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NMCC, UMPI sign agreements that increase transferability

PRESQUE ISLE – Officials with the University of Maine at Presque Isle and Northern Maine Community College held a signing ceremony on Thursday, Aug. 22, in NMCC’s Edmunds Library, finalizing two articulation agreements that ensure UMPI and NMCC students experience a smooth transition when they opt to transfer between institutions.

NMCC President Timothy Crowley and UMPI President Linda Schott led the official signing of the documents, which now can be utilized by students who are preparing for the 2013-2014 academic year.

“This agreement creates an important benefit and facilitates the way for our students whose goal is to attain a four-year degree,” according to NMCC President Timothy Crowley. “It is important for us to utilize the higher education capabilities in Aroostook County to help our citizens enhance their educational level.”

UMPI President Linda Schott also saw the signing of these agreements as an important step forward.

“Both of these articulation agreements provide students with clear pathways to achieving their higher education goals, whether they want to transition from NMCC to UMPI, from UMPI to NMCC, or leverage their associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education into a bachelor’s degree,” President Schott said. “We are delighted to make the process easier for them and to be a leader in the state in terms of increasing transferability.”

The first articulation agreement ensures that students at either institution are able to transfer their General Education courses easily between schools. General Education courses are defined by each institution but are generally in the areas of English, math, science, and the humanities, which students must take in order to graduate. The agreement is especially timely considering statewide efforts to increase transferability between Maine’s public universities and community colleges.

“Since General Education courses are a core group of classes that all students must take at the University and the College, it makes perfect sense for our institutions to standardize and accept credits seamlessly from transferring students,” explained Dr. Dottie Martin, NMCC Academic Dean. “Today’s agreement will allow students to more quickly complete their degree and save money.”

The second agreement allows for transition between NMCC's Early Childhood Education Associate in Applied Science degree program and UMPI's Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree program, which has an Early Childhood Education concentration option. Not only does this agreement allow students who complete their two-year ECE degree at NMCC to efficiently transfer to UMPI, it also allows UMPI Elementary Education students doing an ECE concentration to take ECE classes at NMCC that then transfer back to their UMPI degree. In addition, a new UMPI faculty member has been hired to provide greater support for students participating in this program. Wendy Ross serves as the new Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education and the Director of UMPI's Early Childhood Education Program.

"This agreement strengthens a partnership that UMPI and NMCC began back in 2010 to help early childhood teachers meet state requirements to have or move toward a Bachelor's degree," UMPI Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Michael Sonntag said. "We're very pleased to get the different Early Childhood degree paths from NMCC to UMPI mapped out so students know exactly what classes they need to complete in order to earn their four-year degree. I'm especially delighted to welcome a new full-time faculty member to serve as instructor and advisor for this program to ensure students have all the support they need to be successful."

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Leadership from Northern Maine Community College and the University of Maine at Presque Isle signed two articulation agreements on August 22 that helped ensure UMPI and NMCC students experience a smooth transition when they opt to transfer between institutions. Taking part in the signing, which took place in the library on the NMCC campus, were from left: Dottie Martin, NMCC academic dean; NMCC President Timothy Crowley; UMPI President Linda Schott; and Michael Sonntag, UMPI provost and vice president of academic affairs.