

Policies and Procedures Manual Illinois Articulation Initiative

**Illinois Board of Higher Education
Illinois Community College Board**

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I. Introduction to IAI

In January of 1993, the IBHE, the ICCB, and transfer coordinators from Illinois colleges and universities jointly launched the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) to ease the transfer of students among Illinois public and independent, associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. The IAI grew out of the IBHE's 1990 undergraduate education policies on transfer and articulation. Three key concepts in these policies provided the underlying foundation for IAI: (1) that "associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions are equal partners" in educating college freshmen and sophomores, (2) that "faculties should take primary responsibility for developing and maintaining program and course articulation," and (3) that "institutions are expected to work together to assure that lower-division baccalaureate programs are comparable in scope, quality, and academic rigor."

The IAI has developed in phases. The first phase developed a general education package, the General Education Core Curriculum (GECC), that, as part of a completed transferable associates degree, "would be acceptable in transfer at all IAI participating institutions in lieu of each college or university's own campus-wide *lower division* general education curriculum of comparable size." Since the GECC was transferred as a package replacing the native general education requirements, it did not guarantee the articulation of individual courses, credits, or degree, program, or institutional requirements beyond campus-wide lower division general education requirements from the sending institution to the receiving institution. Such course, credit, or requirement articulation is to remain at the discretion of the receiving institution.

The IAI GECC is not intended to replace a college or university's native general education curriculum, but rather to provide transferring students with a guaranteed pathway among institutions. IAI provides one clear pathway for a large number of Illinois transfer students, while still protecting the distinctive qualities and missions of Illinois colleges and universities.

The second phase expanded the project to create models for easing transfer into baccalaureate major programs. Major panels were established with the intent of providing general advice to students who had decided upon a field of study but not upon a baccalaureate institution. Panels were to develop recommendations for lower division coursework, either within the GECC or among electives, that would best prepare the student to transfer into that major in a baccalaureate program. Recommendations were to include courses a transfer student would need in order to be admitted to a receiving institution with Junior status, courses among the GECC package options that should be elected by the student to meet the prerequisite or foundational demands of the major, major or related discipline courses that a native student would normally take in the first two years of study, and additional information a student should know in order to prepare for transfer (e.g. GPA, entry exam, portfolio or other requirements).

The third phase instituted a process of regular five-year reviews designed to evaluate the efficacy of the panels' recommendations. The five-year review process for all panels is to include a review of the core competencies, standards, and outcomes recommended by the panels. For the GECC panels, the review should also include a review of the objective outcomes by which the panels approve courses for inclusion in the GECC package and a general review of institutional offerings to evaluate alignment of current course offerings with the course descriptions provided by the institution for approval.

The fourth phase included a comprehensive evaluation of the IAI processes, procedures, and goals and the roles of the individual components, and recommendations for adjustment of

these. The current processes and procedures reflect changes adopted by the IBHE in April of 2006 and the ICCB in May of 2006 following this fourth phase.

II. Organizational Components

The coordinating boards and their staffs; participating colleges and universities, including their faculties, administrators, and academic leadership, and the IAI panels and committees have responsibilities related to the initiative. These stakeholders act as members of one or more of the individual components. The components are:

1. The Coordinating Boards and their staff representatives
2. The Steering Panel
3. The Implementation Advisory Council
4. The General Education Core Curriculum Panels
5. The Major Panels
6. The Website Staff

II.a. Roles of Individual Components

II.a.i. ICCB and IBHE and their Staff representatives

The IBHE and ICCB and their staffs should:

1. Coordinate statewide efforts to serve students who transfer among Illinois institutions by developing policies on transfer and articulation in consultation with public and independent colleges and universities and coordinate and support the implementation of these policies;
2. Conduct orientation sessions for all new IAI panel and committee members so they are clear about their roles and responsibilities;
3. Provide adequate staff support and facilitate communications among members of faculty panels, advisor groups, and individual colleges and universities;
4. Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of transfer and articulation policies, identify issues that need to be addressed, and seek input from advisory committees in resolving problems and concerns;
5. Provide information about transfer and articulation efforts to governmental leaders and the general public as appropriate;
6. Support transfer and articulation initiatives in budget development, program approvals, and grant administration;
7. Screen courses submitted by colleges and universities using the objective criteria established by the panels before posting to electronic review platform for review by the GECC panel members.
8. Direct and coordinate the activities of the Website Staff for www.iTransfer.org.

II.a.ii. Steering Panel

The IAI Steering Panel will:

1. Serve as a forum for discussion of issues related to the initiative;
2. Arbitrate any disputes between or among panels or institutions related to the initiative;
3. Coordinate the activities of the GECC and Major Panels and the Implementation Advisory Council;

4. Implement IAI policies and recommendations set or raised by the coordinating boards;
5. Advise the IBHE and ICCB on emergent issues related to the initiative and any issues or concerns raised by the coordinating boards and the IAI panels.

II.a.iii. GECC Panels

The roles and responsibilities of the GECC Panels are:

1. Provide a forum for faculty from participating institutions to guide the transferable General Education Core Curriculum, to develop common understandings about general education objectives and curriculum content, and to monitor changes and developments in the disciplines;
2. Develop the general content guidelines and learning objectives for courses to be included as options within the GECC package at a specific institution. Content guidelines and learning objectives should identify the essential concepts, objectives and competencies to meet the minimum standards for courses in the specific area.
3. Articulate the rationale for the content guidelines and learning objectives for courses to meet the GECC requirements in this discipline area to faculty in this field and administrators at all Illinois colleges and universities.
4. Conduct the final review of courses to determine if they meet the IAI guidelines and learning objectives for inclusion in the GECC discipline area.

II.a.iv. Major Panels

The roles and responsibilities of the Major Panels are:

1. Provide a forum for faculty and administrators from public and independent colleges and universities to develop common understandings about the lower-division objectives and curriculum content in the discipline and to monitor changes and developments in the discipline that may affect a student's preparation for upper division work.
2. Develop course, content, or learning objective recommendations for students who have chosen a major but have not decided upon a baccalaureate institution. Such recommendations should be designed to provide the undecided student with an appropriate lower-division preparation for upper-division studies at likely baccalaureate institutions.
3. Consider national or statewide articulation issues of particular relevance to students in the major and advise the Steering Panel on appropriate options or resolutions.

II.a.v. Implementation Advisory Council

The roles and responsibilities of the Implementation Advisory Council are:

1. Advise the Steering Panel on issues related to the implementation of IAI policies.
2. Conduct, upon the request of the Steering Panel or the coordinating boards, studies relevant to the implementation and effectiveness of IAI policies and report the findings to the Steering Panel and the coordinating boards.

II.a.vi Website Staff

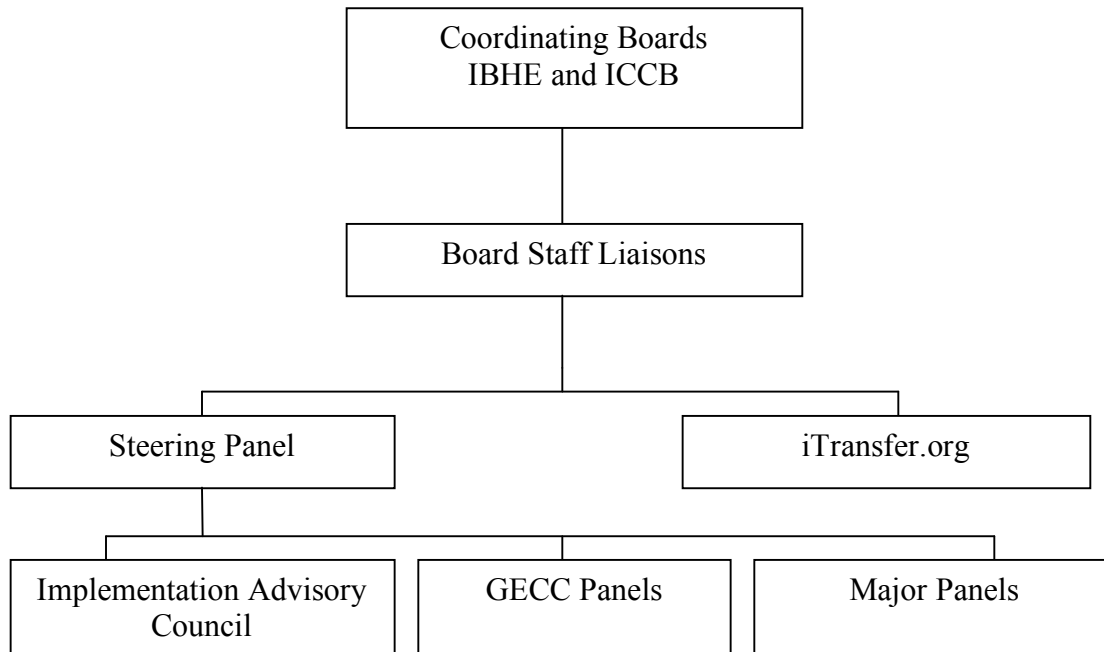
The roles and responsibilities of the website staff are:

iTransfer.org Director: The iTransfer.org director is responsible for the overall management and oversight of the website staff operations and assists in the development and management of the Illinois Articulation Initiative database. Additionally, the director serves as a member of the IAI Implementation Advisory Council and assists the iTransfer.org coordinator in developing and providing training relative to the website and to participation in the initiative.

iTransfer.org Coordinator: The iTransfer.org coordinator is responsible for development, implementation and administration of the website and all related systems and enhancements (such as the database, training and orientation modules, and the syllabi review interface). Additionally, the iTransfer.org Coordinator serves as a member of the IAI Implementation Advisory Council and assists the director in administering the IAI Systems Unit; analyzing, developing and implementing new and/or existing Systems; providing expertise in training and orientation of users in all aspects of the iTransfer Web site and affiliated IAI systems, policies and procedures; preparing reports as directed on iTransfer.org and student transfer; and recommending and developing yearly budget documents.

iTransfer.org Web Developer: The iTransfer.org Web Developer is responsible for assisting the director and coordinator in developing and implementing policies and procedures for the operation and use of technologies supporting the initiative. In addition, the web developer participates in staff discussions and utilizes skills to design, develop, test and implement web page format and data base management, maintains internet servers; maintains all hardware and software related to IAI, as well as makes recommendations for purchase of new hardware and software (all hardware/software at Illinois State as well as the backup server at William Rainey Harper College); and upgrades IAI system as needed (including servers, programming, database, and website).

II.b. Organizational Chart



II.c. Institutional Participation

1. Participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative

- a. Participation in IAI is open to all Illinois institutions (as classified by IPEDS) that have been granted degree-granting authority by the Illinois Board of Higher Education and that meet the following additional criteria.
- b. Participating institutions must be regionally accredited. Institutions that are not regionally accredited may choose to be listed as receiving institutions only.
- c. Participating institutions must agree with the "IBHE Policies on Undergraduate Education, adopted September 1990, Transfer and Articulation, amended September 1994 and May 1997" and Item #7 of the IAI Revisions adopted by the IBHE in April 2006 (see April 4, 2006 Board Agenda Item #11).
- d. Sending institutions must maintain a complete GECC package.

2. Participation in the General Education Core Curriculum

- a. Institutions must offer the entire GECC package to be designated as sending institutions.
- b. All sending institutions are eligible for participation in the GECC Panels.
- c. Participating institutions must identify an IAI Institutional Contact Person to serve as the conduit for information between the institution and the coordinating boards and IAI panels on issues related to IAI.

3. Participation in the Major Panels

- a. Institutions must participate in the GECC in order to be eligible for participation in the Major Panels.

- b. Institutions must have degree-granting authority for programs in the major discipline in order to be eligible for participation in the Major Panels.

4. Requests to Participate

- a. To record a desire to participate, eligible institutions must submit a Statement of Intent. Institutions may choose to participate as a receiving institution only or as a full participant.
- b. Receiving Only: Institutions choosing to participate on a receiving only basis agree to accept as meeting all lower-division general education requirements of the institution a completed GECC package from any other participating institution. Institutional references to IAI must include a receiving-only disclaimer.
- c. Full Participation: Institutions choosing to participate as a fully-participating institution must seek approval for and maintain a complete GECC package and agree to accept as meeting all lower-division general education requirements of the institution a completed GECC package from any other participating institution. Receiving institutions will allow transfer students with a partially-completed GECC package the option of completing the GECC after transfer under the conditions outline in Item #7 of the IAI revisions adopted by the IBHE in April of 2006.

5. Information for Inclusion in Institutional Catalog (in all formats)

- a. Statement of participation in the Illinois Articulation Initiative and effective date for the General Education Core Curriculum
- b. Statement on acceptance of IAI General Education Core Curriculum and application to institution's general education lower division requirements and mission related requirements
- c. IAI General Education Core Curriculum requirements with IAI course numbers
- d. Institution's IAI approved General Education Core Curriculum courses with IAI course numbers
- e. Institution's policy statements on the following:
 - i. Acceptable grades in IAI General Education Core Curriculum courses
 - ii. Acceptance of IAI General Education Core Curriculum courses when the Core has not been Completed prior to transfer
 - iii. Acceptance of course with partial semester hour credit for fulfillment of General Education Core requirements
 - iv. Recognition of credit from non-IAI participating institutions if transfer credit has fulfilled IAI General Education Core Curriculum requirements for the institution verifying the IAI General Education Core Curriculum on the transcript
 - v. Recognition of proficiency and CLEP credits towards IAI General Education Core Curriculum
- f. IAI World Wide Web address: via the Illinois Transfer Portal at www.iTransfer.org

III. Membership (General)

- g. Appointments will be made by the ICCB and IBHE staff, keeping in mind institutional demographics (e.g. two-year/four-year institution; public or private institution, etc.).
- h. Panel members and co-chairs may serve multiple terms.
- i. Membership on the General Education panels will include representatives from the relevant Major Panels whenever possible to allow greater ease of communication between the GE panels and the relevant major panels.

III.a. Representation

1. A fully-complimented panel will include:
 - a. Nine (9) faculty members from community colleges
 - b. One (1) academic officer from a community college
 - c. Eight (8) faculty from public universities
 - d. Four (4) faculty from independent institutions
 - e. Three (3) transfer coordinators, one from each sector – community college, public university, independent institution.
 - f. Individual panels may choose to invite as ex-officio members of the panel consultants, representatives from professional associations, secondary teachers, employers, and others.
2. Each panel will select from among its members a co-chair representing the baccalaureate sector and a co-chair representing the associate sector.
3. Panels may, with the approval of the IAI Steering Panel and the ICCB and IBHE representatives, modify the panel composition to address discipline-specific needs.

III.b. Terms

1. Individual membership on a panel will be for a term of 3 years.
2. Panel co-chairs will serve a term of 3 years. Co-chairs will be selected from currently serving members. When a co-chair steps down, he or she will continue to serve as a panel member until the individual term expires. Terms should be staggered so that only one co-chair vacancy occurs at a time.

III.c. Participation

1. Panel members who fail to participate fully in three consecutive panel meetings (electronic or face-to-face) will be removed from the panel and the institution being represented will be notified.

IV. Steering Panel Processes

The Steering Panel will normally meet once in the Fall semester and once in the Spring semester. An agenda will be developed by the co-chairs in consultation with the ICCB and IBHE staff representatives. The co-chairs will conduct the meetings. Summaries from the meetings will be posted on the iTransfer website.

IV.a. Membership

The Steering Panel will be constituted from the co-chairs of the GECC discipline panels, a representative from the Implementation Advisory Council, a representative from the Illinois Transfer Coordinators, an at-large community college representative, an at-large public university representative, an at-large private college/university representative, a representative of the Illinois Community College Faculty Association, and the IBHE and ICCB staff representatives.

Steering Panel co-chairs will be elected from among the Steering Panel membership, with one representing the baccalaureate sector and one the associate sector.

IV.b. Arbitration

Colleges and universities that have submitted courses or curricula for articulation approval to a General Education Core Curriculum panel have the right to appeal any decision rendered by that panel on the submitted material's eligibility for inclusion in a GECC package. An appealing institution should first exhaust all means of discussion with the panel in question, including revision of the material as suggested by the panel whenever possible, before turning to the Steering Panel for further appeal.

Any appeal to the Steering Panel must begin with a letter of appeal from the chief academic officer or the institutional contact person to the IBHE or ICCB staff representative. The staff representative will decide if the appeal should be placed before the panel at the earliest possible opportunity for consideration and whether it is necessary for the appealing institution to be represented at any meeting of the Panel. The appeal will be reviewed by the Steering Panel if one or more of the following conditions apply:

1. An institution can provide evidence that a panel decision was arbitrary or capricious.
2. Substantive new information or arguments or both regarding the general education course have been developed that challenge the rationale of the panel. These ideas will be reviewed and discussed by the Steering Panel and, if appropriate, the panel in question will be contacted by the Steering Panel chairs with a charge to deliberate further on its original position.
3. The appealing institution can present evidence of inequitable treatment by the panel regarding a specific course. For example, the appealing institution may cite other participating Illinois colleges or universities receiving approval for inclusion of a course comparable to the one that has been rejected. Copies of syllabi for the comparable course should be provided.

Policies or other actions: If an institution wishes to appeal a policy or action of the Steering Panel other than a course inclusion decision, the appealing institution should present its letter of appeal from the chief academic officer or institutional contact to the IBHE or ICCB staff representative, who will discuss the appeal with the Steering Panel co-chairs and other IBHE or ICCB staff representative. They will decide whether the appeal should be presented to the entire panel at the earliest possible opportunity for consideration and whether it is necessary for the appealing institution to be represented at any meeting of the Panel.

Steering Panel Decision: The Steering Panel will review arguments and evidence presented by the appealing institution before rendering a decision. In both curricular matters and policy and procedure matters, the decision of the Steering Panel on all appeals is final.

Timetable for Appeals: Appeal letters, along with supporting materials, should be sent to the IBHE or ICCB staff representative at least one month prior to an IAI Steering Panel meeting. The Panel regularly meets in the Spring and Fall. Any appeals to the Panel will generally be considered at one of the Panel's regular meetings. Unique circumstances may require immediate action by the Panel. A request for such action, along with a statement of the circumstances warranting it, should also be directed to the staff representative, who will discuss the matter with the Panel co-chairs in order to determine if a special meeting is merited.

V. Implementation Advisory Council Processes

The Implementation Advisory Council will meet at a minimum twice each year, in the Spring and Fall prior to the scheduled meeting of the Steering Panel. Additionally, the Council or ad hoc subcommittees of the Council will meet as needed to respond to charges from the Steering Panel or the coordinating boards.

A representative from the Council will be selected from among its members to serve on the Steering Panel. The representative will report to the Steering Panel and will present any reports in response to charges from the Steering Panel or the coordinating boards.

The Implementation Advisory Council is made up of a cross-section of representatives from all levels and sectors of higher education (public, independent, 4-year, 2-year) and the ICCB and IBHE staff liaisons and the co-chairs of the Transfer Coordinators. Since the nature of the Council depends heavily on specific expertise, membership to replace resigning members is by invitation from the Council membership acting in a committee of the whole.

Implementation Advisory Council meetings will be conducted by the ICCB and IBHE staff liaisons.

VI. GECC Panel Processes

Panels will meet face-to-face a minimum of once each year. Meetings will be scheduled by the ICCB or IBHE staff liaison.

VI.a. Objective Criteria

Panels will develop and periodically review and update a set of objective criteria to be used by institutions in preparing courses for inclusion in the General Education Core Curriculum and by the panel for review of such courses.

The criteria should be clear enough for faculty in this discipline at the offering institution to easily determine if the course meets the criteria, while also being specific enough to ensure that each course approved for inclusion in the GECC meets minimum standards.

The criteria should take into consideration the goal of providing appropriate general education instruction at the lower division level among all participating

institutions while maintaining an environment of academic diversity and instructional innovation.

VI.b. Course Review

1. Course development and submission
 - a. Each participating institution will develop an institutional review process for IAI courses. This process may stand-alone or may incorporate existing curriculum development processes.
 - b. When an institution has developed a course for inclusion in the General Education Core Curriculum, course materials must be reviewed and approved through the institutional review process prior to submission to the GECC panel.
 - c. Once a course has been approved through the institutional review process, the appropriate submission forms and course materials are forwarded by the institutional contact person to the ICCB or IBHE staff liaison.
2. Staff review
 - a. The staff will review the materials for completeness. If the submission is incomplete or incorrect, the staff will communicate with the institutional contact person.
 - b. The complete submission materials will be posted to the review site for review by the panel members.
3. Panel review
 - a. Panel members will review and vote on submissions based on a set schedule.
 - b. Courses approved in this schedule will be posted to the iTransfer.org database and listed on the website as soon as possible.
 - c. Courses that are not approved can be resubmitted by the institution after consultation with the IBHE or ICCB staff.

VII. Major Panel Processes

Major panels need not meet on a regular basis. However, in order to craft and review course, content and standard recommendations and to discuss trends in the discipline, face-to-face meetings of the panel or a broader meeting of faculty in the discipline organized and hosted by the panel may prove beneficial.

VII.a. Lower Division Course, Content, or Standard Recommendations

In order to provide guidance to students wishing to pursue studies in a particular discipline who are undecided as to the baccalaureate program they wish to join, the major panels should develop recommendations. Depending upon the nature of the major, these recommendations may be in the form of courses, content or standards (or some combination of these) that would be included in the first and second year of study. Since a student who has chosen one or two potential baccalaureate programs would be best served by other articulation information, these recommendations should be general enough to meet the needs of the undecided student.

VII.b. Trends in the Discipline

In order to keep the course, content or standard recommendations current, the panel members should be aware of changes in the discipline that may influence the lower-division studies of a student in this major. When necessary, the panel should modify its recommendations based on these trends.

VIII. Staff Processes

VIII.a. Course Review

1. Staff will receive course submission materials from participating institutional contact persons.
2. Staff will review these submissions for completeness and correctness.
3. Staff will communicate to the institutional contact person any deficiencies.
4. If the staff believes the submission materials are complete and correct, they will post the materials to the course review site and schedule a voting deadline.
5. The staff will inform panel members of the voting deadline.
6. If the course is approved by the panel, the staff will post the decision to the iTransfer.org website and add the course information to the database.
7. If the course is not approved, the staff will inform the institution of the decision and, upon the institution's request, work with the institution to address the concerns of the panel.
8. If there is insufficient agreement on the course among the panel members, or if the institutions wishes to appeal the decision of the panel, the staff will place the course on the agenda for the annual panel meeting and provide the submission materials to the panel for review prior to the meeting.

VIII.b. Panel Meetings

1. The staff liaisons will schedule meetings and arrange for space.
2. The staff will assist the co-chairs in developing and distributing an agenda for the meeting.
3. The staff will keep summaries of the meetings and post these on the iTransfer.org website.
4. The staff will keep records of decisions on course submissions and post these on the iTransfer.org website.

VIII.c. Membership

1. The IBHE and ICCB staff will assign members to the relevant panels based upon the membership guidelines above. Institutions should be asked to nominate representatives to fill vacancies.
2. Assignments are entered into the Panel Membership Database maintained by the iTransfer.org staff.

3. The IBHE and ICCB staff will maintain attendance and participation logs and take appropriate actions to fill vacancies based on the membership guidelines above.

VIII.d. Website management

1. The staff liaisons will work with the iTransfer.org staff to maintain the Panel Membership Database, the GECC course database, records of decisions and meeting summaries.
2. The staff will work with the iTransfer.org staff to post course submission materials for review.