

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

CARTERET COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AND

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

I. PARTIES

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is made and entered into by and between Carteret Community College (“Carteret CC”) and Western Carolina University (or the “University”), collectively referred to as the “Parties.”

II. BACKGROUND

Western Carolina University creates learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research, service, and engagement through on-campus, off-campus, on-line and international experiences. The university focuses its undergraduate, master’s and doctoral programs, educational outreach, research, creative, and cultural activities to sustain and improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in Western North Carolina and beyond.

Carteret CC is a comprehensive community college within the legislatively created North Carolina Community College System and serves Carteret County. Carteret Community College serves and empowers our students and coastal community by providing high-quality education, workforce training, and lifelong enrichment in an innovative and inclusive learning environment.

The Parties have a shared geographic perspective and a shared desire to strengthen the learning community and workforce development of Carteret County and the State of North Carolina and beyond.

III. Catamount Connections PROGRAM

Western Carolina University and Carteret Community College will create and administer a program on each Party’s campus called the Catamount Connections Program: A Direct-Entry Admission Program (the “Program”). The Program name may be changed upon the mutual written consent of both Parties. (NOTE: The Direct-Entry Admission Program discussed within this MOU pertains to admission to the University and not to a specific degree program. Some WCU programs of study have their own programmatic admission criteria, standards, policies, processes and deadlines.)

Building on the North Carolina Comprehensive Articulation Agreement (CAA) the Program will allow currently enrolled Carteret CC students a direct–entry pathway to Western Carolina University available upon graduation from Carteret CC. Students who wish to participate in the Program must satisfy the following conditions:

- Be a currently enrolled student at Carteret CC in a degree-seeking capacity;
- Submit Western Carolina University application for admission and records by WCU deadlines;
- Submit application fee or waiver and fulfill all commitment action steps;
- Be in good standing at Carteret CC and other institutions attended;
- Demonstrate good citizenship and conduct;
- Earn and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 at Carteret CC and a minimum GPA of 2.20 in their most recent term; and
- Earn an Associate’s Degree from Carteret CC in a college transfer program or in an applied program for which an articulation agreement exists;
- Enroll at Western Carolina University within one academic year (within the next two regular terms (fall/spring semesters) of completion of the Associate’s Degree).

While enrolled at Carteret CC, students will identify their interest in the Program by completing a brief, online form provided by the Western Carolina University Admission Counselor. There is no Program participation fee (Program participants must complete an application for admission and submit the nonrefundable application fee. Go to applicationfeewaiver.wcu.edu for details about the application fee waiver policies and procedures). Students who discontinue their participation will be expected to transition to Western Carolina University through regular admission channels. Students who enroll at another college or university after their Carteret CC enrollment also will be expected to transition to WCU through regular admission channels.

The Program affords Carteret CC students access to information about academic programs, faculty, and staff at the Western Carolina University campus who will facilitate their transition to Western Carolina University. This Program prioritizes the ability to receive admission, financial aid, and orientation communications early in the transition process, which sets Carteret CC students up for maximum success at both institutions. Full access to Western Carolina University activities, services, and facilities occurs at the point of acceptance, commitment, and enrollment at Western Carolina University.

The Program requires completion of the Associate's degree from Carteret CC in a college transfer program or an articulated applied program for guaranteed university admission. In cases where Program participants matriculate prior to completing the Associate's degree, a Reverse Transfer Process provides the opportunity for students to complete their Associate's degree after transferring to Western Carolina University.

Additional benefits that serve both campuses may be added to the Program structure by mutual written consent of both Parties. Examples may include, but are not limited to, consortium agreements for cross-campus enrollment in individual courses and on-campus living accommodations at Western Carolina University for Program participants.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOTH PARTIES

- Disseminating information about the Program to Carteret County and statewide;
- Raising awareness of the Program with relevant members of the Carteret CC and Western Carolina University campus communities;
- The Special Transfer Programs Chair at Carteret CC, will work in concert with the identified Primary Point of Contact at Western Carolina University in the development and maintenance of the program. The Carteret CC Chair of Special Transfer Programs will also serve as the point person for the Western Carolina University representatives while they are on campus;
- Developing and providing an online registration form for Carteret CC students to express interest in the Program;
- Providing faculty and staff to serve on the Program Committee;
- Ensuring that both parties honor the NCCCS/UNC Articulation Agreement;
- Providing real-time resource and information to Carteret CC students, on the Carteret CC campus, for students who express interest in the Program;
- Developing and maintaining a list of students who register to participate in the Program;
- Communicating with students who register to participate in the Program; and
- Providing guest-speaker access to Carteret CC students for services and opportunities that will be available after transitioning to the Western Carolina University campus. Some examples of guests to be made available to Carteret CC students include, but are not limited to, academic program chairs and faculty, academic advisors, admissions and financial aid counselors, student life staff, and student success representatives. This provision does not imply that instructional time will be provided for guest speaker access.

Carteret CC will be responsible for:

- Aiding Carteret CC students pursuing the benefits of the Program to fulfill the requirements for university-level admission to Western Carolina University;
- Educating participants as to program-level admission opportunities and requirements;
- Complying with all applicable federal and state laws and Carteret CC policies, including but not limited to those related to financial aid; and
- Working collaboratively with Western Carolina University staff assigned to serve on the Program Committee.

Western Carolina University will be responsible for:

- Advising and assisting Carteret CC students pursuing the benefits of the Program in fulfilling the requirements for university-level admission to Western Carolina University;
- Educating participants as to program-level admission opportunities and requirements;
- Complying with all applicable federal and state laws, UNC System regulations and Western Carolina University policies, including but not limited to those related to financial aid;
- Disseminating information about the Program to members of the Western Carolina University campus community;
- Providing faculty and staff assigned to administer the Program;
- Disseminating information about the Program to candidates for admission who are not offered admission directly to Western Carolina University about the possibility to participate in the Program as a student at Carteret CC; and
- Guaranteeing university-level admission for applicants from Carteret CC who satisfy all requirements in the above agreement.

IV. NOTICE

The Parties designate the following individual(s) to administer and oversee the Program on behalf of his or her Party.

- A. For Carteret CC
Chair of Special Programs

- B. For Western Carolina University:
Director, Undergraduate Admissions

V. TERM AND TERMINATION

The term of this MOU shall be for a period of five (5) years beginning on the date that it is fully executed by all parties ("Term"). The MOU may be renewed for additional five (5) year terms upon the mutual written consent of the Parties.

Either Party may, for any reason, terminate this MOU with sixty (60) days prior written notice to the other Party. If the MOU is terminated, Carteret CC students who had submitted a transfer application prior to the termination date will still be eligible to participate in the Program.

VI. MODIFICATION

This MOU may be amended or modified at any time upon mutual written consent by the Parties.

VII. GOVERNING LAW

This MOU is subject to applicable Federal and North Carolina State law. It is also subject to the University Of North Carolina Board Of Governors' policies and regulations, the University of North Carolina System Office policies and regulations, and the policies and regulations of the North Carolina Community College System.

VIII. RELATIONSHIP OF THE PARTIES

It is expressly acknowledged by the Parties that they are independent contractors and nothing in this MOU is intended or shall be construed to create an employer/employee relationship, partnership or a joint venture relationship so as to allow one Party to exercise control or direction over the manner or method by which the other Parties perform the services which are the subject matter of the MOU. Neither Party is authorized or empowered to act as agent for the other for any purpose and shall not on behalf of the other enter into any contract, warranty, or representation as to any matter. Neither Party shall be bound by the acts or conduct of the other Party. Neither Party, nor any other person performing services on behalf of such Party pursuant to this MOU shall have any right or claim against the other party for Social Security benefits, workers compensation benefits, disability benefits, unemployment insurance benefits, health insurance benefits, paid time off, or any other employee benefit.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this MOU as of the last written date below.

Carteret Community College Date
Dr. Tracy Mancini, President

Western Carolina University Date
Dr. Kelli R. Brown, Chancellor

