

House Bill 176

By: Representatives Casas of the 103rd, Coleman of the 97th, Hembree of the 67th, Davis of the 109th, Nix of the 69th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions for education, so as to enact the "Credit Articulation
3 Agreements Act" to provide for state-wide degree transfer agreements between state
4 institutions of higher education; to provide for definitions; to provide for certain
5 requirements; to provide for timelines; to provide for statutory construction; to provide for
6 related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

8 **SECTION 1.**

9 Article 1 of Chapter 1 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
10 general provisions for education, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as
11 follows:

12 "20-1-11.

13 (a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the 'Credit Articulation
14 Agreements Act.'

15 (b) As used in this Code section, the term:

16 (1) 'Native student' means a student who begins and completes an undergraduate degree
17 program at a single state institution of higher education.

18 (2) 'State institution of higher education' means:

19 (A) A unit of the University System of Georgia; and

20 (B) A branch of the Technical College System of Georgia.

21 (3) 'State-wide degree transfer agreement' means an agreement among all of the state
22 institutions of higher education for the transfer of an associate of arts or an associate of
23 science degree. A state-wide degree transfer agreement applies to common degree
24 programs and specifies the common terms, conditions, and expectations for students
25 enrolled in state-wide degree transfer programs.

26 (c) The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and the Board of Technical
27 and Adult Education shall establish, after consultation with the governing boards of their
28 respective institutions, and enforce state-wide degree transfer agreements between two-year
29 and four-year state institutions of higher education among four-year state institutions of
30 higher education. Governing boards and state institutions of higher education shall
31 implement the state-wide degree transfer agreements and policies relating to such
32 agreements. The agreements shall include provisions under which state institutions of
33 higher education shall accept all credit hours of acceptable course work for automatic
34 transfer from an associate of science degree program in another state institution of higher
35 education.

36 (d)(1) A student who completes an associate of arts or associate of science degree that
37 is the subject of a state-wide degree transfer agreement and who transfers from the state
38 institution of higher education that awarded the degree to a four-year state institution of
39 higher education shall, if admitted, be enrolled with junior status. Successful completion
40 of an associate of arts or associate of science degree does not guarantee the degree holder
41 admission to a four-year state institution of higher education.

42 (2) A state institution of higher education that admits as a junior a student who holds an
43 associate of arts degree or associate of science degree that is the subject of a state-wide
44 degree transfer agreement may not require the student to complete any additional credit
45 hours of lower-division general education courses; provided, however, that the institution
46 may require the student to complete additional lower-division general education courses
47 if necessary for preparation in the degree program in which the student enrolls so long
48 as the additional courses are consistent with published degree program requirements for
49 native students and do not extend the time to degree completion beyond that required for
50 native students in the same degree program.

51 (e)(1) Beginning July 1, 2011, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia
52 and the Board of Technical and Adult Education shall negotiate state-wide degree transfer
53 agreements and ensure that there are at least four such agreements in place no later than
54 July 1, 2013, and that by July 1, 2017, there are a total of at least 14 such agreements in
55 effect.

56 (2) The governing boards of the state institutions of higher education shall recommend
57 degree programs that would be the most appropriate for state-wide degree transfer
58 agreements based on student demand and the workforce needs of the state.

59 (f)(1) The existence of state-wide degree transfer agreements shall not preclude or
60 restrict a state institution of higher education from awarding nontransfer associate of arts
61 or associate of science degrees, applied associate degrees, or general liberal arts associate
62 of arts or associate of science degrees.

63 (2) Nothing in this Code section shall be construed to:

64 (A) Prevent or otherwise interfere with the ability of a state institution of higher
65 education to fulfill its statutory role and mission;

66 (B) Prohibit one or more state institutions of higher education from entering into
67 memoranda of understanding for the transfer of degrees among the degree institutions;

68 or

69 (C) Impair any memoranda of understanding between or among institutions of higher
70 education in effect prior to July 1, 2011."

71 **SECTION 2.**

72 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.