

ARKANSAS TRANSFER SYSTEM

The goal of Act 747 of 2011 was to create a transparent, easy-to-understand statewide transfer system that eliminates obstacles to the transfer of credit among Arkansas public higher education institutions. Furthermore, the legislation calls for a seamless transfer of academic credits from a **completed designated transfer degree program** to a baccalaureate degree program without the loss of earned credits and without the receiving institution requiring additional lower-level general education credits. Finally, it seeks to eliminate unnecessary, duplicative, and/or hard-to-determine degree requirements when a transfer student has completed all courses required for the state minimum general education core and a transfer degree approved by the AHECB.

Approved Full-Transfer Degrees

In order to ensure that associate-level transfer degrees meet AHECB curricular and total credit hour criteria, ADHE staff has reviewed all Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Arts in Teaching degrees. *The Associate of Science in Business has been approved by the AHECB for full transfer.* Degree programs that meet AHECB criteria for full transfer will be included on an approved transfer program list at www.adhe.edu

Associate (transfer) degrees earned prior to January 2010 do not come under the direction of Act 182 of 2009; therefore, institutional discretion should be used when considering the comprehensive transfer of these degrees. *Act 747 of 2011* and associated AHECB policy will guide institutional transfer acceptance decisions.

Guidelines for associate degrees that are fully transferable.

Associate of Arts. The Associate of Arts degree *has been designated as the fully transferable degree under Act 747 of 2011* that must include the 35-hour state minimum general education core that requires courses in English/writing, the humanities and fine arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. **The required hours for the degree is 60 semester credit hours, and the degree title does not specify a field of study.** Remedial/developmental education courses must be used for placement purposes only and cannot be used to fulfill degree requirements. (*Note: The requirements for the 60-hour state minimum core curriculum and Associate of Arts degree (under Act 747 of 2011) are identical and the template for the core and degree can be found in AHECB Policy 5.11, Appendix C.*)

Associate of Science. The Associate of Science degree must include the 35-hour state minimum general education core that requires courses in English/writing, the humanities and fine arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. **The required hours for the degree is 60 semester credit hours. The degree title must specify a field of study, and must be designed to be fully transferable to meet the bachelor's degree program completion requirements at one or more Arkansas college/university.** Remedial/developmental education courses must be used for placement purposes only and cannot be used to fulfill degree requirements.

Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT). The Associate of Arts in Teaching degree must include the state minimum general education core (35 semester credit hours) that requires courses in English/writing, the humanities and fine arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences. The approved AHECB curriculum required for the AAT degree *must be* designed to align with *current* state licensure requirements in *early childhood (K-6) and middle school*. The degree consists of 60-64 semester credit hours. In order to receive the AAT, students must have the *required* final grade point average and *required minimum score* on the Praxis exam. (**Note:** *Effective Fall 2015, the Arkansas State Board of Education has established new licensure requirements for K-6 and middle school programs. Therefore, the AAT has been suspended by AHECB and cannot be activated by ADHE until common courses offered in the related bachelor's degrees are identified.*)

Associate of Science in Business. The curriculum for the Associate of Science in Business can be found in AHECB Policy 5.11, Appendix C.

Guidelines for associate degrees that are transferable based upon field of study (major) at participating two- and four-year institutions.

- Designated degree titles in specific fields of study, e.g. Associate of Science in agriculture, chemistry, business, etc., must be approved by the AHECB *or the ADHE Director*.
- Signed agreements between institutions in which the associate and baccalaureate degrees are articulated must be on file with ADHE.
- Published statements designating institutions where the degree will fully transfer in that field of study must be made available to *the students and* the general public.

Academic Program Review

All Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Arts in Teaching degree programs will be reviewed by the institutions on a 7-year cycle to ensure that they continue to meet AHECB criteria.

Degree Transfer Guidelines

1. Additional lower-division general education courses cannot be required for a transfer student with an earned Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), or Associate of Arts in Teaching degree unless the course(s) meets one of the following exceptions:

- The course(s) is required of the student's *programm*major.
- The course(s) is a pre-requisite for a course that is required of the student's program major.
- The course is required by an accrediting and/or licensure body.
- The student earned a grade of "D" or "F" in the transfer course.

2. Additional lower-division general education courses cannot be required for a transfer student with an earned AA, AS, or AAT based solely on the type of baccalaureate (Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science) degree the transfer student seeks.

Arkansas Course Transfer System

Guidelines for Course Approval

Institutions offering courses listed in ACTS must submit the course syllabi to ADHE for review/approval prior to the initial course offering and before the courses can be listed in ACTS. Courses listed in ACTS must include the expected student learning outcomes, and must reference the ACTS course number in all published materials as part of the Arkansas Common Course Numbering System. Should a course fail to meet or maintain ACTS learning outcomes, the student enrollments reported for this course through the Student Information System will not be counted for state funding purposes.

Act 672 of 2005 and Act 182 of 2009 required all Arkansas public colleges and universities to participate in the internet-based student manual for transfer purposes, commonly known as ACTS. (Arkansas private/independent colleges and universities may elect to participate in ACTS.) Courses at Arkansas Baptist College and Ecclesia College have been reviewed by ADHE for inclusion in ACTS and the courses listed in ACTS for these institutions are guaranteed for transfer to Arkansas colleges/universities offering a comparable course that is listed in ACTS.

In 2005, 88 general education core courses commonly offered at Arkansas colleges and universities were identified by ADHE and listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System. The Quantitative Literacy/Mathematical Reasoning course was added to ACTS in 2013. These 89 lower-division courses are the only courses listed in ACTS and are guaranteed for transfer.

The syllabus for each course that institutions are required to list in ACTS must be reviewed and approved by ADHE.

ADHE will conduct a periodic review of the course syllabi for all of the courses listed in the Arkansas Course Transfer System. Institutional course syllabi must include the expected student learning outcomes for the course to remain in ACTS and for the institution to continue reporting the course through the Student Information System for state funding purposes.

An institution may accept for transfer any course not listed in ACTS based on the institution's transfer policies.

Adding New Courses to ACTS

New general education courses can be considered for inclusion in ACTS only if a majority of Arkansas colleges and universities offer the course or the AHECB has approved the course for the state minimum general education core. ADHE must select a faculty committee to assist in the determination of the general course description and minimum student learning outcomes as a part of the ADHE course approval process. All

institutions will have an opportunity to comment on the course description/learning outcomes prior to ADHE adding the course to ACTS. The decision of ADHE on the course description and learning outcomes for a course listed in ACTS is final.

In 2008, the course description and expected student learning outcomes for eight (8) common business courses were approved by ADHE for transfer purposes.

Institutional participation is optional for the offering and acceptance of these business courses for transfer purposes. The eight (8) business courses are not ACTS courses, but are listed in ACTS for information purposes only.

Arkansas Common Course Numbering System

Act 747 of 2011 requires the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board to implement a statewide common course numbering system that (1) provides improved program planning; (2) increases communication among all delivery systems; (3) facilitates the transfer of students and credits between state-supported institutions of higher education; and (4) promotes consistency in course designation and identification.

Adopted: April 27, 2012