

**Consortia Agreement—Upper Peninsula Colleges and Universities
Reverse Transfer Associate Degree Initiative**

**Bay College
Finlandia University
Gogebic Community College
Lake Superior State University
Michigan Technological University
Northern Michigan University**

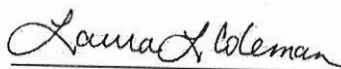
The above listed institutions of higher learning are, together, committed to improving the academic credential status of residents of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and beyond. To this end, the signatories to this Agreement commit to work creatively and collaboratively to better enable qualified students to obtain an additional earned, academic credential.

This agreement assists students who transferred from among consortium institutions to complete an associate's degree at their originating college and/or university. This collaboration enhances existing transfer agreements among the partnering institutions. Students who are eligible and will benefit from this collaboration are those who have completed at least 45 credits at their originating college or university, and have transferred without earning an associate's degree.

Each signatory to this Agreement agrees to:

1. Appoint a contact person and liaison for the initiative;
2. Share student information in a manner that complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act guidelines;
3. Develop a method to track the success of the initiative and share results on an annual basis;
4. Follow parameters of the law and regional accrediting agencies;
5. Develop and document the system, processes, communication, and timeline supporting the initiative;
6. Explore opportunities to leverage existing technology in an effort to create an effective, efficient, and seamless process;
7. Outline student communication, procedures and advisement assistance to complete degree requirements; and
8. Attend consortium meetings to finalize, approve, and monitor the agreement

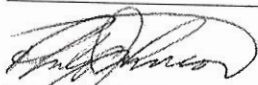
Partnering Institutions:



Dr. Laura Coleman
President of Bay College
Escanaba, Michigan

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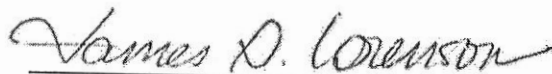
Date



Dr. Philip Johnson
President of Finlandia University
Hancock, Michigan

8/31/11

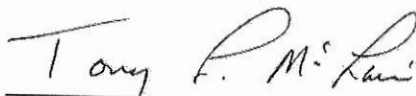
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Mr. James Lorensen
President of Gogebic Community College
Ironwood, Michigan

8/31/11

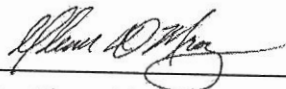
Date



Dr. Tony McLain
President of Lake Superior State University
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

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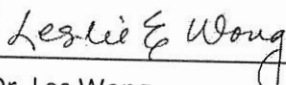
Date



Dr. Glenn Mroz
President of Michigan Technological University
Houghton, Michigan

8/31/11

Date



Dr. Les Wong
President of Northern Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

8/31/11

Date

Upper Peninsula College and University Partners Reverse Transfer Associate Degree Initiative

A reverse transfer Associate degree initiative addresses an issue receiving increased attention: credentialed recognition of earned academic credit at the associate level. This lack of credential has an unnecessarily negative impact, individually and collectively: the individual student is unable to most fully document learning and/or skill attainment; and the workforce unnecessarily appears less skilled or prepared for the increasingly technological and competitive workplace.

A student who begins her postsecondary studies at a community college or associate degree granting program should be able to pursue a bachelor's degree while possessing an earned associate degree that more fully represents his/her academic success. The associate is a valuable credential in the job market, both for job hunting and for career advancement for those employed while pursuing their degrees.

Increasingly, community colleges and four year colleges and universities are joining together to ensure that qualifying transfer students are awarded associate degrees once they have completed the necessary coursework at their new institutions.

Through a collaborative effort among Bay College, Gogebic Community College, Finlandia University, Lake Superior State University, Michigan Technological University, and Northern Michigan University a recent consortial agreement focusing on a Reverse Transfer Associate Degree Initiative is being developed. Through the extension of existing transfer agreements between these higher education institutions, the partners we will work together to accomplish three goals:

1. Address the issue of undocumented learning,
2. Increase and promote the associate degree completion for transfer students, and
3. Encourage higher education continuation toward a bachelor's degree.