b>PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
EDU 101 Introduction to Education	3
EDU 102 Inclusion and the Exceptional Child	3
<b>(For EDU Concentration)</b>	
EDU 110 Foundations of Multicultural Education	3
EDU 140 Educational Technology	3
EDU 201 Principles and Practices in Education	3
EDU 220 Developmental Theory and Learning or PSY 103 Educational Psychology*	3
<b>(For Early CHILD Concentration)</b>	
EDU 120 Foundations of Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 220 Developmental Theory and Learning	3
EDU 226 Supervised Fieldwork Experience	3
EDU 130 Infant and Toddler Care and Education	3
OR EDU 110 Foundations of Multicultural Education	
<b>Humanities Elective</b> Recommended LIT 221 * or GEO 101 World Geography *	<b>3</b>
<b>Social Science Elective</b> Required PSY 101 General Psychology +	<b>3</b>
<b>Free Electives</b>	<b>6</b>
Recommended HIST 111 History to the Reconstruction *	3
Recommended HIST 112 History since the Reconstruction*	3
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS</b>	<b>60</b>
+ State Requirement	* Content Tested on Praxis Certification Test

I. General Education		20-23 credits	III. Major Requirements		66-67 credits
(A) New Student Seminar		1	<b>A. Educational Foundations</b>		<b>(21-22)</b>
(C1) Writing		3	<i>Required:</i>		
(C2) Literature		3	EDFD200 Psychological Foundations of Education		3
(C3) Communication			EDFD220 Philosophical Orientation to Education		3
CMST101 Fundamentals of Speech	(0)		EDFD221 Historical Found of American Education		3
(D) Fine and Performing Arts		3	EDFD300 Assessment, Learning Sciences and Ethics		3
(F1) Great Works and Their Influences		3	EDFD320 Inquiry Based Teaching and Learning		3
(F2) Philosophical and Religious Perspectives			EDFD449 Current Issues in American Education		3
EDFD220 Philosophical Orientation to Ed	(0)		<i>Electives (choose 1 course from the following):</i>		
(G) Computer Science		0-3	EDFD264 Gender Issues in Education (3)		3-4
(H) Mathematics			EDFD290 Education and Urban Youth (4)		
MTHM201 Math in Elementary Schools	(0)		<b>B. Required Courses in Mathematics (9)</b>		
(I) Natural/Physical Science			MTHM201 Math in Elementary Schools I		3
BIOL100 Biological Sciences	(0)		MTHM302 Math in Elementary Schools II		3
(J) Physical Education		1	<i>With advisor's approval select one of the following:</i>		
(K1) Soc. Sci.: American and European History			MTHM 405 Numbers and Operations		3
EDFD221 Historical Found of American Ed	(0)		MTHM 407 Geometry		
(K2) Soc. Sci.: Global Cultural Perspectives		3	MTHM 408 Data Analysis and Probability		
(K3) Soc. Sci.: Social Science Perspectives			MTHM 409 Measurement in the Middle Grades		
PSYC101 Introduction to Psychology	(0)		<b>C. Required Courses in Sciences (15)</b>		
(L) Interdisciplinary Studies		3	BIOL100 Biological Sciences		4
<b>II. World Languages &amp; Cultures Req.</b>	<b>3-9 credits</b>		EAES170 World Geography		3
World Language		3-6	CSAM/ECEL 300 Sci Ways Know/Inq I: Bio/Chem		4
World Cultures		0-3	CSAM/ECEL 301 Sci Ways Know/Inq II: Phys/Erth Sci		4
			<b>D. Required Courses in Social Sciences (15)</b>		
			HIST118 History of U.S. Since 1876		3
			PSYC101 Introduction to Psychology		3
			<i>With advisor's approval select one 300 level in History and two classes at the 300 or 400 level in any of the following subjects:</i>		
			<b>9</b>		
			HISTORY		
			POLITICAL SCIENCES AND LAW		
			ANTHROPOLOGY		
			<b>E. Additional/Collateral Coursework (6)</b>		
			ECEL200 Persp Early Chd/El Ed Democracy		3
			CMST101 Fundamentals of Speech		3
			<b>IV. Free Electives</b>		<b>21-31 credits</b>
			<b>Total credit hours: 120</b>		



Table 3 2+2 Merged Program Pathways Associate of Science to Bachelor of Arts Degree					
Course Number (BCC)	Name	Credit	Course Number (MU)	Name	Credit
<b>Communication</b>					
COM 100 or 102	Speech Communication or Public Speaking	3	ECEL 279	Foundation and Philosophy of Inclusive Education	3
WRT 101	English Composition I	3	ECSE 339	Pedagogy in the Inclusive Elementary Classroom	3
WRT 201	English Composition II	3	ECEL 408	Social Studies/Arts Elementary Classrooms	3
<b>Humanities Electives</b>			ECEL 410	Childhood Classrooms Field	2
GEO 101*	Recommended World Geography	3	ECEL412	Seminar I: Inclusive Elementary Classrooms	1
LAN 1 & II	Recommended in a sequence	6	ECEL414	Elementary Classrooms Field	9
Mathematics Natural Sciences & Technology			ECEL 421	Seminar II: Inclusive Elementary Classrooms	3
BIO101+	General Biology I	4	ECEL 427	Explorations STEM Elementary Classrooms	3
MAT 103	Recommended Contemporary Math	4	<b>Major Requirement</b>		
INF 101	Recommended Intro to Informational Tech	3	EDFD 220	Philosophical Foundations of Education	3
INF 102	Recommended Intro to Computing	1	EDFD 300	Assessment, Learning Science and Ethics	3
<b>Social Science Elective</b>			300 level course in	History or Political Science or Anthropology	3
PSY101	General Psychology	3	EDFD 449	Current Issues in American Education	3
PSY201+	Child Psychology	3	<b>Math Course Requirement</b>		
<b>Free Electives</b>			MTHM 201	Mathematics in Elementary Schools I	3
HIS 111*	Recommended History to the Reconstruction	3	MTHM 302	Mathematics in Elementary Schools II	3

HIS 112*	Recommended History Since the Reconstruction	3	MTHM xx	With Advisor's Approval Select Another Math Course	3
<b>Program Requirements</b>			<b>Science Course Requirement</b>		
EDU 101	Introduction to Education	3	CSAM 300	Science Inquiry Elementary School I : Bio/Chem	3
EDU 102	Inclusion and the Exceptional Child	3	CSAM 301	Science Inquiry Elementary School II: Phys/Earth Science	3
<b>(For EDU Concentration)</b>			<b>Literacy Course Requirement</b>		
EDU110	Foundations of Multicultural Education	3	READ 399	Early Literacy Development and Instruction	3
EDU140	Education Technology	3	READ 408	Literacy in Elementary Grades	3
EDU201	Principles and Practices in Education	3			
EDU220orPSY103	Developmental Theory and Learning or Ed Psychology	3			
<b>(For Early Childhood Concentration)</b>					
EDU120	Foundations of Early Childhood	3			
EDU220	Developmental Theory and Learning	3			
EDU 226	Supervised Fieldwork Experience	3			
EDU 130 or EDU 110	Infant/Toddler Career Found of Multicultural Ed	3			
<b>Additional Requirements for Successful Transfer of 60 credits</b>					
Exam (meet only one)					
Praxis Core Score at or above Reading-156, Writing-162, Math-150 SAT Score at or above Reading-610, Writing-610, Math-520 ACT Score at or above 23					
<b>BCC Credits</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>MU Credits</b>		<b>60</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>					<b>120</b>

## V. CONCLUSION

This paper addressed one collaborative approach between BCC and MU to shed light on how community colleges and four-year institutions can work together to create a shared purpose that could allow transfer students access to a discipline and degree plan for successful completion within four years. Yet, as previously mentioned while students matriculate in various higher education institutions, community college enrollment in NJ represents the most diverse. However, the demographic data from NJ show an increasing percentage of students who are transferring through a 2-year college before completing their baccalaureate degrees. To that end, it is to the student's benefit and the institutions' responsibility to develop seamless pathways for students to transfer and persist in their educational endeavors. According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (2010), best practices in statewide articulation and transfer agreements with implications on academic policies include: (a) providing a clear transfer pathway for community college students who have selected a transferrable major program; (b) providing guaranteed admission policies (c) providing a clear pathway for community college students to meet common lower division general education requirements, and (d) funding incentives and financial assistance programs that actively support transfer students. Thus, it remains critical that faculty across each institution communicate and collaborate on curriculum, make curricular recommendations/revisions pertinent to their institution's context, and advise students appropriately with clear expectations and required coursework so that students navigate the process and achieve time to degree successfully. Finally, as with transfer students, Mission University created a transfer transition experience (TTE), a comprehensive seven-week initiative that encompasses a variety of workshops, programs, and seminars so that students are acclimated to the university, meet and engage with fellow transfer students, build relationships with staff members across the campus, and learn holistic skills that will further equip them for their professional roles after attaining their bachelor's degree. To this end, institutions working together can alleviate attrition and create a pipeline of students into quality four-year degrees and teacher education.

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