



San Diego Community College District

City College · Mesa College · Miramar College · College of Continuing Education

Administrative Procedure

Chapter 4 — Instructional Services

AP 4025 – PHILOSOPHY AND CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREES AND GENERAL EDUCATION

DEFINITIONS

Major:

A “major” is a focused program of study within a specific discipline, which may include some coursework outside the primary discipline. Programs designed to provide transfer preparation must be designed to meet specific lower-division requirements in comparable baccalaureate majors.

Area of Emphasis:

An “area of emphasis” is an interdisciplinary program of study encompassing a broad range of courses from multiple related academic disciplines, providing the student with an academic pathway broader than a specific major but more focused than general education.

Integrative baccalaureate-level courses:

“Integrative baccalaureate-level courses” draw broad connections between multiple perspectives and methodologies and demonstrate relationships within or between disciplines.

Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) and Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) Degrees

The Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) or the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degree is intended for students who plan to complete a baccalaureate degree in a similar major at a CSU campus. Each AA-T or AS-T is accepted by some but not all CSU campuses.

The following is required for all AA-T and AS-T degrees:

1. 60 CSU transferable semester units;
2. Minimum grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in all CSU-transferable coursework. While a minimum of 2.0 is required for admission, some CSU campuses and majors may require a higher GPA;
3. Completion of all required courses in the major with a grade of “C” or better. A “P” (pass) grade meets this requirement.

4. Completion of the requirements for an approved intersegmental lower-division general education pattern used for transfer to the University of California or the California State University.

Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) Degrees

The Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree is intended for students interested in career technical education or transfer preparation. All associate degrees shall be one of two general types: associate of arts or associate of science.

1. The “Associate of Science” (AS) degree will be awarded in the areas of science, technology, engineering or mathematics; or areas of career technical education; and;
2. The “Associate of Arts” (AA) degree will be awarded in all areas not included in subdivision 1.

The following are required for all AA and AS degrees:

1. A minimum of 60 associate degree applicable semester units in lower division credit courses, including courses that apply to the major or area of emphasis in career technical field and courses in composition, reading, and mathematics or quantitative reasoning no more than one level below transfer level. Below transfer level course requirements must align with Education Code section 78213;
2. A minimum of 18 semester units of focused study in a major or interdisciplinary area of emphasis.
3. A minimum of 21 semester units of general education in the areas described below, or completion of the requirements for an approved intersegmental lower-division general education pattern used for transfer to the University of California or the California State University:
 - a. English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking (minimum of 6 semester/8 quarter units) including:
 - 1) English Composition (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement must be baccalaureate-level and include expository and argumentative writing.
 - 2) Oral Communication and Critical Thinking (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement must be baccalaureate-level and may include oral communication and critical thinking courses.
 - b. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement must be at least college-level and may include mathematics or quantitative reasoning courses, including logic, statistics, computer languages, and related disciplines.
 - c. Arts and Humanities (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses in the humanities study the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings.

Such courses develop students' awareness of how people throughout the ages and in different cultures respond to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation and develop students' aesthetic understandings and abilities to make value judgments. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in the visual and performing arts, art history, foreign languages, literature, philosophy, religion, and related disciplines.

- d. Social and Behavioral Sciences (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses in the social and behavioral sciences focus on people as members of society and develop awareness of the methods of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. They stimulate critical thinking about how people act and have acted in response to their societies and promote appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in cultural anthropology, cultural geography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and related disciplines.
 - e. Natural Sciences (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses in the natural sciences examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena, helping students appreciate and understand the scientific method and the relationships between science and other human activities. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physical anthropology, physics, and other scientific disciplines.
 - f. Ethnic Studies (minimum of 3 semester / 4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement may include baccalaureate-level courses in the four autonomous disciplines within Ethnic Studies: Black Studies; African American Studies; Africana Studies; Native American Studies; Chicano/a/x, Latino/a/x Studies/La Raza Studies; and Asian American Studies.
- 4. Minimum grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in the 18-unit general education requirement;
 - 5. Minimum GPA of at least 2.0 in all associate degree applicable courses;
 - 6. Completion of all required courses in the major with a grade of "C" or better. A "P" (pass) grade meets this requirement.
 - 7. Completion of District Residency Requirements;
 - a. A minimum of 12 associate degree applicable semester units completed in residence at the College awarding the degree within the college district; and
 - b. A minimum of 6 semester units in the major completed in residence within the college district.
 - 8. One of the following General Education options;
 - a. Option 1 San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) General Education and District Requirements including:

- 1) American Institutions/California Government;
- 2) Health Education;
- 3) Exercise Science Activity; and
- 4) Multicultural Studies.

b. Option 2 CSU General Education Breadth (CSU GE Pattern):

Effective Fall 2025, the CSU General Education pattern (Option 2) will be deactivated and no longer available for general education certification to the California State University (CSU) system. Students with catalog rights prior to Fall 2025 may continue to use this pattern.

c. Option 3 Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) pattern;

Effective Fall 2025, the Intersegmental General Transfer Curriculum pattern will be deactivated and no longer available for general education certification to the California State University system or University of California system. Students with catalog rights prior to Fall 2025 may continue to use this pattern.

d. Option 4 SDCCD General Education Requirements. Students selecting this option should meet with a counselor to determine the appropriate General Education courses for their individual transfer goals. Note Option 4 is only available for transfer students with a declared major in liberal arts and sciences degrees or a degree designed transfer students as specified in the college catalog; or;

e. Option 5 Students who submit an official transcript showing they have earned a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution will have satisfied the SDCCD associate degree general education and District requirements by having previously completed the baccalaureate degree.

f. Option 6: California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)

g. Regardless of the option chosen students must complete a minimum of 21 semester (31.5 quarter) units of general education, including a minimum of three semester (four quarter) units in each of the areas:

1) English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking;

a) English Composition

b) Communication and Critical Thinking

2) English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking;

3) Arts and Humanities

4) Social and Behavioral Sciences

5) Natural Sciences

6) Ethnic Studies

Program Recency

Program Recency may be established to require major courses to be completed within a minimum of 36 months prior to the date of awarding the degree or certificate and shall:

1. Be established by discipline faculty only if it has been determined a significant lapse of time will have an impact on a student's ability to successfully fulfill the goals and objectives;
2. Be stated in the official outline of record; and
3. Be required of all students in the program.

Institutionally Accredited Institutions

Courses that meet or exceed the standards of the California Community Colleges completed at other institutionally accredited institutions shall be counted toward associate degree unit requirements.

Additional Degree

A student having received an associate or baccalaureate degree may qualify for an additional Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree in a new major or concentration.

An additional degree:

1. Permits upgrading or preparation for upgrading current employment.
2. Prepares for employment in an area different from that provided by previous training.
3. Provides general knowledge leading to fulfillment of personal goals.
4. Allows the student to improve priority of transfer applications by earning an Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT).

The following requirements are applicable:

1. A student must earn a minimum of 6 mutually exclusive required semester units in the new major or emphasis. A minimum of twelve (12) semester degree-applicable units must be completed in residence within the college district
2. A student must fulfill current catalog associate degree requirements.

3. In order to receive an additional college degree, the student must file a Petition for Graduation in the Evaluations Office. Counselors will review all previous college work to determine the student's eligibility for a second degree.

ADT Exemption:

Students who have previously been awarded an Associate Degree, and wish to receive one ADT in the same or similar major, will be exempt from the additional unit requirement of 6 new units.

Students who intend to transfer shall be advised of limitations of transfer institutions may place on the transferability of credits based on institutional accreditation, course modality, and any other relevant factors.

Credit for Prior Learning:

Students may receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through a district's procedures for awarding credit for prior learning. See AP 4235.

Reference: California Code of Regulations, title 5, Sections 55061; 55070, 55072, 51022, 55130, and 55600 et seq.;
Education Code: Sections 70901, and 70902, 78106;
WASC/ACCJC Accreditation Standard 2 II.A

Adopted: 02/10/17

Revised: 11/18/19, 04/09/25

Supersedes: AP 5025 – *Renumbered to 4025*