

First Degree Program

Degree Completion between

*Holyoke Community College
&
Bay Path University*

Holyoke Community College and Bay Path University have committed themselves to improving student persistence and degree completion at our institutions.

Ensuring students obtain a degree at each of our institutions deserves our attention and collective resources. Through this program we will be improving our rates of graduation, thus effectively serving as a measure of our success and the educational impact on the lives of our students. As such, we agree to participate and support the **First Degree Program** developed jointly between our institutions that tracks student enrollment between Holyoke Community College and Bay Path University and encourage students to complete their Associate degree by using applicable college-level credits earned at Bay Path University.

The nature of a community college student is to co- and cross-enroll at multiple institutions. Therefore our institutions need to continue to support the postsecondary academic needs of individuals in Western Massachusetts. Economic data indicates that graduates of our institutions remain in this region supporting and improving the local labor market and economies.

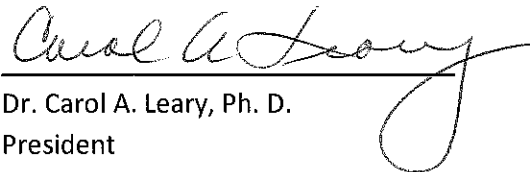
We commit our administrative resources to this program while assuring compliance with all applicable state and federal records and privacy laws.

Holyoke Community College



Dr. William Messner, Ph.D.
President

Bay Path University



Dr. Carol A. Leary, Ph. D.
President

Date 4/10/15

First Degree

Program Goal

The goal of the **First Degree Program** is to promote a partnership between Holyoke Community College and Bay Path University that values degree completion while improving student persistence and retention rates.

Overview

Students who transfer from Holyoke Community College may continue to work toward the completion of their associate degree while matriculated at the Bay Path University. The targeted outcome will be to increase persistence and retention acting as partners in supporting student success.

National data has shown an increase in student mobility in the students second year of college, meaning that students are not completing their first college's degree requirements. With the First Degree partnership we can promote student graduation and retention while showing students our strong commitment to their educational success.

Implementation

Each semester Bay Path University will identify students who have transferred from Holyoke Community College that have not completed the Associate degree. Then the names and addresses of these non-graduates will be forwarded to the Transfer Affairs office at Holyoke Community College. A letter will be sent to each student seeing if they would like to participate in the **First Degree Program**. The letter will encourage students to continue their enrollment at Bay Path University while simultaneously having applicable credits applied toward their Holyoke Community College associate degree.

Once a student has satisfied the associate degree requirements, Holyoke Community College will complete the application for graduation; moving the student toward the awarding of their degree. The student will then be invited to participate in commencement activities at Holyoke Community College. Holyoke Community College will then notify the **Transfer Admissions** office at Bay Path University when a student has successfully completed his/her associate degree.

Students participating in the **First Degree Program** and transfer credits back to Holyoke Community College from Bay Path University will not be eligible for waiver of general education requirements. In order to receive these benefits student must have eligible before they started at Bay Path University.

Only courses that fulfill both graduation requirements at Holyoke Community College and Bay Path University will be honored, students cannot change majors or request for a course overload at Bay Path University in order to fulfill Holyoke Community College graduation requirements.