



Reference: *Title 5 Sections 55002 and 55060 et seq.*

Coursework for Associate Degrees

The Governing Board of the West Hills Community College District shall confer the degree of Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree upon a student who has satisfactorily completed at least 60 semester units of degree applicable lower division credit courses, including courses that apply to the major or 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 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.

General education must include a minimum of work in the following:

- English Composition
- Oral Communication or Critical Thinking
- Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
- Arts and Humanities
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Natural Sciences
- Ethnic Studies

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 satisfactorily completed at least 12 semester units of study in residence. The Board may excuse the residence requirement to alleviate injustice or undue hardship as determined by the Chancellor or designee.
- The student satisfactorily completed each course counted toward the major area of emphasis requirement with a grade of “C” or better, or “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 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 requirement and to satisfy a general education requirement at 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 a district's procedures for awarding credit for prior learning.

Students who have been awarded a bachelor's degree from an 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.

Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADTs)

The ADT is awarded when the student meets all of the following requirements:

1. 60 (sixty) semester units transferrable to California State University including both of the following:
 - a. Minimum of 18 semester units in a major or area of emphasis as defined in the college catalog with each course completed with a 2.0 GPA or higher;
 - b. The California State University General Education (CSU-GE) – Breadth Requirements or CSU Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).
2. Minimum overall transferable grade point average of 2.0

No other local district requirements are imposed on ADT programs.

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.

Certificates of Achievement and Other Credit Programs

Certificates of achievement may be awarded for state Chancellor's Office approved programs of study of 16 or more semester units or 24 or more quarter units. Lower unit certificates of achievement may also be awarded when the program consists of 8-16 units and is approved by the state Chancellor's Office. All certificate courses require grades of C or above, a minimum of 12 semester units completed from Coalinga College and/or Lemoore College, and all coursework as defined in the college catalogs. The certificate of achievement shall be designed to demonstrate that the student has completed coursework and developed capabilities relating to career or general education.

Noncredit Certificates of Completion or Competency

The colleges may offer noncredit programs of two or more courses to prepare students for employment or to be successful in college-level credit coursework. Noncredit courses offered in the four distinct categories (instructional domains) of English as a Second Language (ESL), elementary and secondary basic skills, short-term vocational, and workforce preparation are eligible when sequenced to lead to a Chancellor's Office approved certificate of completion or certificate of competency in accordance with the provisions of the California Education Code governing Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) programs.

Local Certificates

Shorter credit programs that lead to a local certificate may be established by the District. Content and assessment standards for certificates shall ensure that certificate programs are consistent with the mission of the District, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement. At least one course used for completion of a local certificate must be in residence. A minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA or the equivalent and a grade of C or better in certificate coursework is required.

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.

Date: 5/26/09

Reviewed/Revised: 9/27/11; 11/13/18; 1/17/25