Guaranteed Transfer Partnership Agreement
between
Virginia Commonwealth University
and
Northern Virginia Community College

Purpose

This agreement lays the foundation for a partnership designed to facilitate the seamless transfer of Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) graduates to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). The agreement stipulates the criteria under which NOVA graduates are guaranteed admission to VCU as outlined in the existing Guaranteed Admissions Agreements (GAA) between the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and VCU, including the GAA for general admission, the GAA for engineering, the GAA for teacher preparation, and the GAA for nursing. The agreement further articulates terms that ensure all NOVA courses described in a NOVA-VCU Curricular Pathway transfer fully to meet degree requirements in a baccalaureate program at VCU. Appendix A provides a list of approved NOVA-VCU Curricular Pathways via this agreement. This list will be updated as new pathways are approved. Curricular Pathways may be amended by mutual written agreement between NOVA and VCU without need to restate this entire Guaranteed Transfer Partnership Agreement. Amendments to Curricular Pathways become effective no sooner than one year after mutual agreement to revise the Curricular Pathways.

Acceptance and Application of Credits

1. NOVA and VCU will agree upon specific Curricular Pathways that include courses that apply fully to meeting lower division general education requirements in all VCU baccalaureate programs as well as to any specific VCU baccalaureate degree requirements defined in the Curricular Pathway.

2. Graduates of Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) programs (including the Associate of Science in General Studies degree) at NOVA whose agreed-upon Curricular Pathways are appended to and form part of this agreement are considered to have met all VCU lower-division general education requirements. Students who have met the transfer criteria for all Curricular Pathway courses shall be admitted to academic junior status at VCU.

3. Graduates of other NOVA degree programs, e.g., Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs in an agreed-upon Curricular Pathway may be required to take additional general education courses or additional courses within their major at VCU. Graduates of such programs may need to complete more than 120 credits to complete the bachelor's degree at VCU. AFA and AAS courses will transfer if equivalent courses exist at VCU. Approved Curricular Pathways for such programs are considered part of this agreement and will be included in Appendix A.

4. Only coursework in which grades of C or higher have been earned at NOVA will transfer to VCU and may be applied toward the requirements of the partner program at VCU.

5. VCU will accept credit for prior learning such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge, and CLEP according to VCU policies in effect at the time of the application for admission to VCU. VCU will also evaluate courses/credits earned at other regionally accredited institutions and designate equivalencies. Students are responsible for providing transcripts from any other institutions attended and documentation for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge, CLEP, military credit, or other advanced standing
credit applied toward completion of their associate degree. The amount and type of credit awarded by VCU may differ from that awarded by NOVA.

6. No distinction will be made by VCU regarding the transferability of college courses applicable to the transfer-oriented associate degrees completed through dual enrollment arrangements with high schools.

7. Completion of an associate degree through high school dual enrollment will not preclude the student from eligibility under this agreement. However, high school students enrolled in a dual enrollment program and who earn an associate degree concurrent with graduation from high school must follow the freshman applicant deadlines and indicate they are applying as a freshman when prompted on the university application.

8. VCU will maintain course equivalency information in its online Transfer Center website (https://transfer.vcu.edu/). It will alert NOVA to proposed changes in course equivalencies at least one year before such changes are implemented. To be locked into the Curricular Pathway requirements at the time they begin taking courses at NOVA, students must submit the online Letter of Interest form (see website link to Letter of interest at: https://apps.sem.vcu.edu/apply/letter-of-interest/) for VCU to ensure that they are following the correct Curricular Pathway.

9. A minimum of 30 semester hours must be earned at VCU to be eligible for degree conferral. Thirty of the last 45 hours of credit required for the degree must be earned through instruction offered at VCU. In addition, 50 percent of the semester hours required for a major or minor (as defined by the department) must be taken at VCU and at least 45 upper-level credit hours (defined as 300- or 400-level courses) must be completed to earn a bachelor’s degree at VCU.

Admissions Practices

1. VCU will accept applications from students who wish to transfer from NOVA into any baccalaureate degree program.

2. Students transferring from NOVA to specific VCU programs at the junior-level must meet the same prerequisites, grade point average (GPA) and other admission criteria, as other native or transfer students applying for entry to VCU programs.

3. NOVA students who graduate with an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science (including the Associate of Science in General Studies degree) or Associate of Fine Arts degree and have a NOVA cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 are guaranteed admission to VCU. NOVA graduates of Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees are NOT guaranteed admission to VCU. As stipulated in VCU’s Guaranteed Admission Agreement (GAA) for general admission with VC, acceptance in some degree programs at VCU is competitive; guaranteed admission into VCU does not imply admission into these competitive programs without further acceptance by the school/college or department offering the program. Admission into the following baccalaureate programs at VCU is NOT guaranteed by the GAA:
   - All baccalaureate degree programs in the School of the Arts;
   - All baccalaureate degree programs in the College of Health Professions;
   - All baccalaureate degree programs in the College of Engineering (see separate GAA for engineering);
   - Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene;
   - Bachelor of Science in Nursing (see separate GAA for the RN to BSN program).

Separate GAA’s govern the guaranteed admissions of students into the College of Engineering, teacher preparation programs, and the RN to BS in Nursing degree program. A complete list of GAA’s governing the
admission of community college students to VCU is located on the Transfer Center website (https://transfer.vcu.edu/).

4. VCU will recognize NOVA's cumulative GPA as recorded on the NOVA transcript and not recalculate based on multiple course attempts. VCU will consider and average cumulative GPAs from all institutions attended. Only courses completed (with earned grades of A, B, C, D, or F) will be used in the calculation of a GPA average for admission purposes; however, all attempts (including withdrawals) will and must be considered for financial aid purposes. Trends in academic performance will be also considered.

5. NOVA graduates who complete the NOVA Honors Core Curriculum with a curriculum GPA of 3.5 or higher will be offered admission to the VCU Honors program and will have credits applied toward the VCU Honors curriculum. Specific details of the articulation of the two Honors programs are provided in the separate Honors Memorandum of Understanding.

6. NOVA graduates admitted under this agreement will be considered juniors for purposes of scholarship eligibility, housing, and priority registration. Students who complete a NOVA associate degree while still in high school and apply to VCU as freshman applicants will be considered as first-year students for housing, scholarship, new student orientation and data tracking purposes.

7. To be eligible for admission to VCU, students must meet the current requirements for legal status and any other non-academic requirements stated in the VCU catalog. VCU reserves the right to deny admission to students who have felony convictions as well as students who have been academically or non-academically suspended from previous institutions.

Responsibilities

Joint responsibilities

1. The agreement, articulated Curricular Pathways, and relevant transfer course equivalencies will be reviewed biennially by VCU and NOVA. Each institution will designate an individual to monitor this agreement and coordinate meetings designed to maintain Inter-institutional articulation. In addition, each institution will identify one person to serve as the main contact for each pathway program.

2. A NOVA-VCU inter-institutional leadership team will be appointed to plan joint initiatives and to review transfer success. This team will identify faculty to collaborate on developing Curricular Pathways.

3. NOVA and VCU agree to collaborate on a reverse transfer credit protocol enabling NOVA students who transfer to VCU before completing an associate’s degree to be awarded an associate’s degree from NOVA, using credit earned at VCU, if they satisfactorily complete the appropriate coursework.

4. Both institutions agree to encourage faculty to collaborate frequently.

5. VCU will provide NOVA with aggregate reports of enrolled NOVA transfer students, their majors and academic performance when 10 or more are enrolled in any given year. Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), VCU hereby designates NOVA as a school official with a legitimate educational interest in this transfer data for the purpose of implementing this agreement. Accordingly, NOVA agrees to maintain this data confidentially, not to disclose it unless authorized by VCU or otherwise in compliance with FERPA, to use the transfer data only for the purpose of implementing this agreement, including to improve student preparation for transfer, and to report to VCU its intended improvements.
Responsibilities of NOVA:

1. Notify students of transfer opportunities to VCU under this Guaranteed Transfer Partnership Agreement and promote VCU as a Guaranteed Transfer Partner.

2. Provide space (e.g., in a campus advising center) for a VCU representative. In addition, VCU will be invited to attend NOVA transfer fairs.

3. Provide academic advising services to assist NOVA students in selecting the appropriate Curricular Pathway to VCU and choosing courses that will best prepare them for their intended major at VCU. NOVA will also refer students to VCU’s Major Maps for additional guidance on how to prepare for a successful transition to VCU.

4. Host NOVA campus visits from VCU advising representatives at least once per semester to meet with prospective VCU students.

5. Provide VCU with a summary of research findings and actions taken based on data supplied by VCU on transfer student performance.

6. NOVA will contract with a NOVA-VCU senior to help welcome and support new NOVA transfer students to VCU.

Responsibilities of VCU:

1. Disseminate accurate information to prospective transfer students from NOVA regarding the general conditions of the Guaranteed Transfer Partnership Agreement and the details of the Curricular Pathways.

2. Provide academic advising services to prospective students from NOVA (coordinated through the VCU Transfer Center).

3. Host VCU campus visits for NOVA faculty and advisors at least once per year.

Amendments and Term of Effect

The Curricular Pathway in effect at the time a student first enrolls at NOVA will be honored by VCU if the student submits a Letter of Interest form to VCU (see website link to Letter of Interest at: https://apps.sem.vcu.edu/apply/letter-of-interest/), completes an associate’s degree, and successfully transfers to VCU within 4 years of that first enrollment at NOVA.

This agreement may be amended, as needed, for specific program articulation without affecting the currency of the master agreement. All course-by-course transfer guides may be amended as needed.

This master agreement will remain in effect until terminated by either party upon written notice to other party of an intention to terminate. Such notice will be effective only if given 180 days prior to the intended date of termination. In the event that this agreement is terminated, the terms of the agreement contained herein will remain in effect for a maximum of 2 years.
VCU REVIEWERS:

Inta Tolan, Senior Associate Vice Provost, Student Success
Date: 10.18.18

Tomikia LeGrande, Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management
Date: 11.7.18

Deborah Noble-Triplett, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
Date: 11.19.18

Gail Hackett, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Date: 12.13.18

NOVA REVIEWERS:

Robyn Seabrook, Associate System Counsel and Assistant Attorney General
Date: 3.5.19

*Reviewed for legal, supra in copy only*

Dimitrina Dimkova, Vice President of Finance and Administration
Date: 3.17.2019

Jennifer L. Wilson, Coordinator of University Transfer and Initiatives
Date: 3.17.19

Dr. Sharon Robertson, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
Date: 3.11.19