



## **Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) Frequently Asked Questions for College Personnel**

- **What happened to the MACRAO Agreement?**

Originally signed in 1972, the MACRAO agreement has been used successfully by many students to transfer their general education courses from community colleges to participating four year institutions. In 2012 the Michigan legislature included language in the community college appropriations bill calling for improvement in the transferability of college courses between Michigan colleges and universities by revising the MACRAO Agreement. The Michigan Transfer Agreement has been created in an effort to increase the transferability of lower level general education courses across all of Michigan's public institutions.

- **What is the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA)?**

The Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) was designed to facilitate the transfer of general education requirements from one institution to another. Students may complete the Michigan Transfer Agreement as part of an associate's degree or as a stand-alone package at a Michigan community college.

- **What are the minimum requirements to receive the MTA?**

To fulfill the Michigan Transfer Agreement, students must successfully complete at least 30 credits of coursework in six defined areas with at least a grade of 2.0 in each course.

- **What does it mean by distribution requirement of credits?**

Distribution requirements are a set of categories of academic disciplines from which students select from a list of courses to satisfy the requirements.

- **What are the distributions of credits that must be met for the MTA\*?**

- One course in English Composition
- A second course in English Composition or one course in Communications
- Two courses in Social Sciences (from two disciplines)
- Two courses in Humanities and Fine Arts (from two disciplines excluding studio and performance classes)
- Two courses in Natural Sciences including one with laboratory experience (from two disciplines)
- One course in Mathematics\*\* that should be satisfied by an entry-level college course.

\* Additional coursework may be necessary to satisfy the 30 credit hour requirement.<sup>1</sup>

\*\* A mathematics course should be treated as an entry-level college course; see Math Requirement section that follows this FAQ for a full description.

- **What special consideration should be given to quarter hours?**

Quarter hour based credits must be converted to equal 30 semester credit hours in order to fulfill the MTA, which translates to 46 quarter hours.

- **When will the MTA be available?**

The MTA will take effect for students who begin their studies in the fall 2014 semester. Students who started prior to fall 2014 will be able to complete the existing MACRAO Agreement until the end of the summer 2019.

- **Will students that have already completed the MACRAO agreement be required to complete the MTA?**

No, irrespective of time, if a student already has a “MACRAO Satisfied” endorsement previously placed on their transcript, it is expected that receiving institution will still honor the MACRAO Stamp if it is in the best interest of the individual student.

- **Who determines if students have met the MTA requirements?**

Individual sending institutions determine specific courses to be included in the MTA categories at their institution.

- **What do you mean by sending and receiving institutions?**

The sending institution refers to participating community colleges and the receiving institution refers to four-year colleges and universities that participate in the MTA.

- **How do students get the MTA endorsement on their transcript?**

It is the sending institution's responsibility to develop a process to certify students who have satisfied the requirements of the MTA, which includes prominently displaying "MTA Satisfied" on an official transcript.

- **How many courses must a student complete in order for a sending institution to recognize the completion of the MTA?**

Students are required to complete at least one credit-bearing course at the institution awarding the MTA.

- **What happens if students do not meet the minimum 30 credits required to satisfy the MTA but need to transfer to another college?**

Sending institutions may use credits earned at other institutions toward completion of the MTA requirements, including credit reverse transferred from the receiving institution.

- A student must earn at least one credit-bearing course at the sending institution in order to have "MTA Satisfied" posted on a transcript.
- Students must earn at least a grade of 2.0 in each MTA course in order for it to count towards the minimum MTA requirements.

- **Are students required to complete an associate's degree in order to satisfy the MTA?**

Students are not required to complete an associate's degree in order to satisfy the MTA and likewise, students who have completed an associate's degree should be allowed to return later to complete the MTA.

- **Do students need to be enrolled at the sending institution in order to earn the MTA?**

No. Students should not be required to be enrolled at a sending institution during the semester they request an MTA evaluation.

- **How will the receiving institution know that a student has completed the MTA?**

The sending institution will include the phrase “MTA Satisfied” on the official transcript.

- **Does it make sense for all students to complete the MTA at a sending institution?**

Some academic programs may have general education requirements that are comprised of mostly math and science courses. In those cases, students should work with their academic advisors at their sending institutions in order to determine whether the MTA is appropriate for their educational needs.

- **Will community colleges include courses they have transferred in from institutions that are not regionally accredited institutions?**

Community colleges will follow their own transfer policies to determine which courses can be transferred into their college and used to satisfy the MTA. The exception to this rule would be any policies allowing transfer credit for coursework in which a grade lower than a “C” was earned. Coursework must be earned with a grade of C (2.0) or higher in order to be utilized for the MTA.

- **What should institutions do with transcripts on which a student has earned a ‘C-’, but the sending institution has given them two grade points?**

If a sending institution has included a course like this in a student’s satisfied MTA, it is understood that the institution recognizes this course as a 2.0

- **What if a student placed out of a college level math class?**

If a student passed a college level math placement exam, he/she would be responsible for taking a math course that is the next level up. For example, if a student placed out of Intermediate Algebra and College Algebra was the next level math course, he/she would take College Algebra to meet the MTA math requirement. This does NOT apply for students who received a passing score on the AP or CLEP exam for which college credit is granted and may be applied to the 30-credit block.

- **What are occupational (vocational) courses? Will they count towards satisfying any of the MTA distribution requirements?**

Occupational (vocational) courses are those classes devoted to educating based on occupation or employment in preparing students for specific trades, crafts, and careers. These courses typically teach job-specific skills and training that are not generally accepted as part of a liberal arts education. Examples of occupational courses include office administration, apprenticeships, etc. Occupational courses cannot be considered in fulfilling MTA distribution requirements.

- **What are career specific courses? Will they count towards satisfying any of the MTA distribution requirements?**

Courses geared towards a specific career, and uses it in the title, are career specific courses. They are to be treated as occupational courses and they cannot be applied towards the MTA. Examples of career specific courses include Math for Teachers, Science for Teachers, etc.

- **What are studio and performing arts courses? Will they count towards satisfying any of the MTA distribution requirements?**

Studio and performing arts courses cannot be considered in fulfilling MTA distribution requirements. Studio and performing arts courses are applied and pragmatic in nature, as opposed to lecture-based courses devoted to a broad survey of the arts designed to sensitize students to the variety of art forms and their importance in contemporary civilization. Examples of studio and performing arts courses include drawing, sculpture, acting, etc. Studio and performing arts courses cannot be considered in fulfilling MTA distribution requirements.

- **Can a student choose to participate in the MTA if he/she started his/her post-secondary education before fall 2014?**

Yes. Students that started at a sending institution before fall 2014 may elect to pursue the MTA. Students are encouraged to work with an advisor in order to determine which agreement is the best fit for them.

- **How long does a student have to finish the MACRAO Transfer Agreement if he/she started prior to fall 2014?**

Students who started prior to fall 2014 will be able to complete the existing MACRAO Transfer Agreement until the end of summer 2019. Students are encouraged to work with an advisor in order to determine which agreement is the best fit for them.

- **Is it possible for a student to double count a speech course as satisfying both the second composition/communications course and as one of the two courses required for humanities?**

The intent of the MTA is for a student to complete a separate course in each of the categories. If a student elects to take a communications course for their composition/communication category, they must complete two additional humanities courses to satisfy the MTA.

- **If a student is required to complete intermediate algebra as a prerequisite to their MTA mathematics course, can the credit hours earned in the intermediate algebra courses count in the 30 required for the completion of the MTA?**

No. All coursework included in a student's MTA must be college level.

- **Are out of state transfer courses applicable to the MTA?**

It is very likely that out of state coursework may be applicable to the MTA. Students are encouraged to work with their sending institutions in order to determine whether any out of state transfer coursework is applicable.

- **Are dual enrollment credits applicable to the MTA?**

Yes, dual enrollment courses may satisfy the MTA as determined by the sending institution.

- **Are prior learning credits applicable to the MTA?**

Advanced Placement (AP) credit is applicable towards the MTA when deemed appropriate by the sending institution; however, the receiving institution may determine transferability contingent upon its current AP acceptance policy. It is incumbent upon sending institutions to advise transferring students accordingly. Additional areas of prior learning are not applicable to the MTA at this time (e.g., International Baccalaureate-IB, College-Level Examination Program-CLEP, DANTES Subject Standardized Test-DSST, etc.).

- **Is my institution required to be both an MTA sending AND receiving institution?**

No, institutions are encouraged to be both a sending and receiving institution, but it is not mandatory.

**The above list of questions is not meant to be exhaustive. Should you have a question that is not listed on this FAQ, please contact MTA Support at [michigantransferagreement@gmail.com](mailto:michigantransferagreement@gmail.com).**

## FAQ Addendum: Math Requirement

A select number of mathematics faculty from two-year and four-year institutions were appointed to a special task force to define the MTA math requirement. The Math Task Force devised three math pathways that satisfy the MTA math requirement:

### College Algebra Pathway - For students proceeding to programs that specifically require background in algebra, particularly STEM programs.

#### *Statement on Prerequisites:*

- For success in the College Algebra Pathway a college level course has a prerequisite skill level of intermediate algebra or high school algebra II or equivalent content. Students will be expected to apply advanced algebra skills.
- This course must be beyond Intermediate Algebra.

#### *Topics/content that should be a part of a course in this pathway:*

- Functions, polynomials (including polynomials of degree greater than 2 and the fundamental theorem of algebra), rational functions, logarithms, exponential functions, inverse functions, and graphing by recognition and transformation rather than by plotting points. Pre-calculus topics such as sequences and series may also be included.

#### *Descriptors to consider for this pathway:*

- This course (possibly in conjunction with a separate course on trigonometry) would qualify a student to take a calculus course
- This course should be one that your mathematically capable student would start with after completing high school Algebra I and II
- This course should provide a strong foundation for critical mathematical thinking
- Many students in this pathway will have additional math courses required for their program; if a college-algebra-type course is a prerequisite for that course, students who are ready to begin with that course might be able to use it for meeting the math requirement.

#### *Guidelines from the Mathematics Association of America:*

- College Algebra provides students a college-level academic experience that emphasizes the use of algebra and functions in problem solving and modeling, provides a foundation in quantitative literacy, supplies the algebra and other mathematics needed in partner disciplines, and helps meet quantitative needs in, and outside of, academia. Students address problems presented as real world situations by creating and interpreting mathematical models. Solutions to the problems are formulated, validated, and analyzed using mental, paper and pencil, algebraic, and technology-based techniques as appropriate.
- Link: <http://www.maa.org/sites/default/files/pdf/CUPM/crafty/CRAFTY-Coll-Alg-Guidelines.pdf>

**Statistics Pathway - For students proceeding to programs in business or social sciences.**

*Statement on Prerequisites:*

- The Statistics Pathway will satisfy the MTA requirements for general education.
- For success in the Statistics Pathway a college level course has a prerequisite skill level of at least beginning algebra or high school algebra I or equivalent content. Students will be expected to apply basic algebra skills.

*Topics/content that should be a part of a course in this pathway:*

- Probability, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics, including hypothesis testing, p-values, confidence intervals, and linear regression. The course should incorporate both formula-based and technology-based approaches to statistics.

*Descriptors to consider for this pathway:*

- This course must go beyond descriptive statistics
- The course can be algebra-based or calculus-based
- The course must be taught and organized by the Math (or Statistics) department or be cross-listed as a Math (or Statistics) course
- The course should be conceptually driven from a Math perspective

*Guidelines from the American Statistical Association:*

- The best thinking about introductory statistics courses is that students should focus on statistical thinking. The Guidelines list goals of the statistics course, which form the minimum expectations for an MTA statistics course.
- Link: [http://www.amstat.org/education/gaise/GAISECollege\\_Goals.pdf](http://www.amstat.org/education/gaise/GAISECollege_Goals.pdf)

## **Quantitative Reasoning Pathway - For students proceeding to programs not requiring statistics or calculus.**

### *Statement on Prerequisites:*

- The Quantitative Reasoning Pathway will satisfy the MTA requirements for general education.
- For success in the Quantitative Reasoning Pathway a college level course has a prerequisite skill level of at least beginning algebra or high school algebra I or equivalent content. Students will be expected to apply basic algebra skills.

### *Topics/content that should be a part of a course in this pathway:*

- Mathematical modeling and the use of reasoning to choose between competing models
- Numeric, symbolic, and graphical methods to handle a variety of applications
- Topics could include but are not limited to number sense and estimation, linear and non-linear models, financial models, symbolic logic, networks and graphs, probability and counting, statistical reasoning, voting theory, geometric models, similarity and scaling, and game theory

### *Descriptors to consider for this pathway:*

- Building on the Kentucky guidelines articulated below, this course should help students communicate mathematical and/or statistical information symbolically, visually, and/or numerically.
- This course should also help students communicate a quantitative argument in writing.

### *Guidelines borrowed from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education:*

- The General Education Transfer Policy and Implementation Guidelines for Quantitative Reasoning (page 11):
  - ✓ Interpret information presented in mathematical and/or statistical forms.
  - ✓ Illustrate and communicate mathematical and/or statistical information symbolically, visually, and/or numerically.
  - ✓ Determine when computations are needed and to execute the appropriate computations.
  - ✓ Apply an appropriate model to the problem to be solved
  - ✓ Make inferences, evaluate assumptions, and assess limitations in estimation modeling and/or statistical analysis.
- Link: [http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6D7A8159-16D8-4810-A0B6-3D8161157D73/0/Revised\\_GE\\_Transfer\\_PolicyImp\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://cpe.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6D7A8159-16D8-4810-A0B6-3D8161157D73/0/Revised_GE_Transfer_PolicyImp_Guidelines.pdf)