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AN ACT  
RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; AMENDING THE POST-SECONDARY  
EDUCATION ARTICULATION ACT TO ESTABLISH AND CLARIFY  
CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH STUDENTS MAY TRANSFER EARNED CREDITS  
BETWEEN AND AMONG NEW MEXICO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 21-1B-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1995,  
Chapter 224, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

"21-1B-2. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Post-Secondary  
Education Articulation Act:

A. "articulation" means the transfer of courses  
that fulfill a graduation requirement for a student's chosen  
degree program;

B. "department" means the higher education  
department;

C. "general education core curriculum" means the  
group of lower-division courses approved by the department as  
fulfilling general education requirements that are accepted  
by all institutions for transfer purposes;

D. "institution" means an accredited, public post-  
secondary educational institution operating in the state;

E. "meta-major" means fifteen credits of lower-  
division courses that are developed in consultation with the

1 faculty and approved by the department and that include  
2 general education courses and prerequisite courses and that  
3 can articulate to multiple degree programs and can include  
4 courses across the institution that address diversity;

5 F. "transfer" means the transfer of course credits  
6 from one institution to another; and

7 G. "transfer module" means a list of lower-  
8 division courses established by the department that fulfill  
9 graduation requirements for a specific degree program."

10 SECTION 2. Section 21-1B-3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1995,  
11 Chapter 224, Section 3, as amended) is amended to read:

12 "21-1B-3. INITIAL ARTICULATION PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
13 OF META-MAJOR AND TRANSFER MODULE.--

14 A. The department shall establish and maintain a  
15 comprehensive statewide plan to provide for the articulation  
16 of educational programs and facilitate the transfer of course  
17 credits between institutions.

18 B. In establishing a statewide articulation plan,  
19 the department shall:

20 (1) by August 1, 2017, establish a common  
21 course naming and numbering system for courses identified as  
22 substantially equivalent lower-division courses; provided  
23 that the department shall establish an interim mechanism of a  
24 statewide equivalency table that uses a universal taxonomy to  
25 identify substantially equivalent courses until the common

1 system is in place;

2 (2) establish a process to identify courses  
3 as substantially equivalent. The process shall:

4 (a) include a procedure for each course  
5 whereby faculty members from each segment teaching the  
6 academic discipline will reach mutual agreement on the  
7 material to be taught and the competencies to be gained;

8 (b) ensure that the content of each  
9 course is comparable across institutions offering that  
10 course;

11 (c) ensure that substantially all the  
12 content agreed to among the institutions as the content to be  
13 covered by a course is in fact covered in that course and  
14 that students successfully completing the course will achieve  
15 like competencies with respect to the content covered; and

16 (d) ensure that the content  
17 requirements for each course will be sufficient to prepare  
18 students for upper-division coursework in that field;

19 (3) maintain a list of lower-division  
20 courses offered at higher education institutions in New  
21 Mexico. All courses assigned the same number shall transfer  
22 between institutions as that course name and number; and

23 (4) develop a process for reviewing,  
24 updating and maintaining the common course numbering system.

25 C. The department shall, in consultation with the

1 faculty, facilitate the development and approval of statewide  
2 meta-majors and transfer modules by August 2019.

3 D. The department, in consultation with faculty,  
4 shall develop a statewide general education core curriculum  
5 of not less than fifteen hours for an associate in applied  
6 science degree, thirty hours for an associate degree other  
7 than in applied science and thirty hours for a bachelor  
8 degree. The statewide general education core curriculum  
9 shall include a comprehensive array of lower-division  
10 college-level courses designed to provide a foundation for a  
11 liberal education and courses that include the  
12 interdisciplinary study of differences that recognize and  
13 respect New Mexico's diverse cultures, histories and  
14 identities. The department shall develop a process for  
15 maintaining and updating the statewide general education core  
16 curriculum. The department shall review and approve proposed  
17 statewide general education core curriculum requirements.  
18 For every institution, each approved course in the general  
19 education core curriculum shall be transferable, and its  
20 credit hours shall count toward fulfilling general education  
21 core curriculum requirements at any institution to which they  
22 are transferred."

23 SECTION 3. Section 21-1B-4 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1995,  
24 Chapter 224, Section 4, as amended) is amended to read:

25 "21-1B-4. TRANSFER OF CREDITS.--

1           A. Courses that have a New Mexico common course  
2 number shall be accepted as the equivalent courses offered at  
3 the receiving institution.

4           B. Courses taken as part of an approved meta-major  
5 or transfer module shall be accepted to meet lower-division  
6 graduation requirements of a degree-granting program to which  
7 the meta-major or transfer module articulates.

8           C. An institution shall not increase requirements  
9 for degree-granting programs as a result of the use of a  
10 meta-major or transfer module or acceptance of a course that  
11 is part of a meta-major or transfer module. An institution  
12 may specify additional lower-division or upper-division  
13 requirements not included in a meta-major or transfer module  
14 for one or more programs of study; provided that those  
15 requirements apply equally to transfer students and students  
16 originating their study at the institution."

17           **SECTION 4.** Section 21-1B-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1995,  
18 Chapter 224, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

19           "21-1B-5. OVERSIGHT OF ARTICULATION PROGRAMS--COMPLAINT  
20 PROCEDURES.--

21           A. The department shall establish and maintain a  
22 process to monitor and improve articulation through frequent  
23 and systematic consultation with institutions.

24           B. The department shall establish a complaint  
25 procedure for transfer students who fail to receive credit

1 for courses that have a common course number or are contained  
2 in an approved meta-major or transfer module taken at another  
3 institution. The department may set standards for  
4 determining bona fide complaints, including a requirement  
5 that students follow institutions' internal procedures for  
6 resolving complaints prior to submitting them to the  
7 department. The department shall investigate all  
8 articulation complaints and render decisions as to the  
9 appropriateness of the actions of the participants.

10 C. Prior to December 31 of each year, the  
11 department shall summarize all articulation complaints filed  
12 with the department and the decisions of the department with  
13 regard to those complaints.

14 D. If a student's articulation complaint regarding  
15 commonly numbered courses or courses contained in a meta-  
16 major or transfer module is upheld, the receiving institution  
17 shall reimburse the student the complete cost, including  
18 tuition, books and fees, of each course the student was  
19 required to repeat at the receiving institution."

20 SECTION 5. Section 21-1B-6 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1995,  
21 Chapter 224, Section 6, as amended) is amended to read:

22 "21-1B-6. REPORTING.--

23 A. Prior to December 31 of each year, the  
24 department shall report to the legislative finance committee  
25 and the governor regarding the status of articulation

1 programs and the transfer of students between institutions.

2 B. The report developed by the department shall  
3 include the statewide meta-major and transfer modules  
4 available, an analysis of the number of students transferring  
5 between New Mexico's higher education institutions, the  
6 graduation rates and time to earn degrees of transfer  
7 students at receiving institutions, the average number of  
8 credit hours earned by graduating transfer students compared  
9 to the average number of credit hours earned by graduates who  
10 originated at the institution and a summary of student  
11 complaints regarding articulation. The report shall include  
12 data and other information obtained on both a statewide and  
13 individual institution basis.

14 C. The report shall look at outcomes with regard  
15 to such factors as transfer rates, persistence rates after  
16 transfer and graduation rates.

17 D. The report shall identify each institution  
18 against which a meritorious complaint has been filed. The  
19 report shall summarize the recommendations of the department  
20 with regard to those complaints.

21 E. All institutions shall provide articulation  
22 information required by the department for the development of  
23 the annual report prior to September 30 of each year."

24 **SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.**--The effective date of the  
25 provisions of this act is July 1, 2017. \_\_\_\_\_