

ECC, SBU SIGN ARTICULATION AGREEMENT FOR A.A. IN TEACHING TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES

BOLIVAR, Mo. – East Central College and Southwest Baptist University signed an articulation agreement on Friday, Nov. 5, to provide ECC graduates who earn an Associate of Arts in Teaching degree a smooth transition into SBU’s [bachelor of science in elementary education](#) program.



“One of our strategies in our five-year strategic plan was to grow partnerships with our four-year university partners, provide opportunities for the students and the community,” said Dr. Robyn Walter, vice president for academic affairs at ECC. “This articulation agreement is really impactful for teacher education. We’ve been hearing a lot about the shortage of teachers.

“We’re hearing high schools and superintendents in the K-12 sector asking us, ‘How can we grow our own? What can we do? We know that if they are educated in the community, they were likely to stay in a community and teach. How do you do that?’ I

think this aligns with all of those strategic priorities in terms of our Rolla campus, our community and our partnerships.”

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) reported a 5.06 percent shortage in full-time equivalent (FTE) instructors for the 2020-2021 academic year. The most-severe shortages include: elementary education, early childhood education, early childhood special education and general science.

“We are pleased to have collaboratively created a path for East Central College teacher candidates to attain their goal of elementary education certification at SBU,” said [Dr. Dwight Haun](#), coordinator of teacher education and professor of education at SBU. “The need for teachers across the state of Missouri, especially rural areas, is great. Preparing teacher candidates for the mission field of teaching is our calling and mission.”

The partnership also allows SBU the opportunity to continue to engage students currently enrolled at the Union, Mo.-based community college, and who are wanting to pursue a bachelor’s degree at a liberal arts Christian university.

"I am excited about this agreement as it provides additional pathways for students to pursue additional education and allows students to focus on their coursework and not have to worry about where credits will go and if they will count," said [Dr. Lee Skinkle](#), provost of SBU. "We look forward to expanding this partnership and working together to benefit students in the central Missouri/Rolla area."



This agreement will impact students pursuing an Associate of Arts in Teaching degree at ECC. The A.A. often is referred to as a "transfer degree" because it is designed for students who plan to continue their education beyond the associate degree level.

"Our mission at East Central is enriching our communities through education, and I don't think it gets any better than teaching the teachers and creating a pathway to completing that bachelor's degree locally, to be able to serve our rural community and really address this teacher shortage issue is powerful," said Christina Ayers, director of ECC's Rolla campus.

"As someone who grew up just a few miles south of here, this opportunity today really excites me for our students in Rolla, but in the surrounding communities that they can start here and use that A+. We are all about, as a community college, opening that access to higher education. To have a realistic plan through those pathways to start here and finish with SBU, is really a game-changer, an exciting and an impactful difference for our rural students."

For more information on transfer opportunities, visit SBUiv.info/transfer.

PHOTO 1: Dr. Robyn Walter, vice president of academic affairs for East Central College, and Dr. Lee Skinkle, provost for SBU, sign the articulation agreement between the two schools.

PHOTO 2: East Central College and Southwest Baptist University signed an articulation agreement on Nov. 5 for teaching transfer opportunities. (Seated, left to right) Dr. Robyn Walter, vice president of academic affairs for ECC, and Dr. Lee Skinkle, provost for SBU. (Back row, left to right): Greg Stotler, teacher education coordinator at ECC; Christina Ayres, director of ECC-Rolla campus; Dr. Reginald Brigham, math and education department chair at ECC; Dr. Dwight Haun, coordinator of teacher education and professor of education at SBU; Linda Armer, director of the SBU-Salem campus; and Chris Welch, associate director of admissions at SBU-Salem.

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