JOINT ADMISSIONS AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
2006

BACKGROUND

This revised Joint Admissions Agreement between the Massachusetts Community Colleges and the University of Massachusetts updates and strengthens the procedures within the original agreement which was adopted in 1995 and implemented in the fall term of 1996. This revised agreement allows for increased student participation in Joint Admissions, streamlines information sharing among participating institutions, and incorporates the amendment process into the main body of the text.

Recognizing the importance of a strong coordinated system of higher education to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and to the students within the Commonwealth, the Joint Admissions Agreement seeks, consistent with the individual missions, policies and regulations of the participating institutions to:

- Strengthen the academic and student support partnership between the University of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Community Colleges.
- Facilitate student access to further public higher education in the Commonwealth.
- Provide barrier-free movement from the associate degree to the baccalaureate degree for students enrolled in public higher education within the Commonwealth.
- Enhance the benefits of the Commonwealth Transfer Compact\(^1\) as well as existing articulation agreements.

In order to achieve these goals, the following Agreement is entered into by the fifteen Massachusetts Community Colleges and the Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth and Lowell campuses of the University of Massachusetts.

I. Guarantees and Conditions of Joint Admissions

Joint Admissions is intended to facilitate the transfer of eligible students from Massachusetts Community Colleges to the University upon completion of their associate's degree programs and satisfaction of other applicable conditions required under the Joint Admissions Agreement. Students who enroll at a Massachusetts Community College in an approved joint admissions associate's degree program are conditionally accepted by the University campus with which there is an agreement.

In order to satisfy the conditions of admission into the University campus, participating students must earn a minimum 2.5 cumulative grade point average (based on a 4.0 scale) and an associate's degree in an approved joint admissions associate degree program.

Students who satisfy the requirements of the Joint Admissions Agreement will receive the following guarantees:

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\(^1\) The Commonwealth Transfer Compact directs that a minimum of 60 credits earned by students who fulfill the Compact's requirements be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution. The Compact does not guarantee admission. Please refer to the Commonwealth Transfer Compact for further information at www.mass.edu.
A. Joint Admissions students are guaranteed admission to the University of Massachusetts campus, and individual school or college, provided they complete an approved joint admissions associate's degree program and meet the requirements of the Joint Admissions Agreement.

B. Joint Admissions students are treated without disadvantage at the University campuses with respect to access to specific majors, registration for courses, applicability of "D" grades, assignment to Junior status, and degree program requirements. Students who wish to be admitted to a major that requires specific courses or grades must meet those requirements.

Although a goal of the Joint Admissions Agreement is to maximize the transfer of credits through appropriate advising and identification of approved joint admissions associate's degree programs, participation does not guarantee, in and of itself, that all course credits earned at a participating Community College will be accepted for transfer by the University. However, students who satisfy the requirements of the Joint Admissions Agreement and the Commonwealth Transfer Compact will additionally receive the following guarantee:

C. Students fulfilling the requirements of both the Joint Admissions Agreement and the Commonwealth Transfer Compact are guaranteed Junior status and a minimum of 60 transfer credits, including "D" grades, applied to their degree requirements at the University. If a student enrolls in a comparable University degree program and does not subsequently change her/his program, she/he will be required to complete no more than 68 additional credits toward the baccalaureate degree requirements, unless the combination of unfulfilled general education requirements, if any, and the unfulfilled requirements of the student's major at the University total more than 68 credits.

Further, Joint Admissions students may receive certain guarantees concerning the transfer of credits if they participate in and satisfy the requirements of certain articulation agreements that provide independent course credit guarantees.

II. Information Sharing

The participating institutions agree to share information about participating students as set forth in this Section, to the extent permissible under appropriate statutes, regulations and institutional policies regarding confidentiality of student records. This exchange of information allows institutions to provide students with the broadest range of academic choices and support services, thereby creating an environment conducive to academic success.

A. To the extent permissible under applicable law, the Massachusetts Community Colleges agree to provide upon request the University with directory information, as defined by the respective Community College, such as names, addresses, and majors for participating Joint Admissions students enrolled on their campuses.

B. To the extent permissible under applicable law, the University campuses agree to provide non-identifying student information on Joint Admissions such as graduation and retention rates, grade point averages, and academic majors and degree programs upon request from the Community Colleges. Any release of such information shall not, directly or indirectly, transmit personally identifying information about any student who has not granted permission for participating institutions to share such information.

C. Each University campus agrees to provide applicants not offered University admission with information on Joint Admissions if, based on guidelines developed by the Joint Admissions Steering Committee, the applicant is potentially suitable for participation in the Joint Admissions program. The University campuses will provide the appropriate Community College(s) with names and addresses of all such applicants who grant permission for the release of this information.
D. In order to encourage students who are academically suspended, or who otherwise leave the University while not in good academic standing, to consider educational opportunities at the Community Colleges, the University campuses agree to undertake reasonable efforts to provide participating Community Colleges with the names, addresses and other pertinent academic records of such students who grant permission for the release of this information.

III. Advising and Communicating with Students

The Joint Admissions Agreement emphasizes collaborative communication with participating students and jointly supported advisement of students who will be enrolling in a baccalaureate degree program through Joint Admissions.

A. Program advising materials listing courses to be completed at the Community College and subsequently at the University campus, will be available on both Community College and University campuses and will be distributed appropriately to advisors and participating students. Each University campus and participating Community College agrees to use its best effort to provide participating Community Colleges and University campuses, respectively, with prompt notifications of changes in programs and curricula.

B. University registration/enrollment information sessions for Joint Admissions students will be offered on each participating Community College campus.

C. The University campuses agree to provide to students completing the requirements of the Joint Admissions Agreement the opportunity for pre-registration along with current University students.

IV. Implementation and Oversight of the Agreement

The implementation and oversight of this Agreement will be provided by a Joint Admissions Steering Committee composed of a representative from each participating University campus, appointed by its Chancellor, and from each participating Community College, appointed by its President; a representative each from the University of Massachusetts President's office and the Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office; and a representative from the office of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.

The Joint Admissions Steering Committee will monitor, evaluate and, when necessary, modify the administration of the Joint Admissions Agreement. To do this, the Committee should implement guidelines that are consistent across the system to address such issues as:

- system-wide marketing and publications
- advising and enrollment processes, including pre-registration
- procedural timelines
- exchange of information between institutions
- evaluation and assessment of the program
- curriculum development
- agreement amendment procedures
- inventory of existing articulation agreements

The Joint Admissions Steering Committee will provide policy recommendations to the University of Massachusetts President's Office and the Community Colleges Executive Office.

The Joint Admissions Steering Committee may create subcommittees, as appropriate, with a minimum of two standing subcommittees: A Subcommittee for Appeals and a Subcommittee on Curriculum Development and Exchange. Membership on the subcommittees may be taken from
outside the membership of the Steering Committee. The Chancellors and Presidents will be consulted regarding appointments to these subcommittees.

The Subcommittee for Appeals will hear inter-institutional and student disputes relating to the Joint Admissions Agreement, and will recommend non-binding resolutions to the affected institutions. This Subcommittee will consist of eight members (four from the Community Colleges, to be appointed by the Community Colleges Executive Office, and one from each undergraduate UMASS campus, to be appointed by the University President’s Office in consultation with the campuses). Appointments to this committee will be for a two-year period, established on a rotational basis. No member may participate in a decision involving his/her own institution. The Subcommittee for Appeals shall meet at times jointly designated by the University President’s Office and the Community Colleges Executive Office.

In the event of irreconcilable differences that lead any campus to withdraw from this Joint Admissions Agreement, no student who has been accepted to an institution under this Agreement shall be prejudiced thereby.

The Subcommittee on Curriculum Development and Exchange will address such issues as strengthening the coordination of curriculum, developing opportunities for faculty and staff exchanges and collaboration, considering the impact of curriculum changes on the movement of students from Community Colleges to the University, and sharing information about curriculum changes.

V. Further Understandings

A. Notwithstanding any provision of this Agreement, Joint Admissions does not:

1. Preclude Community Colleges or the University campuses from entering into similar agreements with other institutions of higher education.

2. Replace, alter or abrogate other existing articulation agreements.

3. Prevent the University from admitting Community College students through existing admission processes.

4. Limit the University from eliminating a school, department or degree program.

5. Waive any program requirements.

6. Ensure eligibility for Federal, State, or institutional financial assistance.

7. Provide any guarantees or representations regarding tuition rates or fees at the University of Massachusetts or the Massachusetts Community Colleges.

B. A student currently matriculated in an approved joint admissions associate’s degree program at a Community College who was formerly matriculated—whether on a full-time or part-time basis—at a University campus is ineligible to participate in joint admissions with the same University campus. Such students may explore other applicable transfer options at that campus and may participate in Joint Admissions with other University campuses or State Colleges.

C. A student matriculated in an approved joint admissions baccalaureate degree program at a University campus who subsequently transfers to another higher education institution or another University campus shall not be allowed to continue participating in the Joint Admissions program and shall not receive any guarantees under the Joint Admissions program.
VI. Process to Amend the Joint Admissions Agreement

Community College Process

All proposed amendments to the Joint Admissions Agreement between the Community Colleges and the University of Massachusetts will first be deliberated by the Joint Admissions Steering Committee. They will then make recommendations as to the form and content of a suggested amendment to the Joint Admissions Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will consist of a representative from the Community Colleges' Executive Office, the University of Massachusetts' President's Office, the Steering Committee co-chair from the Community Colleges, the Steering Committee co-chair from the University of Massachusetts, and a staff representative from the Board of Higher Education. The Executive Committee will have sole authority for voting on whether to amend the agreement.

University of Massachusetts Process

All proposed amendments to the Joint Admissions Agreement between the Community Colleges and the University of Massachusetts will first be deliberated by the Joint Admissions Steering Committee. They will then make recommendations as to the form and content of a suggested amendment to the Joint Admissions Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will consist of a representative from the Community Colleges' Executive Office, the University of Massachusetts' President's Office, the Steering Committee co-chair from the Community Colleges, the Steering Committee co-chair from the University of Massachusetts, and a staff representative from the Board of Higher Education. The Executive Committee will then make recommendations as to form and content of a suggested amendment to the President of the University, who shall then have sole authority for voting on whether to amend the agreement.