

## **Section Seven - Course Articulation**

This section is concerned with the processes and policies for establishing agreements on lower-division courses of other institutions that may be used in lieu of CSULB lower-division courses. This process is called "articulation." Articulation is mandated among Title 5 institutions to minimize the loss of academic credit when a student transfers from one institution to another, principally from community colleges to four-year institutions.

### **Premises**

The articulation process provides a structure wherein the faculty of other accredited colleges and universities and of CSULB are able to ensure a reasonable transferability of courses from one institution to another. Of particular concern is the transfer of lower-division courses from community colleges to CSULB, especially those lower-division courses required in the baccalaureate programs. Articulation is based on the following premises:

- That students who have conscientiously pursued an educational plan at one institution based on the published requirements for a degree at CSULB should be able to transfer approved (articulated) courses taken for credit toward that degree without unreasonable loss of credit or time.
- That the faculty of the academic programs at CSULB have the primary responsibility for maintaining the integrity of the academic program and, therefore, for determining when requirements and courses completed at other institutions are "sufficiently equivalent to constitute satisfaction of" or "may be used in lieu of" CSULB requirements and courses.
- That the faculty, by virtue of their knowledge of subject matter and educational principles, are best qualified to judge on matters of equivalency.
- That among accredited institutions there will ordinarily be a high degree of correspondence and equivalency between programs of the same type and, therefore, a high degree of reciprocity will normally exist.

The articulation process is carried out by the university articulation coordinator, the college/department articulation reviewers, and the associate deans.

## **University Articulation**

The university articulation coordinator has overall responsibility for the effective functioning of the internal articulation process and external communications of policy, primarily with the California Community Colleges, but also with the other campuses in the CSU, campuses of the University of California, and with private institutions.

The university articulation coordinator has overall responsibility for all aspects of articulation with other colleges and universities. The university articulation coordinator is responsible for the preparation of all university reports and correspondence on articulation matters, although it is expected that departments and schools will have well-established, collegial communication with the local institutions with which formal articulation agreements have been made. The university articulation coordinator is also responsible for maintenance of the university course articulation databases (PeopleSoft and ASSIST).

The university articulation coordinator maintains close liaison with the director of University Outreach and School Relations, whose duties include the dissemination of general information about the university to regional high schools and community colleges. The director of University Outreach and School Relations, in the process of maintaining inter-institutional relations, may from time to time learn of matters concerning the articulation of courses between academic departments and should immediately notify the university articulation coordinator of these matters. The university articulation coordinator shall keep the director of University Outreach and School Relations apprised of articulation agreements in effect.

## **College/Department Articulation**

College/departamental articulation is organized according to departmental and college policies. Involved faculty should be familiar with the lower-division course portfolio of the department and with the articulation process in general. The chairs of departments should maintain open communications between themselves and their counterparts in the community colleges and other institutions of higher education. Within each college/departamental, faculty will be assigned as the college or department articulation reviewers. Courses for potential articulation agreements will be evaluated by the designated articulation reviewer and endorsed by the associate dean.

## **Articulation Process**

The CSULB articulation process is designed for course-to-course articulations, and all other articulation-related agreements and literature are predicated on it. Because CSULB and community college enrollment management and transfer student processes are facilitated when students can transfer from the community college with all lower-division major requirements completed or appropriately patterned, the university hopes that the relationships between CSULB departments and the colleges will result in as many articulation agreements as possible of the lower-division requirements of our majors.

Articulation agreements may be initiated by external colleges or by CSULB faculty.

The university articulation coordinator, acting as principal point of contact for requests for articulation of courses received from other institutions, ensures that CSULB has an up-to-date copy of the college catalog (also available at <http://www.collegesource.org/home.asp>) and college course outlines for those courses for which articulation is desired.

The college or department articulation reviewer will be responsible for evaluating courses using these course outlines or catalog descriptions for comparability to CSULB courses. Any course outline referred to the department reviewer from the Academic Programs and Articulation Office will be attached to an "Articulation Form" that provides the college name and course name and number, along with the corresponding CSULB course for potential articulation agreement. The reviewer will indicate approval or disapproval of the agreement, sign the form, and forward it on to the associate dean for approval. Upon receipt in the Academic Programs and Articulation Office, the university articulation coordinator ensures that the agreement is formally communicated and recorded and that all computer systems are expeditiously updated.

A CSULB department that wishes to initiate articulation for a course(s) at another community college should contact the university articulation coordinator. The offices of Enrollment Services and Academic Programs and Articulation have developed a simple process to facilitate such requests.

### **Response Time**

Timely responses to articulation requests are important. Departments requiring additional information should always relay this information to the university articulation coordinator, because this person has contact with the requesting institution on a variety of courses. Requests for additional materials should be made promptly.

### **Notice**

Colleges/departments are given thirty days in which to respond to a college's request or to review tentative agreements forwarded to them by the university articulation coordinator. Failure of a department to respond within the normal time period requires that the university articulation coordinator make the determination for the course in question. The department reviewer will receive notice during the 30-day review period that the articulation agreement will be assumed in cases of no response from the department. Under normal conditions, the university articulation coordinator will complete and sign single-course articulation agreements and record articulation agreements with the community colleges only on the recommendation of the department reviewers and endorsement by the associate deans.

## **Course-to-Course Articulation**

A single course articulation requires that the course have substantially the same content, methodology, and goals. Normally the same number of semester course credit units are assigned to courses that are articulated. Where quarter-system units are involved, the department is urged to consider the coverage rather than concentrating on the elapsed time. A course with fewer units or with more units may be articulated with a CSULB course; in such cases, the student receives the full CSULB subject credit for the transferred course, but may have either a deficiency or an excess in unit credits in the major.

## **Articulation with Upper Division Courses**

In general, courses must be articulated within the same division, i.e., lower-division to lower-division. However, if faculty wishes to award "subject matter credit" to a lower division community college course in comparison to an upper division CSULB course, the agreement will be accommodated. The student will NOT receive upper division credit for the course.

## **Major-to-Major Articulation**

An "articulation-by-major" refers to a set of agreements for most or all of the lower division requirements for the major. CSULB does not articulate majors-to-majors, but it does attempt to establish complete sets of course-to- course articulations which fill out the lower-division requirements of the major.

Articulation by major is the by-product of course-to- course articulations for major requirements and prerequisites. The lower-division requirements of our majors are on file in the computer. When a specific course is articulated, that fact is registered throughout the computer files so that, whatever the discipline, whether the course is a major requirement, alternative requirement, elective, or service course, its articulated status is stated. Major-to-major "articulations" are particularly valuable for the community college student, especially because it is only through the articulation systems that a student can be sure of the transferability and acceptance of his or her coursework toward the requirements of the degree.

## **ASSIST**

ASSIST is a computerized student-transfer information system that can be accessed over the World Wide Web. It displays reports of how course credits earned at one California college or university can be applied when transferred to another. ASSIST is the official repository of articulation for California's colleges and universities and, therefore, provides the most accurate and up-to-date information available about student transfer in California.

The ASSIST acronym stands for Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer.

The Academic Programs and Articulation office records all articulation agreements in the ASSIST database for easy access by students wishing to transfer to CSULB. Agreements are listed individually by academic department, but are also included in the section of the site that provides lower division degree requirements by major. The CSULB information for majors and articulation agreements is established and maintained by CSULB articulation staff. The site is available at: <http://www.assist.org/web-assist/welcome.html>.

### **Articulation Agreements: Timeframe and Maintenance**

Articulation agreements are maintained by "CSULB catalog year" and are updated when new CSULB courses are published in a new university catalog, the CSULB course changes and the notification of change is published to other institutions, or a new community college course or substantially changed course has been developed.

When a community college course has changed, we rely on the community college articulation officer to give us prompt and detailed information about the change. Articulation agreements remain in effect (at a minimum) through the effective period of the college catalog in which the course is published, unless the articulated course is substantially changed and offered as a changed course during this period. If an articulated college course is substantially changed by its faculty, whether published in their catalog or not, the articulation agreement may be voided by the university articulation coordinator or referred to the college/department reviewer for evaluation. If in the opinion of the university articulation coordinator the change to the college's course is not substantial, the articulation agreement may be continued by the university articulation coordinator without further review.

Changes to CSULB courses for which any articulation agreement exists may have an affect on those agreements. Normal courtesy requires that when CSULB courses are modified the institutions which have a course articulated with our course be notified with sufficient time to effect necessary changes. This is done automatically in the articulation office with sufficient time (at least one semester) given to the community college to respond to the change.

Articulation agreements are in force for the minimum period of the academic year of the college catalog and CSULB catalog in which the course is published and these agreements are normally extended for a five year period. They may be cancelled, and in unusual circumstances without respect to the election of regulations policy. Nevertheless, the CSU election of regulations policies are fundamental to the California Higher Education Master Plan. They promise to students a stability of degree course requirements at the degree-granting institution and are predicated on the currency and accuracy of articulation agreements and transcript evaluations.

Articulation agreements are recorded in the university student system module of the common management system (PeopleSoft) and in ASSIST.

### **California Articulation Number System CAN and Lower Division Transfer Pattern LDTP**

The CAN program is in the process of being phased out and is being replaced by the Lower Division Transfer Pattern (LDTP) program. CAN numbers will no longer be referenced in the CSULB catalog as of 2009-10.

The LDTP program will provide guidance for many California Community College (CCC) students planning to transfer to the CSU. One part of each LDTP is a system-wide, major-specific course pattern that is to be completed at a CCC and that will advance the student toward graduation from any CSU campus offering the specified major. This pattern of courses will generally equal 45 units. The next part is the campus-specific requirements which will bring the total units to at least 60, but not more than 70. Details of the program are available at the Articulation Office on campus.