

## Public Higher Education Policy Guidelines for the Development of Pathway Maps

**(Adopted by Council: January 11, 2021)**

Code of Virginia §23.1-907 states:

*The Council shall develop guidelines for associate-degree-granting and baccalaureate public institutions of higher education to use in mapping pathways for the completion of credits in particular programs of study, including the courses recommended to be taken in a dual enrollment, comprehensive community college, and baccalaureate public institution setting in order to pursue a specific degree or career. Such guidelines shall define the elements of a pathway map and identify the pathway maps to be developed. Initial guidelines adopted for mapping such pathways shall establish a multiyear schedule for the development and implementation of pathway maps for all fields of study.*

The policy guidelines offered here apply to the development and implementation of pathway maps between two- and four-year institutions. Pathway maps are intended to support a framework for an efficient system of transfer that provides clarity to students, so they can maximize their ability to complete a baccalaureate program within the designed timeframe and with no to minimal loss of credit. Pathway maps are supported by the standardized Transfer Guide (Appendix B) developed in collaboration with Virginia's public four-year institutions to ensure transparency in the transfer process. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the *State Policy on College Transfer*, the *Higher Education Guidelines for the Development of Transfer Agreements*, and the *Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Programs* when developing Pathway maps. Private institutions wishing to develop Pathway maps with public two-year institutions are subject to these guidelines.

### **I. Definitions:**

**Dual Enrollment** – Coursework taken by high school students under the aegis of an agreement between a public school or district and a public institution of higher education, wherein a student takes coursework that both (i) counts toward high school graduation requirements and (ii) is designed to result in earned college credits.

**Passport** - A 16-credit hour two-year college program in which all courses are transferable and shall satisfy a lower-division general education requirement at any public institution of higher education. Passport courses may satisfy a general education requirement without having a specific course equivalent at the receiving institution.

**Pathway Map** – A planned curriculum between two- and four-year institutions that identifies coursework needed to complete a specified associate degree and its applicability to a specific baccalaureate degree. The map will specify academic requirements for finishing the target

baccalaureate program at the four-year institution.

**Statewide Transfer Portal** – An online resource for public access that provides students with transfer-related information, to include transfer agreements, transfer-related resources, course equivalencies, and Pathway maps.

**Transfer Agreement** – Any formal agreement between institutions of higher education that relates to the requirements and privileges that obtain when students move from one institution to another. Transfer agreements include but are not limited to articulation agreements, dual admission agreements, and guaranteed admission agreements.

**Transfer Associate Degree** - An associate degree that follows a baccalaureate-oriented sequence of courses. In Virginia, transfer degrees are the SCHEV-recognized Associate of Arts, the Associate of Science, the Associate of Arts and Sciences, and the Associate of Fine Arts (AFA). Under specific articulation agreements, some institutions may develop articulation agreements for the Associate of Applied Arts and the Associate of Applied Sciences for specified degree programs.

**Transfer Guide** - A statewide template serving as the front-facing student document including the pathway map, requirements and responsibilities for successful transfer as defined through transfer agreements, and pertinent information related to transfer.

**Uniform Certificate of General Studies** - A 30-credit hour program where all courses shall be transferable and satisfy a lower-division general education requirement at any public institution of higher education. UCGS courses may satisfy a general education requirement without having a specific course equivalent at the receiving institution.

## **II. Pathway Map Guidelines:**

1. Two- and four-year institutions will develop pathway maps following a standardized format as defined by the Transfer Guide in Appendix B. Specialized transfer agreements (e.g. dual admission or concurrent enrollment agreements) are not subject to the provisions of this policy.
2. For transferable associate degrees, pathway maps will be developed between two- and four-year institutions for appropriately aligned baccalaureate programs of study. Associate of Applied Science degrees offered by the two-year institution may have a four-year relevant bachelor's program (e.g. nursing, early childhood education). In these instances, institutions are strongly encouraged to develop pathway maps for these programs.
3. The Associate of Fine Arts degree is a specialized program specifically designed for transfer to a fine arts baccalaureate program. AFA pathway maps will reflect this specificity when developed for relevant art programs.

4. Pathway maps will be developed on a multiyear schedule until all programs of study have been completed. This schedule is included in Appendix A.
5. In accordance with Code of Virginia §23.1-908(C) Pathway maps will be included in the statewide transfer portal.
6. Each Pathway map shall provide for the completion of the Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies program. In cases where SCHEV has granted a waiver pursuant to the policies outlined in the *Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Passport and Uniform Certificate of General Studies Programs*, these exceptions will be included in the Pathway map.
7. Faculty representatives from two-year and four-year institutions shall convene on a rotating basis at least every three years, as determined by the discipline, to review course learning outcomes, program curriculum, and transfer student preparation.
8. The VCCS will create a system for streamlining transfer curriculum requirements across the 23 colleges, minimizing the variance in pathway programs to support the mapping of baccalaureate program requirements to one VCCS curriculum plan for each degree program. Not all VCCS colleges will be able to support the requirements of all four-year institutions and may need to focus on meeting those regionally close or with the greatest level of transfer.
9. Each institution shall designate a point of contact for all pathway map communications.
10. SCHEV shall prepare an annual report on the effectiveness of transfer as compared to the successful completion of non-trans for students which will include a review of the effectiveness of the use of pathway maps in achieving efficiencies and cost savings in the completion of a degree program, and similarities in outcomes post-completion.

## Appendix A

### Pathway Map Development Schedule

Phase	Target Development	Associate Degree - Discipline Areas	Target Implementation
<b>Phase 1</b>	Spring 2020	Business, Computer Science, Engineering, Education	Fall 2022
<b>Phase 2</b>	Spring 2022	Biology, Math, World Languages	Fall 2023
<b>Phase 3</b>	Fall 2022	Communications, English, Psychology, IT, Theater, Health Professions (Public Health, Kinesiology)	Spring 2024
<b>Phase 4</b>	Spring 2023	Chemistry, Social Work, Political Science, Art, Environmental Science, Dance, Criminal Justice	Fall 2024
<b>Phase 5</b>	Fall 2024	History, Philosophy, Geology, Physics, Art History, Religion, Music, Sociology, Cinema	Spring 2025
<b>Phase 6</b>		Programs identified by colleges as serving a regional need – possible expansion through statewide collaborative work.	
Begin Course and Curriculum Sustainability Cycle 2025-2026			

## Appendix B

TRANSFER GUIDE Catalog Years: <<Catalog Years>>		<<University Name>> <<BA or BS>> in <<Degree Name>> Associate Transfer Degree Plan in <<Curriculum Name>>		COURSE REQUIREMENTS			
BACHELOR'S DEGREE REQUIREMENT		Complete at <<CC Name>>		Complete at <<University Name>>		BACHELOR'S DEGREE REQUIREMENT	
Course	Credits	Associate Degree* <<GEL AA>>	CC Course <<GEL CC Course>>	Notes <<GEL Notes>>	Course	Credits	Notes
<<GEL Name>>	<<GEL Credits>>	X		<<GEL Notes>>	<<B1 Name>>	<<B1 Credits>>	<<B1 Notes>>
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X		...	...	...	...
...	...	X					

<<AGREEMENT TYPE & NAME>>

By meeting the following criteria, you are <<Agreement Descriptor>>:

- <<Agreement Criteria 1>>
- <<Agreement Criteria 2>>
- <<Agreement Criteria 3>>
- <<Agreement Criteria 4>>

Learn more at: [Portal University Profile Link]

Learn more at: [Portal University Profile Link]

**DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

- Completing your Associate transfer degree post-high school satisfies all lower division general education requirements and increases the chance of completing your bachelor's degree?
- Exceeding 3 years or 90 credits at your community college means you may have exhausted your financial aid at that college and have limited your future financial aid at <<University Name>>?

**WHAT CAN I DO WITH THIS DEGREE?**

Explore possible careers, salaries, and job outlook at: [Portal Careers Link]

**PROGRAM SUCCESSES & HIGHLIGHTS**

- <<Program Successes & Highlights 1>>
- <<Program Successes & Highlights 2>>
- <<Program Successes & Highlights 3>>

**WHAT ARE MY CHANCES FOR GETTING ACCEPTED?**

- <<TransferAcceptPercent>>
- <<Transfer Profile Info 1
- Learn more at: [Portal University Profile Link]

**DO MORE WITH YOUR DEGREE!**

- <<Do More With Degree 1>>
- <<Do More With Degree 2>>
- <<Do More With Degree 3>>

**OTHER THAN CLASSES, ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS?**

- <<Program Requirement 1>>
- <<Program Requirement 2>>
- <<Program Requirement 3>>

**IMPORTANT LINKS & DATES:**

- University Transfer Center: <<transferURL>>
- Register Intent to Transfer: By <<Intent Date>> at [Portal Link]
- Admission Application: By <<Application Date>> at <<Application Link>>
- Financial Aid: <<Financial Aid Link>>
- FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid: <<FAFSA Date>> at studentaid.gov

**WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING COURSES?**

- <<Course Selection>>
- Create a schedule for all required courses, pay attention to prerequisites and when courses are offered, complete your first math and English courses in your first year. [Portal Worksheet Link]
- Connect with an advisor at your community college and <<University Name>> within your first year. [Portal register intent link]

**IS THIS DEGREE RIGHT FOR ME?**

- <<Is Degree Right for Me Criteria 1>>
- <<Is Degree Right for Me Criteria 2>>
- <<Is Degree Right for Me Criteria 3>>
- <<Is Degree Right for Me Criteria 4>>

**WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON MY DEGREE OF WORK I HAVE ALREADY COMPLETED?**

- Associate Transfer Degree Completion: <<AssocDegreeTransfer>>
- Credit for Prior Learning: <<acceptsCPL>>
- Catalog Year: <<TransferStudentCatalog>>
- Dual Enrollment – Completion of Associate Degree in HS: <<Dual Enrollment – Completion of Associate Degree concurrent with HS>>

**IS THIS COLLEGE RIGHT FOR ME?**

- <<CollegeFit Criteria 1>>
- <<CollegeFit Criteria 2>>
- <<CollegeFit Criteria 3>>
- <<CollegeFit Criteria 4>>