

**Seneca**

**YORK**  
UNIVERSITÉ  
UNIVERSITY 



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
WOODSWORTH COLLEGE

# **Extension of the UTSC-Seneca College Arts & Science Transfer Agreement to Woodsworth College, U of T and York University**

Paula Green, Riaz Saloojee & Henry Decock

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## Executive Summary

This project was developed to explore the credit transfer pathway opportunities, into the Bachelor of Science degree programs at York University and The University of Toronto, Woodsworth College, St. George Campus, for graduates of Seneca College's Arts and Science University Transfer (ASU) diploma program. The ASU diploma program was developed by Seneca College in collaboration with staff from the University of Toronto, Scarborough. The goal therefore was to explore the possibility of expanding this pathway agreement to include York University and the University of Toronto, Woodsworth College.

The Arts and Science University Transfer diploma program retains some of the foundational elements of the Liberal Arts Transfer (LAT) program, formerly General Arts and Science (GAS), except for the addition of specific science courses in chemistry, biology, physics and mathematics. The program began in Fall 2015 with one section, and as of Winter 2016, there have been three additional intakes. The first group of graduates will complete their program in April 2017 and most will apply for admission to York University and the University of Toronto, for programs beginning in Fall 2017.

Students entering York University, having graduated from the Arts and Science University Transfer (ASU) program, will receive 48 block transfer credits towards a 120 credit, honours degree program. This is an enhanced block, as typically most diploma programs are awarded 45 block credits. Since the course assessment and mapping at University of Toronto, Woodsworth College, began in 2017, the outcome of the credit transfer process here is pending, and so, at this time is unknown.

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## Program Description

With the success of the Liberal Arts Transfer (LAT) program (formerly, General Arts and Science-GAS), Seneca College collaborated with the University of Toronto, Scarborough to develop the Arts and Science University Transfer (ASU) program. The Arts and Science University Transfer program enables graduates to enter into the Bachelor of Science degree program at the University, with foundational courses/ credits in science. The courses include biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics, along with general education credits (previously established in the Liberal Arts Transfer program) that were approved and accepted for transfer credits at the University. With the success of the Seneca College and University of Toronto, Scarborough agreement, the project proposed the development of a similar pathway agreement with York University and University of Toronto, Woodsworth College.

In this pathway agreement, graduates of the Arts and Science University Transfer (ASU) program receive a combination of block and specified course credits upon the successful completion of the ASU program when they are admitted to the University.

## Project Implementation & Mapping

### York University

#### Admissions

For the course mapping process at York University, the science and general education courses within the Arts and Science University Transfer diploma program were identified. Next it was determined whether the science courses in particular, met the threshold for admission to the University. The participation in and completion of a postsecondary program at the College, which in this case is the ASU program, was central to the decision-making regarding admission for entrance into the University. All of the science courses within the ASU program were evaluated as having met the threshold for admission to York University.

#### First Year Science Credits and General Education Courses

Within most postsecondary programs, courses are scaffolded to ensure that the foundational competencies are achieved as students move through each level/ year of their studies. Another aspect of the course mapping process was the assessment of the ASU courses, to determine whether their course content was aligned to the course and program learning outcomes for first year courses, within the science degree programs at the University.

The Faculty of Science at York University began their review of the science courses in Spring/ Summer 2016. However, the discussions between the Seneca College sending program and the Faculties that would potentially receive most of the ASU graduates did not begin in earnest until Fall 2016. As the process progressed, other Faculties at York University, including the Faculty of Health and the Faculty of Engineering were brought onboard, because they offered BSc degrees within their respective programs.

Course outlines were requested from Seneca College and sent to the Office at Admissions at York University. In-turn the outlines were sent to the undergraduate program directors, associate deans, program coordinators and chairs to be reviewed. The course outline reviews involved multiple inputs from the staff who assessed academic content, for alignment to learning outcomes, with the first year

science courses offered in the various degrees. The highly aligned courses were then granted Course Credit Exclusion status by York University.

All of the science courses that were evaluated met the threshold for first year York University credits with the exception of biology. The Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics were given the Course Credit Exclusion designation by York University. Therefore, in the resulting articulation agreement, a block of 48 credits was granted to students who complete the ASU program and transfer to York University. As well, within the block credits, the specified general education electives were indicated.

Initially though, thirty-six block transfer credits were granted. However, based on the general education electives satisfied within ASU, of the York degree program areas, and the agreement by the ASU program to have students complete York approved electives, the block credits granted were increased to 48. Therefore, as stated in the York University Credit Articulation Agreement Guidelines, with the granting of 48 or more block credits, all of the general education electives required for a Science (BSc) degree are deemed to have been satisfied. Accordingly, ASU students transferring to York University will have completed all of their non-science requirements for their BSc.

The York articulation agreement is being finalized. Students completing the ASU diploma will be able to transfer into BSc and BA programs within the Faculty of Science, Faculty of Health, Lassonde School of Engineering as well as other Faculties at York University, as of Fall 2017

## **University of Toronto, Woodsworth College, St. George**

Staffing transitions at Seneca College, affected the communication timelines for connecting with University of Toronto. The documentation from Seneca College to the University of Toronto, Woodsworth College, St. George Campus, was sent early in 2017 to the Office of the Assistant Principal and Registrar for dissemination. Seneca College is awaiting the outcome of those reviews.

## **Lessons Learned**

Since there wasn't agreement for biology, the program faculty teaching the courses at York University and Seneca College, who also had program coordination responsibilities, met for a discussion about the curriculum gaps. Although the latter was identified, the challenge however became that the science courses in the ASU program developed by Seneca College were modelled to align with the first year science program requirements at University of Toronto, Scarborough. Accordingly, the recommended changes proposed by York University for the biology course revision, were out of sync with the University of Toronto, Scarborough, requirements. Therefore, the revisions requested by York University to the biology courses will not proceed at this time.

One of the realizations emerging from this project was that there was no guarantee that the acceptance of a course by one institution should assume/ preclude acceptance by another. The results from the Woodsworth College mapping exercise are pending and so it would be interesting to see whether they are aligned with the University of Toronto, Scarborough or with York University.

Staffing vacancies, administrative turnovers and transition at both Seneca College and York University created some initial implementation delays with the course mapping process. However, the project was able to remain on track towards completion. Pending the outcome of the course mapping process at University of Toronto, Woodsworth, cross-institutional conversations are likely to begin between York

University, University of Toronto and Seneca College, to potentially look at common course outcomes for first year science courses, particularly biology.