



# Operating Standard

**Title:** General Education

**Number:** A2000.40

**Type:** Administrative

**Responsible:** VPAA; CAO

**Related Policies:** A2000, A2100

**Linked Operating Standards:** [A2000.00](#), [A2000.05](#), [A2000.30](#), [A2000.35](#), A2000.45, A2000.50, A2000.55, A2000.60, [A2100.00](#), [A2100.05](#), A2100.10, A2100.20, [A2100.40](#), [A2100.55](#), [A2100.60](#)

**Related Laws:**

**Related External Standards:** [ICCB 1501.301](#); [1501.309](#); [Illinois Articulation Initiative](#)

**HLC Criterion:** 3B, 4A, 4B

## Statement

Shawnee Community College is committed to providing high-quality general education transfer programming ([B1003 Transfer Programming](#)) that prepares students for the first two years of a baccalaureate education. The College recognizes that students benefit most when courses and degrees align with the major requirements of upper-division institutions, ensuring a seamless transfer experience, minimizing excess credits, time, and financial burden. This operating standard establishes guidelines for curriculum development, student advisement, and articulation agreements to optimize general education for students.

## Definitions

**General Education Courses and Programs** are essential for understanding how curriculum, transfer agreements, and statewide initiatives support student success. Together, the General Education Core Certificate (GECC), the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), and definitions from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) create a framework for seamless transfer. These elements help students navigate academic pathways efficiently, minimize credit loss, and align coursework with four-year degree requirements.

General Education is defined by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) as transfer instruction, or coursework intended to prepare individuals for transfer into baccalaureate curriculum; programs and courses associated with the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science:

PCS Code	CIP Codes
1.1	01.xxxx, 03.xxxx-05.xxxx, 09.xxxx, 11.xxxx, 13.xxxx-14.xxxx, 16.xxxx, 19.xxxx, 22.0001 (Curriculum CIP only), 23.xxxx-24.xxxx, 26.xxxx- 28.xxxx, 30.xxxx-31.xxxx, 36.0108, 38.xxxx, 40.xxxx, 42.xxxx-45.xxxx, 50.xxxx, 51.xxxx, 52.xxxx, 54.01xx

The **Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI)** is a statewide transfer agreement, which is transferable among more than 100 participating colleges and universities in Illinois. IAI also includes major recommendations for the first two years of college in several popular majors. IAI is designed for students who know they are going to transfer but are undecided on the college or university that will grant their baccalaureate degree.

The **General Education Core Certificate (GECC)** is the “package” of IAI general education courses at SCC that all colleges and universities participating in the IAI agree to accept in lieu of their own comparable lower-division general education requirements. This certificate transfers to the participating universities as a package, and course-to-course transfer credit is not guaranteed beyond the IAI package.

## **Guidelines**

**Curriculum and Course Development:** To support continuous improvement, student learning outcomes are embedded into general education courses. [Assessment](#) of these outcomes is conducted through institutional reporting, and results are used to inform curriculum updates. This assessment cycle, including annual monitoring and five-year [ICCB program reviews](#), ensures that student achievement informs changes in pedagogy and course design.

As detailed in A2100.00 Curriculum Development and A2100.20 Course Development, the College will:

- design general education courses in alignment with the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) transfer course requirements and the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) to maximize transferability
- offer a General Education Core Certificate (GECC) aligned with the IAI for students who plan to transfer to complete their baccalaureate degree
- maintain clear pathways that outline how courses apply toward specific university majors
- periodically review general education courses and the GECC to ensure they align with evolving university requirements and meet ICCB/IAI standards through an annual *B1002 Transfer Programming* monitoring report
- conduct an ICCB Program Review every five years for transfer disciplines, according to [A2100.60 Academic Program/Services Review](#)

**Articulation Agreements and Transfer Assurance:** Articulation agreements and transfer assurance play a crucial role in creating seamless pathways for students transitioning from community colleges to four-year institutions. These agreements are formalized partnerships between Shawnee Community College and regional universities that ensure the transfer of credits and alignment of academic programs. General education courses form the foundation of these agreements, as they are often the first two years of coursework required for a baccalaureate degree. Ensuring that SCC’s general education curriculum aligns with statewide transfer standards allows students to carry these credits with them, regardless of their transfer destination.

As detailed in [A2100.55 Articulation Operating Standard](#), the College will:

- establish and maintain articulation agreements with regional universities to facilitate smooth credit transfers
- review and update agreements regularly to reflect curricular changes at both the College and transfer institutions
- review and update IAI course articulation according to the review schedule provided by the IAI board
- communicate with transfer institutions to ensure major-specific course acceptance whenever possible

**Student Advisement and Transfer Planning:** The College recognizes the role of general education in promoting equity. To support underserved and first-generation students, the curriculum incorporates inclusive teaching practices and high-impact educational experiences such as writing-intensive courses, research opportunities, and first-year seminars. These practices enhance student engagement, retention, and long-term success.

To ensure a seamless transfer experience and minimizing excess credits, the College will:

- provide students with transfer planning resources, including degree maps that outline required courses for specific four-year institutions
- maintain an up-to-date webpage listing articulation agreements, transfer guides, and course equivalencies
- maintain a current college catalog, explicitly indicating the courses and programs that are transfer, including IAI codes for complete transparency
- encourage students to meet with advisors each semester to ensure they are on track for a successful transfer
- provide access to university representatives for transfer advising sessions
- notify students of any changes in transferability that may affect their academic plan

## **Accountability & Oversight**

Accountability and oversight of the general education courses and programs require collaboration between the Academic and Student Affairs divisions.

- **The Vice President of Academic Affairs** will oversee transfer programming and articulation agreement compliance.
- **Academic Deans** will ensure program alignment with transfer standards and oversee faculty review of transfer courses.
- **The Registrar** will manage articulation agreements and coordinate student notifications regarding transfer policies.
- **Advisors** will support students by providing transfer planning resources and individualized guidance.

<b>Change Log</b>		<b>Governance Unit: Acad Affairs Council</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>	
3.27.25	Initial Adoption	