



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

4100

DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

Coursework for Associate Degrees

For the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree, a student must demonstrate competence in reading, in written expression, and in mathematics. The student must complete at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable lower-division credit courses, including courses that apply to the major area of emphasis in career technical fields and courses in composition, reading, and mathematics or quantitative reasoning not more than one level below transfer. Below transfer level course requirements must align with Education Code Section 78213.

The courses must include at least 18 semester units or 27 quarter units of focused study in a major or interdisciplinary area of emphasis.

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.

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.

The courses must include at least 21 semester units or 28-31.5 quarter units of general education. General education must include a minimum of work in (1a) English Composition, (1b) Oral Communication or Critical Thinking, (2) Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning, (3) Arts, Humanities, and Culture (4) Social and Behavioral Sciences, (5) Natural Sciences, (6) Ethnic Studies, and (7) Personal Growth and Development, Health, Activity and Wellness. Students who complete general education coursework at institutions outside of the California Community College, CSU, or UC systems may still receive credit toward general education requirements in accordance with Title 5 and Cal-GETC standards. Additionally, students who obtained general education certification prior to earning an associate degree may continue to apply that certification toward the degree, even if they no longer maintain catalog rights.

Other Conditions for Awarding Associate Degrees

The District will award an associate degree to students who fulfill the coursework requirements described above or completed the requirements for an approved intersegmental lower-division general education pattern used for transfer to the University of California or the California State University and who meet the following conditions:

The student completed at least 12 semester units or 18 quarter units of study in residence. The Board may excuse the residence requirement to alleviate injustice or undue hardship.

The student satisfactorily completed each course counted toward the major or area of emphasis requirement with a grade of “C” or better, or of “P” if the course is taken on a “pass-no pass” basis.

The student completed the requirements for the associate degree with a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.0 in the degree-applicable courses. If a student accumulates units beyond those required for the degree that lower the student’s cumulative grade-point average below 2.0, the District may compute the grade-point average based solely on those courses used to satisfy the degree requirements, provided that the coursework used to compute the grade-point average fulfill all major or area of emphasis and general education requirements.

Courses that meet or exceed the standards of the California Community Colleges completed at other institutionally recognized accredited institutions shall be counted toward associate degree unit requirements. A course may not be counted in more than one general education area, even if the course is approved in multiple general education areas. Students may use the same course to meet a local general education requirement and to satisfy a general education requirement of the California State University or the University of California if that segment accepts the course for this purpose.

Students may receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through the District’s procedures for awarding credit for prior learning. In addition, students can earn credit by earning the required score on an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or College Level Examination Program (CLEP).

Students who have been awarded a bachelor’s degree from an institutionally accredited institution shall be deemed to have fulfilled the general education course requirements for the associate degree.

Students may petition to have noncredit courses counted toward the satisfaction of requirements for an associate degree.

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

In response to the Chancellor’s Office Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Call to Action, and in accordance with revisions to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, implemented in July 2020, students must demonstrate competence in ethnic studies to qualify for an associate degree.

Certificates of Achievement and Other Credit Programs

For a certificate of achievement, a student must successfully complete a course of study or curriculum that consists of 16 or more semester units or 24 or more quarter units of degree-applicable credit coursework. The certificate of achievement shall be designed to demonstrate that the student has completed coursework and developed capabilities relating to career or general education.

Shorter credit programs that lead to a certificate may be established by the District when the program of study consists of 8 – 15.5 semester units and is approved by the Chancellor’s Office.

Content and assessment standards for certificates shall ensure that certificate programs are

consistent with the mission of the Desert Community College District, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement.

Certificates for which California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office approval is not sought may be given any name or designation deemed appropriate except for certificate of achievement, certificate of completion, or certificate of competency.

The District may obtain approval of a direct assessment competency-based program from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's office.

References:

Title 5 Sections 55060 et seq. and 55270 et seq.

Administrator: VP Instruction

Board Review/Information Item: October 20, 2023

Executive Cabinet Review: February 11, 2025

Educational Policies and Practices Committee, 1st Reading: March 6, 2025

Educational Policies and Practices Committee, 2nd Reading: May 1, 2025

Academic Senate, 1st Reading: September 11, 2025

Academic Senate, 2nd Reading: October 23, 2025

College Planning Council, 1st Reading: October 31, 2025

College Planning Council, 2nd Reading: November 21, 2025

Board of Trustees, Information Item: December 19, 2025

Next Review: 2026-2027