



References: Title 5 Section 55060; 55061, 55062, and 55090 et seq.;
Accreditation Standard 2
WHCCD Administrative Procedure 4100

The West Hills Community College District's programs are consistent with the institutional mission, vision, and core values of the colleges, as well as the demographics and economics of their communities.

West Hills Community College District may approve associate degrees that meet the following course requirements:

- (a) A minimum of 60 semester units (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.
- (b) A minimum of 18 semester units (27 quarter units) of focused study in a major or interdisciplinary area of emphasis.
 - 1) 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.
 - 2) 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 associate degree is awarded to students who have successfully demonstrated that they have developed intellectual skills, information technology facility, affective and creative capabilities, social attitudes, and an appreciation for cultural diversity. In addition to these accomplishments, students graduating with an associate degree shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest and career pursuit. Majors or areas of emphasis that provide this depth are composed of a minimum of 18 units. Students completing this program demonstrate the following:

- The ability to think critically and communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing;

- Broad understanding of mathematics, science, social science, humanities, and the arts;
- Critical thinking skills for problem solving;
- Awareness of other cultures and times;
- Achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and
- Develop the capacity for self-understanding, social awareness and responsibility as a participating member of society.

The philosophy and criteria regarding the baccalaureate degree should address the considerations contained in the references listed above and reference the District's baccalaureate degree goals, which shall include addressing unmet local and regional workforce needs.

General education introduces the content and methodology of major areas of knowledge. Its purpose is to encourage students to select a broad spectrum of classes. Students completing this program are able to demonstrate the following:

- General education is designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world.
- General education introduces the content and methodology of the major areas of knowledge and provides an opportunity for students to develop intellectual skills, information technology facility, affective and creative capabilities, social attitudes, and an appreciation for cultural diversity.

Students receiving an associate degree shall complete a minimum of 21 semester units of general education coursework which includes a minimum of three (3) semester units in each of the following areas:

1. English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking (minimum of 6 semester/8 quarter units) including:
 - a. English Composition (minimum of 3 semester/4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement must be baccalaureate-level and include expository and argumentative writing. Courses in this area must be completed with a grade of "C" or better, or "P" if the course is taken on a "pass/no pass" basis.
 - b. Oral Communication OR 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. Courses in this area must be completed with a grade of "C" or better, or "P" if the course is taken on a "pass/no pass" basis.
2. 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. Courses in this area must be completed with a grade of "C" or better, or "P" if the course is taken on a "pass/no pass" basis.

3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Natural Sciences (minimum of 3 semester/4 quarter units). Courses in the natural sciences explore the physical universe, its life forms, its natural phenomena, and how the scientific method is used to advance our understanding of the natural world and drive innovation. Such courses develop students' ability to apply scientific knowledge to real world issues, which may include learning about effects of human activities on introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level coursework in astronomy, biology, chemistry, environmental science, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physical anthropology, physics, and related scientific disciplines.
6. 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; Lantino/a/x Studies/La Raza Studies; and Asian American Studies.

§ 55062. Conditions for Awarding the Associate Degree

- (a) District governing boards shall confer the associate degree upon students who have fulfilled the course requirements of section 55061, and who have met the following conditions:
 - 1) Satisfactory completion of at least 12 semester units (18 quarter units) in residence within the college district. Governing boards shall adopt policies that permit students to obtain waivers of this requirement in order to alleviate injustice and undue hardship.

- 2) Satisfactory completion of 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.
 - 3) Completion of a minimum of 21 semester units (or 28-31.5 quarter units) general education pattern pursuant to section 55061, 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; and
 - 4) Completion of the requirements for the associate degree with a minimum of cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in the degree- applicable courses. If units accumulated beyond those required for the degree lower a student’s cumulative grade point average below 2.0, colleges 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/area of emphasis and general education requirements.
- (b) 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.
- (c) Courses may meet multiple requirements, including general education, a major or area of emphasis, and additional requirements stated in section 55061 when courses are locally approved to meet multiple requirements. However, one 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 at the California State University or the University of California if that segment accepts the course for this purpose.
- (d) Students may receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through a district’s procedures for awarding credit for prior learning.
- (e) Students who have been awarded a bachelor's degree from an institutionally accredited institution in the United States shall be deemed to have fulfilled the general education course requirements for the associate degree.
- (f) The governing board of each community college district shall establish procedures by which a student may petition to have completion of a noncredit course counted toward satisfaction of the requirements for an associate degree.
- (g) 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.

Note: Authority cited: Section 70901, Education Code: Sections 709101 and 70902, Education Code.

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