



**Faculty Council of Community Colleges
Upper Division Definition
AAC2. 2022-2023
Passed by the FCCC
October 15, 2022**

WHEREAS the State University of New York (SUNY) mission “promotes appropriate program articulation between its state-operated institutions and its community colleges as well as encourages regional networks and cooperative relationships with other educational and cultural institutions for the purpose of better fulfilling its mission of education, research, and service,” and

WHEREAS the transfer of credits across state institutions is foundational to study at community colleges, and

WHEREAS the transferability of courses from community colleges to baccalaureate colleges within SUNY is often determined more by course numbering than by course content, and

WHEREAS the course numbering systems used by SUNY campuses are both arbitrary and inconsistent resulting in the rejection of transferable courses for students upon credit evaluation, hampering their ability to complete their degree in a timely fashion, and

WHEREAS the courses offered at community colleges are equivalent in substantial measure to courses offered at the lower division of the baccalaureate level, and

WHEREAS faculty teaching at community colleges are professionally qualified and uphold current standards in their fields, and

WHEREAS current practice currently allows some institutions to reject transfer credits based upon the numbering of a course rather than the content of the course itself, and

WHEREAS current practice impairs the efficacy of community college programs, which particularly has a detrimental effect on first-generation and disadvantaged students, and

WHEREAS opportunities for student careers are affected by these transferability issues, thus reducing the size and diversity of the pool of candidates available to the workforce, and

WHEREAS community colleges and four-year institutions are not meant to compete with each other, and

WHEREAS an equitable transfer of credits for courses with parallel learning outcomes is necessary to maintain the robustness of our community college programs, and

WHEREAS this policy has been addressed and reaffirmed at the system level in 1972, 1980, 1987, 1990, 2003, and 2013, and

WHEREAS students continue to face barriers when transferring to the baccalaureate level within SUNY, leading to repeated coursework and incurring further expenses, and

WHEREAS SUNY Board of Trustees transfer policy has been mandated since November 1972 in a Memorandum to Presidents that baccalaureate campuses will work with community colleges to give students a timely path to degree completion, and

WHEREAS this policy, which has been in place for five decades, assures “equal recognition at the junior year level for all students,” therefore, be it

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Council of Community Colleges calls on Provost in Charge Sandvik to organize a collaborative workgroup that includes representatives designated by the University Faculty Senate, Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and SUNY Registrars Association, and

RESOLVED that said workgroup be charged with establishing a definition of upper and lower division— independent of course number, and

RESOLVED that said workgroup be charged with establishing a definition of upper and lower division courses, which depends upon course content and outcomes.

Memos to the President regarding transferability:

1. [1973](#)

2. [1980](#)
3. [1987](#)
4. [1990](#)
5. [2003](#)
6. [2013](#)