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MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida College System Council of Instructional Affairs

FROM: Dr. Mike Sfiropoulos, Associate Vice Chancellor, *MS*

DATE: April 29, 2026

SUBJECT: Ringling College of Art and Design – Letter of Interest/Articulation Agreement

The Division of Florida Colleges (Division) has received a letter of interest (LOI) from Ringling College of Art and Design to establish articulation agreements with Florida College System (FCS) institutions. Per Florida Department of Education policy, the Office of Articulation will post the LOI on its website (<http://www.fldoe.org/policy/articulation/articulation-agreements.stml>) for viewing by each institution. A copy of the LOI and template are also included with this memo.

Individual FCS institutions may enter into individual articulation agreements with Ringling College of Art and Design at their discretion. The primary contact email regarding articulation agreements for Ringling College is contracts@ringling.edu.

Please feel free to contact Shannon Mercer (Shannon.Mercer@fldoe.org or 850-245-9549) with the Office of Articulation if you have any questions or concerns.

MS/lS

Cc: Shannon Mercer, Executive Director, Office of Articulation



April 13, 2026

Office of Articulation
1401 Turlington Building
Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Letter of Interest

My name is Elena M. Paul. I'm the General Counsel at Ringling College of Art and Design ("Ringling College"). Based in Sarasota, Florida, Ringling College is a private nonprofit college that was founded in 1931. I am writing this Letter of Interest as we are interested in formally pursuing an articulation agreement with institutions in which the transfer pathways will be established locally with institutions within the Florida College System.

As background, Ringling College is the only institution in Florida dedicated exclusively to teaching art and design. The College believes that creative thinkers represent the future leaders of tomorrow and play a significant role in society as scholars, artists, designers, and creative professionals. The College is accredited by National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Ringling College has over 1600 undergraduate students and offers 13 baccalaureate degree programs; those programs are listed in Exhibit A to this Letter of Interest for reference. Many of our programs, including Computer Animation, Motion Design, and Game Art are ranked among the best in the world.

Attached please find a draft copy of an articulation agreement for review whereby students with a conferred degree who meet specific requirements may be eligible to transfer to Ringling College. We welcome your feedback on the draft as well as the opportunity to provide more information about Ringling College and the benefits of the proposed partnership.

Also, I have prepared, and attached as Exhibit B to this Letter of Interest, background and other information about transferring to Ringling College of Art and Design as we may differ from many potential articulation agreement partners given our exclusive focus on art and design education. I thought that context would be helpful.

Very Truly Yours,

Elena M Paul

Elena M. Paul
General Counsel

EXHIBIT A TO LETTER OF INTEREST

Ringling College of Art and Design Baccalaureate Degree Programs

1. Business of Art and Design (BA Degree Program)
2. Computer Animation (BFA Degree Program)
3. Creative Technologies (BFA Degree Program)
4. Creative Writing (BFA Degree Program)
5. Entertainment Design (BFA Degree Program)
6. Film (BFA Degree Program)
7. Fine Arts (BFA Degree Program)
8. Game Art (BFA Degree Program)
9. Graphic Design (BFA Degree Program)
10. Illustration (BFA Degree Program)
11. Motion Design (BFA Degree Program)
12. Virtual Reality Development (BFA Degree Program)
13. Visual Studies (BA Degree Program)

EXHIBIT B TO LETTER OF INTEREST

General Information about Transferring into Ringling College of Art and Design

I. Background and History

We thought it might be helpful to provide background and other information as Ringling College of Art and Design may differ from most potential articulation agreement partners given its exclusive focus on art and design education. Our specialized education and curriculum mean that some, not all, of our programs are appropriate for mid-program transfer. We also may have some admission and graduation requirements that are not as common. For example, Ringling College requires a portfolio of demonstrated artistic work in an application for admission and all Ringling College graduates are required to have studied art history.

Ringling College was established in 1931 by Dr. Ludd M. Spivey in collaboration with John Ringling. Today, Ringling College has over 1,600 undergraduate students and offers thirteen (13) Baccalaureate Degree Programs. Many of our programs, including Computer Animation, Motion Design, and Game Art, are ranked among the best in the world.

Ringling College is the only institution of higher education in the State of Florida dedicated exclusively to teaching art and design. Ringling College believes that creative thinkers represent the future leaders of tomorrow and play a significant role in society as scholars, artists, designers, and creative professionals.

II. Ringling College Programs for Articulated Transfers

The following Ringling College programs have the most potential for mid-program transfers to be supported within an Articulation Agreement:

1. Business of Art and Design, Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree Program
2. Creative Technology, Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Degree Program
3. Creative Writing, BFA Degree Program
4. Entertainment Design, BFA Degree Program
5. Fine Art, BFA Degree Program
6. Graphic Design, BFA Degree Program
7. Visual Studies, BA Degree Program

Please note that Ringling College is open to developing broader articulation agreement partnerships beyond those seven programs on an individualized basis with other institutions. In general, our highly specialized and rigorous curriculum in the other six programs which make it less likely that mid-program transfers could occur without loss of credits earned elsewhere.

III. General Education, Liberal Arts, and the Block Transfer of Credits

A. Liberal Arts is General Education at Ringling College

Many colleges and universities require the completion of “General Education” credits to graduate with a degree. Given its specialized curriculum, at Ringling College, the General Education (“Gen Ed”) requirements are Liberal Arts courses and our Gen Ed requirements are referred to as “Liberal Arts” requirements.

Further, per Ringling College's current accreditation and related to our specialty in art and design education, our degrees require the study of Art History. Specifically, the BFA degrees at Ringling College require the completion of four (4) art history courses, and the BA degrees (Business of Art and Design, and Visual Studies) require the completion of two (2) art history courses by graduation. One of those courses, Art and Ideas, is a required survey course.

B. Transfers to Ringling College by BA and BFA Degree Holders

Under Ringling College's current catalog and policies, individuals who transfer into Ringling College with a previously awarded Associate of Arts ("AA") or a Bachelor of Arts ("BA") degree from an accredited college or university will be considered to have met Ringling College's Liberal Arts (i.e., General Education) requirements for a degree. That is, conferred AA or BA degrees will be accepted by Ringling College as a block in the spirit of the State of Florida's 2+2 system.

C. Transfers to Ringling College by AS and AAS Degree Holders

Under Ringling College's current catalog and policies, AS and AAS degrees are not recognized as terminal degrees for block credit transfer purposes. Therefore, the credits for individuals who transfer into Ringling College with a conferred AS or AAS degree will have their transcripts evaluated on a course-by-course basis. The reason for this is that AS and AAS degree requirements typically do not include the types of courses that are foundational and fundamental to an art and design education. Our accreditations also mandate certain requirements which Ringling College must meet to award degrees.

This course-by-course analysis is also the same process that Ringling College applies to the request for the transfer of credits by individuals who may have earned credits (but not conferred degrees) at other accredited institutions of higher education; Ringling College evaluates the transcript on a course-by-course basis to determine the credits that can be transferred.

D. Minimum Residency and Transfer Credit Maximum

Ringling College has certain general parameters regarding the transfer credit and residency. First, only a total of sixty-six (66) semester hours of credit may be transferred. Second, a minimum of fifty-four (54) semester hours must be completed at Ringling College. Third, the final two academic years of study within the student's major must be completed at the College.

E. Course Equivalency Determination Process at Ringling College

When a course is submitted for transfer credit consideration which does not have a direct alignment with a course offered at Ringling College, Ringling College evaluates the course by reviewing the transferring institution's course catalog as it compares to Ringling College's catalog. Specifically, Ringling College's Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies assesses the course description and stated student learning outcomes to determine equivalency; if deemed equivalent, Ringling College will award credit for the course completed elsewhere (assuming other requirements like minimum grades are met).

Finally, from a larger institutional perspective, it is our plan to pre-determine and set forth all course equivalencies in the Articulation Agreements entered into between any Sending Institution and Ringling College. (To address possible credit being awarded for Sending

Institution courses that are not listed in Appendix C, Ringling College’s Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will use the process set forth above. Ringling College will determine equivalency based on course descriptions and student learning outcomes as set forth in the course catalogs at Sending Institution and Ringling College.)

F. Treatment and No Transfer of D, F, and W Grades

Ringling College will consider for transfer any liberal arts or studio art credit that meets its academic requirements and for which a grade of C or better was earned at an accredited college or university. For clarity, no transfer credit for courses where a grade of “D”, “F” or “W” was earned is eligible for transfer.

IV. Identifying Transfer Pathways

Ringling College will outline transfer pathways with each institution in individualized Articulation Agreements. The reason for this is that one Florida College System (“FCS”) institution may offer a program, like film for example, which is well aligned with Ringling College’s program where another FCS does not have such a program at all.

V. Addressing Baccalaureate Program Prerequisites for Upper Courses

If students did not complete specific Baccalaureate program prerequisites during lower-division study, Ringling College allows students to request “Permission of Instructor” for enrollment consideration in a particular course. That permission process may include the student submitting a portfolio of relevant work for consideration. The Department Head of the Program in which the applicable course falls determines the specific process to be followed in that department.

VI. Program Termination and Teach-Out Plans

Ringling College follows teach-out requirements of its accrediting body, NASAD, under which every enrolled student is guaranteed a complete teach-out plan if their program is discontinued.

These standards are found in the 2025–2026 NASAD Handbook:

<https://nasad.arts-accredit.org/accreditation/standards-guidelines/handbook/>

These same standards would apply to any student who transfers into Ringling College through an Articulation Agreement or otherwise.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
AND
[NAME OF INSTITUTION]

This Articulation Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into as of this __ day of _____, 20__, (“Effective Date”) by and between Ringling College of Art and Design, Inc., (“Ringling College”) and _____ (“Sending Institution”).

WHEREAS, the parties desire to offer students the broadest possible range of educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the parties desire to establish specific articulation provisions to facilitate the transfer of qualified students from Sending Institution to Ringling College.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and other good and valuable consideration, the parties agree to cooperate in accordance with the terms set forth herein.

1. Purpose of Agreement

The purpose of this Agreement is to confirm the transfer eligibility and the application for admissions process for qualified students of Sending Institution (“SI Students”) to be admitted to Ringling College (“Transfer Program”). Ringling College and Sending Institution have mutually developed and agreed upon the following appendices attached to this Agreement and made a part hereof:

A. Appendix A is a list of programs at Ringling College into which SI Students could potentially transfer into with junior standing.

B. Appendix B is a list of programs at Sending Institution which are appropriate for the Transfer Program.

C. Appendix C is a list of course equivalencies between Sending Institution and Ringling College.

2. Transfer Eligibility and Application Process

To be eligible for the Transfer Program, SI Students are required to meet the minimum academic requirements and to apply with the elements set forth below.

A. Minimum Academic Requirements

SI Students must be able to demonstrate:

- i. Successful completion of two (2) years in a BFA or BA Program, an Associate in Arts ("AA") degree, or an Associate in Science ("AS") degree in one of the programs listed in Appendix B at Sending Institution with a cumulative grade point ratio of 3.0 or higher¹;
- ii. Successful completion of the required courses listed in Appendix C attached hereto and made a part of this Agreement. For clarity, Appendix C sets forth course equivalencies between Sending Institution and Ringling College. To address possible credit being awarded for Sending Institution courses that are not listed in Appendix C, Ringling College's Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will determine equivalency based on course descriptions and student learning outcomes as set forth in the course catalogs at Sending Institution and Ringling College;
- iii. Meet all Ringling College transfer credit requirements, including general education courses, in effect at the time of the SI Student's most recent enrollment at Sending Institution; and
- iv. A grade of "C", or better, in all courses for which the SI Student is seeking credit in a transfer to Ringling College. (For clarity, credit for classes where the SI Student earned a grade of "D", "F" or "W" are not eligible for transfer.) Only the course credit is transferred. Transfer credit is not used in the calculation of grade point average. No more than the equivalent of sixty-six (66) semester hours of credit will be accepted from Sending Institution or other accredited higher education institution.

B. Application Process

As part of the application, SI Students will prepare and submit the following for Ringling College's review and approval as meeting its standards:

- i. A Portfolio representative of SI Student's work completed during enrollment at Sending Institution and that meets Ringling College's portfolio requirements for the program into which the SI Student seeks entry as such requirements may vary; and
- ii. A Letter of Intent addressing SI Student's interest and intention in enrolling at Ringling College into one of the programs listed in Appendix A.

3. Obligations of Ringling College

¹ Please note that only those who have been awarded AA degrees are eligible for block credit transfer under this Articulation Agreement. If a prospective transfer student has been awarded an AS or Associate of Applied Science ("AAS") degree from a Florida College System Institution, Ringling College will consider and confirm transfer and credit eligibility on an individualized basis.

A. Ringling College will identify an individual to serve as the coordinator and point of contact for the Transfer Program.

B. Ringling College will accept all courses as outlined in Appendix C with a grade of "C" or better, as part of the AA or AS Degree from Sending Institution. Transfer credits (C or higher) from Sending Institution will be used to meet the graduation requirements.

C. For SI Students enrolled under the Transfer Program, Ringling College will apply the applicable undergraduate Curriculum in effect during the student's most recent enrollment at Sending Institution.

D. Admit SI Students who have satisfied the requirements outlined herein.

4. Obligations of Sending Institution

A. Sending Institution will provide regular opportunities for a representative from Ringling College to meet with students who have indicated an interest in the Transfer Program.

B. Sending Institution will assist Ringling College in the distribution of transfer materials to individuals, including alumni as well as prospective and current students.

C. Sending Institution has the responsibility to certify and document on the student transcript that the SI Student has completed the stated requirements for the associate degree program. The academic record from Sending Institution shall include all courses attempted and an official copy will be provided to Ringling College.

D. Sending Institution will provide Ringling College with introductions and access to contacts to plan and present virtual and on-site presentations for general recruitment purposes. In addition, the Sending Institution will provide guidance on the appropriate process and protocol to follow in requesting faculty appointments and virtual or classroom presentations. Those contacts will include, but are not limited to faculty, program directors, advisors, managers and other school personnel. Sending Institution will appoint one of its academic advisors as the individual responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Transfer Program.

E. Sending Institution will provide such SI Student data and documents as necessary to assist in the maintenance and improvement of the transfer arrangements identified in this Agreement. All data shall be provided in compliance with federal, state, and local laws relevant to the monitoring and execution of this agreement. Both parties will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regarding the exchange of student information.

5. Mutual Obligations

Both parties accept the following responsibilities:

A. To use best efforts to inform potential transfer students about the Transfer Program. Examples of possible informational activities may include, but are not limited to, media announcements, brochures or fliers, information sessions for students at Sending Institution.

B. To mutually develop an individualized advising plan for each student interested in the Transfer Program, which will be based on the Ringling College Course Catalog in effect at that time.

6. Accreditation

Ringling College and Sending Institution will maintain accreditation with the appropriate accrediting agencies/bodies recognized by the United States Department of Education and will operate in accordance with those accreditation requirements.

7. Marketing, Outreach, and Trademarks

In the event of any agreed upon shared marketing effort, the parties will provide updated logos to produce co-branded promotional material. Both parties reserve the right to review in advance any information including, but not limited to, websites, co-branded web portals, and in-print marketing publications. Co-branding must be mutually agreed upon in writing by the parties.

For any approved co-branding, the parties grant to each other a limited non-exclusive, non-transferable license to use each other's trademarks and service marks in furtherance of the articulation coordination detailed herein or in a manner solely for the purpose of identifying and communicating the existence of this relationship to Sending Institution's students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Use of trademarks, service marks and logos will comply with use policies of the originating institution. The parties shall discontinue the use of the licensed marks and return any and all files and materials containing the licensed marks supplied by the owner at termination or expiration of the Agreement. Neither party grants to the other any permanent or exclusive interest in the other party's trademarks. Should either originating institution request, in writing, that a particular use of the originating institution's trademarks and/or service marks be discontinued, the non-originating institution shall immediately cease and desist such use of the trademarks and/or service marks.

8. Miscellaneous

A. Term and Termination. This Agreement shall remain in effect until terminated. Either party may terminate the Agreement with six (6) months prior written notice to the other party for any reason. For clarity, Ringling College follows teach-out requirements of its accrediting body, NASAD, under which every enrolled student is guaranteed a complete teach-

out plan if their program is discontinued.

B. Modifications. Any modifications, additions, or deletions to this Agreement must be in writing and signed by both parties.

C. Applicable Law. This Agreement will be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.

D. Merger. This Agreement sets forth the entire understanding of the parties hereto and supersedes any and all prior agreement, arrangement, and understandings, oral or written, of any nature whatsoever, between the parties with respect to the subject matter.

E. Communication and Notice. To foster communication between Ringling College and Sending Institution, the following individuals will serve as liaison officers for matters relating to this Agreement:

Ringling College:
Elena M. Paul
General Counsel
2700 N. Tamiami Trail
Sarasota, FL 34234
Epaul1@ringling.edu

Sending Institution:

Both parties agree to notify the other of any changes in contact information for their respective liaison officers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the Effective Date.

RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN, INC.

Elena M. Paul
General Counsel

[SENDING INSTITUTION]

Name

Title

APPENDIX A

Ringling College Programs for Articulated Transfers under Articulation Agreement which can include the following:

1. Business of Art and Design, Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree Program
2. Creative Technology, Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) Degree Program
3. Creative Writing, BFA Degree Program
4. Entertainment Design, BFA Degree Program
5. Fine Art, BFA Degree Program
6. Graphic Design, BFA Degree Program
7. Visual Studies, BA Degree Program

APPENDIX B

[TBD Sending Institution Programs to be jointly developed for Articulation Agreement]

APPENDIX C

Transfer Credit Audit & Analysis

General Education Courses (18 Credits)

RCAD Course	Partner Course#	Partner Course Title	Credits
LIBA 111: Contemporary Design Culture			
LMST 282: Literature & Media Studies			
WRIT 151: Writing Studio			
One (1) Writing Elective			
One (1) Literature and Media Studies Course			
One (1) Social and Behavioral Sciences Course			
One (1) Scientific Practices Course			
One (1) Arts and Humanities Course			
ARTH 111: Development of Art and Ideas			
ARTH 129: History of Digital Media			
Upper-Level Art History Elective			

Upper-Level Art History Elective			
BOAD 151: Introduction to Creative Business Management			
One (1) General Education Elective			
Open Elective			
Open Elective			
Open Elective			
Open Elective			

First Year (X Credits)

RCAD Course	Partner Course#	Partner Course Title	Credits
DSNA 112: 2D Design 1			
DSNA 122: 2D Design 2			
DSNA 113: 3D Design I			
STDA 115: Lens-Based Communication			
STDA 148: Intro to Time Based Media			

Art and Design Courses (6 Credits)

RCAD Course	Partner Course#	Partner Course Title	Credits
GDES 124: Intro to UI/UX			
Art and Design Course			

Art and Design Course			
Art and Design Course			
Art and Design Course			
Art and Design Course			

Technology and Media Courses (X Credits)

RCAD Course	Partner Course#	Partner Course Title	Credits
Technology and Media Course			
Technology and Media Course			
Technology and Media Course			
Technology and Media Course			
Technology and Media Course			