Transfer Students
Planning Your Successful College Transfer

What is a Transfer?
Simply put, a transfer is a change of colleges. A student who begins at one college and then switches to another is considered a transfer student. Transfers come in many forms and can take place at various times during a student’s academic career.

The Most Important Part of the Process: You!
While the transfer process is different for each student, the single most important factor is the same for everyone: You must take responsibility for every step of the process. There are no hard-and-fast rules because the circumstances for each transfer student are different, and every college and university has its own policies concerning transfer admissions.

Here are some ways to make sure your transfer is successful:
• Research the requirements that will apply to your transfer.
• Make a game plan to implement the transfer.
• Follow through with the required action to make your transfer a successful experience.
• Never forget that YOU are in charge of the process!

Why Transfer?
Students decide to switch colleges for many different reasons:
• To move from a two-year college to a four-year college
• To attend a college or university that better suits their educational, career or personal needs
• To change to a college with features they now prefer (for example, moving from a large college to a small one or from a rural college to an urban college)

• To attend a college or university that is closer to home
• To accommodate changing financial needs
• To change degree programs

There are several steps involved in the transfer process, including researching colleges, applying and transferring your transcripts and records, and enrolling in a new college.

Kinds of Transfers
• Two-year to four-year colleges
• Four-year to four-year colleges
• Four-year to two-year colleges

The majority of students who transfer begin their college career at a junior or community college and then transfer to a senior-level college or university. Some two-year degrees are designed to transfer to a four-year institution. Ideally, these transferable programs allow students to transfer to a four-year college as a junior.

Transfer Student Planner
The Transfer Student Planner available in Student Planner at CFNC.org has information on the North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA), the Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA), transferable courses, transfer student guarantees, contact information, FAQs, and the Transfer Assured Admissions Policy (TAAP). You can use the TAAP tool to register to be contacted by another college if you were denied admission into a UNC institution.
Creating a Game Plan for Your Transfer

- Consider your field of study.
- Research colleges and universities.
- Determine how your credits will transfer.
- Visit colleges that interest you.
- Obtain applications.
- Know deadlines and meet them.
- Submit admission applications.
- Apply for financial aid.
- Communicate with your current college and your new one.

When to Start Planning Your Transfer

Now is the time to start planning! Talk to a transfer counselor at the college you are currently attending and make contact with the admissions office of the college you would like to attend. Research all requirements thoroughly and carefully. Although it is a time-consuming process, it will save you countless hours or even months or years. If you don’t plan ahead, it is quite possible that much of the work you have done at your current college will not transfer to your new college. However, if you do your research and plan ahead, you should be able to transfer without losing the college credits you have already earned.

Plan Ahead for a Successful Transfer

Since each college and university has its own policies concerning transfer admissions, never assume that the requirements of one college apply to those of another college. It’s up to you to research colleges, majors, admissions, and financial aid applications and deadlines.

Start a “To Do” list to keep track of everything you will need to do in the transfer process. A good starting point is to determine which semester you plan to transfer. Prioritize the steps you need to take, and then set a timetable for future tasks. As you complete each task, check off the item and include the date it was completed. It may seem obvious, but it’s important to keep all of your transfer information organized and in one place.

Researching Colleges

The best way to start researching colleges is by reviewing websites and taking virtual tours online. The CFNC website, CFNC.org, has information on more than 100 North Carolina colleges available through College Fair, plus summary descriptions of basic information such as size, cost, and majors offered. College websites offer general information about a college or university’s programs, costs, requirements, services, history, and more. You may also call toll free 866-866-CFNC with questions regarding North Carolina colleges and universities.

The best way to evaluate a college is to take a campus tour. Nothing can replace a campus visit. Most colleges have regularly scheduled tours and may have a special open house for transfer students. It is extremely important to talk with an admissions counselor about your transfer plans in order to establish a point of contact with the institution you would like to attend. Remember, the college you choose is one of the most important decisions you will make in the transfer process. Carefully consider all your options and then look for the college that matches your most important needs and goals.
Finding the Right College for You

It is important to select a college that best suits your interests and meets your needs. The more research you do, the better your chances of finding the best match. Again, the work you do up front will pay off enormously in the years to come.

Factors You Need to Consider

- Degree programs and majors
- Admission requirements
- Total costs (tuition, fees, books and supplies, housing, food, transportation)
- Financial aid
- Transfer of credits
- Location
- Size of campus and setting
- Size of student population
- Housing options
- Application deadlines
- Student life
- Extracurricular activities

Now It’s Time to Apply

As a transfer student, it’s up to you to initiate and direct each step of the admissions process:

- Include any application fees that may be required.
- Submit your application on time!
- Send transcripts from the colleges you have attended. Ask your admissions counselor or registrar’s office to send official transcripts to the colleges of your choice.
- You will need to send your high school transcript.
- Send official admissions test scores, if required (SAT, SAT Subject Tests, or ACT).
- Send letters of recommendation, if required. Professors, teachers, counselors, employers, clergy, advisors, or mentors who know you well are great people to write letters of support.
- Write the essay, if required. For tips on writing the best essay possible, see the publication “Writing Your Admissions Essay” in Downloadable Resources at CFNC.org.

Remember to proofread your entire application carefully to avoid careless errors or mistakes. If possible, check your information for accuracy and completeness with faculty, advisors, or a transfer counselor at your former college or new institution.

What Makes a Transcript Official?

There are two important points to remember when requesting an official transcript:

1. When requesting a paper transcript from an institution, be sure to specify that you need an official transcript and not a student copy.
2. The official transcript must arrive at the college in an unopened envelope. If you open the envelope to view the transcript, you have made it unofficial.
Explore Financial Aid Options

Although the cost of college may sometimes seem overwhelming, there is plenty of help available to make college possible. Some basic thoughts on financial aid:

- Always assume that you may be eligible for financial aid.
- Consider all colleges, regardless of cost; financial aid may be available.
- It is FREE to apply for financial aid with the “Free Application for Federal Student Aid” (FAFSA) so go ahead and try.

How to Begin

- There may be different deadlines or documentation required for financial assistance. Once you have decided where you’d like to apply, check with the financial aid office of that college as soon as possible for specific information.
- The first step to apply for most forms of financial aid is to fill out the FAFSA. This can be done in Online Applications at CFNC.org. Copies can also be obtained at any high school, college, or public library.
- If you are entering in the fall semester, complete and submit the FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible (that’s the first day it will be accepted). Most colleges recommend that you submit the FAFSA between January 1 and mid-February. (Note: It is much easier to complete the FAFSA if you have also completed your tax return for the previous year.)
- A Student Aid Report (SAR) will be generated when you submit the FAFSA. Your SAR will determine your eligibility for federal aid, as well as most other forms of financial assistance.
- If you submitted the FAFSA for the college you currently attend, you can send the information to the college you plan to attend. Check with the financial aid office of your current college for more details.

You can research scholarships, grants, and loans by visiting Paying for College at CFNC.org. To apply online for loans, go to Online Applications at CFNC.org. You can also call the toll-free number 866-866-CFNC and select option 2 to speak directly with a financial aid specialist.

Types of Financial Aid

Grants and scholarships: Money that does not have to be repaid and is awarded on the basis of financial need or a student’s merit, special talent, or other qualifications.

Loans: Money that is borrowed for educational purposes and must be repaid with interest.

Work-Study/Student Employment: Money that is earned by the student in programs such as Federal College Work-Study.

Now You’re a Transfer Student

Congratulations! Your hard work has paid off, and you are enrolled at the college of your choice. What should you do now?

- Attend a transfer student orientation. Learning about your new environment will help you feel at home more quickly. Orientation sessions are the best way to learn where things are and how things work at your new college. Orientations can include information on everything from library and computer resources, meal plans, campus ID cards, transportation and parking options, and campus organizations and clubs to the location of the cashier’s office for tuition and fee payments. You may discover that your new college has an organization specifically for transfer students.

- Meet with your academic advisor. Your advisor will help you determine how your credits have transferred as well as what courses you need to take to fulfill general education requirements and specific requirements to complete your major. Your advisor is also a good person to discuss future career goals with you.
A Definition of Terms

**Articulation Agreement:** Agreement between two colleges that allows credit at one college to automatically transfer to another.

**Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA):** The articulation agreement between the NC Community College System and the University of North Carolina (16 public universities).

**Independent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (ICAA):** The articulation agreement between the NC Community College System and 24 participating independent colleges and universities.

**Transcript:** Official record of a student’s educational history.

**General Education:** Basic courses that cover a broad range of study (liberal arts), which prepare students for further study in a major area.

**Major:** Subject area in which students take many courses in an area of emphasis and earn a degree.

**Electives:** Courses that are optional in a degree program as opposed to required courses.

Two-Year and Four-Year Degree Options

A **bachelor’s degree (baccalaureate degree)** is granted by colleges and universities after students have completed a prescribed four-year program of study (undergraduate curriculum).

Students receive either a Bachelor of Science (BS), a Bachelor of Arts (BA), or a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree, depending on their course of study.

An **associate’s degree** is a two-year degree normally granted by a community or two-year college. There are five types of associate’s degrees:

1. **Associate in Arts (AA):** A two-year degree that is designed to allow students to transfer to a senior (four-year) institution. This degree is for students intending to pursue a liberal arts major.

2. **Associate in Fine Arts (AFA):** A two-year degree that is designed to allow students to transfer to a senior institution. The AFA degree is designed for students who would like to pursue careers in music, drama, or art. (At present the AFA is not part of the CAA or ICAA.)

3. **Associate in Science (AS):** A two-year degree that is designed to allow students to transfer to a senior institution. This degree is for students interested in a baccalaureate degree in the areas of science, computer science, mathematics, engineering, and pre-med.

4. **Associate in Applied Science (AAS):** A two-year degree that is not intended for transfer to a senior institution, but many students do transfer through articulation agreements to certain institutions or specific majors. The key is to know your transfer possibilities before you enroll in a program. Students interested in gaining specific skills necessary for the work force should pursue this degree option.

5. **Associate in General Education (AGE):** A two-year degree that is not intended for transfer to a senior institution. Students interested in gaining specific skills necessary for the work force should pursue this degree option.

Helpful Websites

**College Foundation of North Carolina**
CFNC.org
This site provides tools and resources to help you plan, apply, and pay for college in North Carolina, including online applications for college admission and financial aid.

**The North Carolina Community College System**
www.ncccs.cc.nc.us

**North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities**
www.ncicu.org

**The University of North Carolina System**
www.northcarolina.edu

**The Comprehensive Articulation Agreement**
http://caa.northcarolina.edu

Adult Learners

Adult students may have work or family responsibilities and will likely have to commute to attend classes. Many colleges have programs designed specifically for adults and their unique needs. For example, classes may be online or in the evening or on weekends. In addition, classes may be available on a satellite campus or include a combination of face-to-face and distance learning.

To learn more about programs geared toward adult students, download a free copy of “Adult Learner College Information” or “Distance Learning” in Downloadable Resources at CFNC.org. Adult students may also want to contact the admissions office of the college they wish to attend for more information. Visit Adult Learner at CFNC.org for links to adult student programs across the state.
Transfer Checklist

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<th>Task</th>
<th>date due</th>
<th>date completed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contact an academic advisor at your new college</td>
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<td>Submit completed application and pay fees</td>
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<td>Send an essay, if required</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete and submit the FAFSA, if applicable</td>
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<td>Have your financial aid record sent to your new college, if applicable</td>
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<td>Have your transcripts and records transferred to your new college from your current college</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have admission test scores (ACT/SAT) sent to your new college</td>
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<td>Send letters of recommendation</td>
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<td>Complete any outstanding forms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pay any remaining required fees (housing, activities, food, transportation or parking, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Register for classes</td>
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The 24 Independent Colleges and Universities that Endorse the ICAA

- Barton College
- Belmont Abbey College
- Bennett College for Women
- Brevard College
- Campbell University
- Catawba College
- Chowan College
- Gardner-Webb University
- Johnston C. Smith University
- Livingstone College
- Lees-McRae College
- Louisburg College
- Mars Hill College
- Montreat College
- Mount Olive College
- North Carolina Wesleyan College
- Peace College
- Pfeiffer University
- Queens University of Charlotte
- St. Andrews Presbyterian College
- St. Augustine’s College
- Shaw University
- Warren Wilson College
- Wingate University

Contact an academic advisor at your new college
Submit completed application and pay fees
Send an essay, if required
Complete and submit the FAFSA, if applicable
Have your financial aid record sent to your new college, if applicable
Have your transcripts and records transferred to your new college from your current college
Have admission test scores (ACT/SAT) sent to your new college
Send letters of recommendation
Complete any outstanding forms
Pay any remaining required fees (housing, activities, food, transportation or parking, etc.)
Register for classes

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