



Book	VCCCD Administrative Procedure Manual
Section	Chapter 4 Academic Affairs
Title	AP 4100 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES
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As authorized by the California Code of Regulations, Title 5 (Education) section 55063, the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) Governing Board confers the Associate in Arts degree, the Associate in Science degree, Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T), the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) and Certificates of Achievement on students who provide the required transcripts, meet the respective requirements listed in this administrative procedure and the college catalog, and who file with the appropriate college office an application for a degree and/or certificates. In accordance with Title 5 section 55070, the VCCCD also confers locally approved Proficiency Awards.

Only those courses which have been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with Title 5, Section 55063 and that meet the standards and criteria described in Title 5, Section 55002 and have been properly approved pursuant to this section, shall be applied to any degree or certificate awarded by the district. Courses completed at regionally accredited institutions other than a California community college, are expected to meet the same standards. District policies and procedures regarding general education and program requirements must be published in the college catalog and must be filed with the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO).

Graduation Requirements for Degrees, Certificates, and Proficiency Awards of the District Colleges must address the following:

## **Associate Degrees and Associate Degrees for Transfer**

For the Associate in Arts (AA) or Associate in Science (AS) degree, a student must:

- Demonstrate competency in reading, in written expression, and in mathematics as defined in Title 5 section 55063 for the appropriate catalog year.
- Satisfactorily complete at least 60 semester units of degree-applicable college work.
- Achieve a cumulative grade point average of no less than 2.0 in all degree-applicable college and university coursework attempted.
- Complete the major and/or area of emphasis coursework, a minimum of 18 semester units, prescribed in a State Chancellor's Office approved AA or AS degree with no less than a "C" or "P" (formerly "CR") in each course.
- Complete the required specified subjects and units in general education as defined in AP 4025.
- Complete a minimum of 12 semester units in residency at the college granting the degree. Exceptions to the residency requirement can be made by the Board when an injustice or undue hardship would result.

For the Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) or the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degrees a student must:

- Complete 60 CSU transferable semester units.
- Achieve a CSU transferable GPA of no less than 2.0.
- Complete the major coursework, a minimum of 18 semester units, prescribed in a State Chancellor's Office approved AA-T or AS-T with no less than a "C" or "P" (formerly "CR") in each course.
- Complete the CSU GE-Breadth pattern or IGETC pattern for CSU.
- Complete 12 semester units in residence at the college granting the degree.

## **Certificates of Achievement**

For a Certificate of Achievement, a student must successfully complete a course of study that has been approved by the CCCCCO and that consists of 18 or more semester 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. Certificate programs may also be approved for fewer units (a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 17.5 semester units of degree-applicable credit coursework), in this case, the same scholarship and residency standards would apply.

For a Certificate of Achievement, a student must:

- Complete the major coursework, a minimum of 18 semester units (or between 12 and 17.5 units in a low-unit certificate), prescribed in a State Chancellor's Office approved Certificate of Achievement.
- Complete all applicable coursework in a state approved Certificate of Achievement with no less than a "C" or "P" (formerly "CR") in each course.
- Achieve a cumulative GPA of no less than 2.0 in all degree-applicable college work.
- Complete 12 semester units in residence at the college granting the degree.

## **Proficiency Awards**

Shorter credit programs that lead to a Proficiency Award may be established by the District. Content and assessment standards for Proficiency Awards shall ensure that these programs are consistent with the District Colleges' mission, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement. Proficiency Awards cannot be memorialized on a student transcript.

For a Proficiency Award, a student must:

- Complete all applicable coursework in a Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) Board approved Proficiency Award with no less than a "C" or "P" (formerly "CR") in each course.

## **Graduation Application Procedure**

1. Students must file a petition for a degree and, certificate, through the Counseling Office/Center. For proficiency awards, check with the issuing department for the application procedure.
2. District Colleges offer three graduation dates: fall semester, and spring semester, and summer term.
3. Graduation ceremonies are conducted at the end of the spring semester.
4. Graduation petition deadline dates are locally announced at each District College.

## **Course Substitution for Major and/or General Education Requirements**

Occasionally a student may have difficulty in completing exact major and/or general education requirements as specified in the college catalog due to circumstances of class schedule conflicts, class cancellation, related but nonequivalent coursework taken outside of this college district, or circumstances beyond the control of the student. Under such circumstances, a student may file a Petition for Course Substitution/Petition for Variance for Major and/or General Education Requirements to seek approval from the appropriate college officials to substitute one or more courses in a designated major, an area of emphasis, and/or in general education. The petition forms are available in the Counseling Office/Center.

## **Reciprocity for Local General Education Requirements**

Colleges shall apply courses taken at other regionally accredited colleges or universities toward general education requirements in the areas where the student would have received credit at the institution where they were originally taken or in the area where the college granting the degree places or meets our GE criteria/description or would place a comparable course, whichever best facilitates the student's degree completion. (ASCCC Resolution 09.02 spring 2010)

## **Reciprocity for CSU GE-Breadth or Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) Requirements**

Students who are required to complete CSU GE-Breadth or IGETC for their particular degree, such as General Studies pattern III or Associate Degrees for Transfer, or Certificates of Achievement in CSU GE-Breadth or IGETC, shall have their courses evaluated for reciprocity according to the rules set forth by either CSU GE-Breadth in Executive Order (EO) 1065 or in the most current version of the IGETC Standards.

## **Course Substitution within approved Associate Degrees for Transfer (AA-T/AS-T)**

While the C-ID system establishes course-to-course reciprocity, where C-ID descriptors are not in place or where the substitution does not involve deeming two courses comparable, substitution decisions must be informed by the judgment of counseling or discipline faculty. When an AA-T or AS-T degree is being conferred, any substitutions made must result in the awarding of a degree that is consistent with the parameters defined by the TMC (Transfer Model Curriculum). The colleges are encouraged to apply courses successfully completed as part of a TMC-aligned degree at one college for requirements within their own degrees to the greatest extent deemed possible and reasonable, but substitutions should only be made in instances where the TMC allows flexibility, as the local AA-T or AS-T degree awarded must remain consistent with parameters of the TMC for the specific discipline. (ASCCC Resolution 15.01 Spring 2011 and ASCCC statements on Reciprocity, Course Substitution and Credit by Exam - in light of AA-T and AS-T degrees August 2012.)

## **Double Counting**

While a course might satisfy more than one general education requirement, it may not be counted more than once for these purposes within sections A-D of the district general education pattern. A course may not satisfy more than one requirement within a major and/or area of emphasis, even if it is an option in more than one section of either a major and/or area of emphasis. However, a course may be used to satisfy both a general education requirement and a major or area of emphasis requirement. A course may also be used to satisfy requirements in two (2) or more different majors, whether for an Associate degree, Associate degree for Transfer, Certificate of Achievement, or Proficiency Award. The units, however, may never be counted more than once toward the units required for the specific degree, certificate or proficiency award.

## **Catalog Rights/Continuous Enrollment**

A student remaining in continuous enrollment at one or more of the colleges of the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD) or at any other regionally accredited college or university, may meet the VCCCD graduation requirements in effect at the time of his/her entering or at any time thereafter. This applies only to graduation requirements and not to policies, procedures, or other regulations. Catalog rights/continuous enrollment are defined as attendance in at least one term each calendar year. Any academic record symbol entered on a transcript (A-F, CRE, P, NP, I, IP, RD, W, MW and prior to fall 2009: CR and NC) shall constitute enrollment or attendance.

A student who has not maintained continuous enrollment is considered to be under new requirements when returning unless the student is granted a petition/waiver for extenuating circumstances. This petition must be initiated by the student through a college counselor and approved by the appropriate dean or designee.

Students should be made aware that other governing agencies may impose more restrictive limitations concerning the definitions of continuous enrollment or continuous attendance. Some agencies define continuous enrollment as remaining in attendance both fall and spring semesters. Some will not accept selected academic record symbols (such as Ws). Those who may be affected by more restrictive guidelines include students receiving financial aid, veterans and alien students.

## **Academic Year**

The fall semester is the first term of an academic year. A summer term, whether one or more sessions, constitutes the last term of an academic year.

## **Guidelines for Additional Degrees, Certificates of Achievement, and Proficiency Awards**

Any college in the Ventura County Community College District will award additional associate degrees, certificates of achievement and proficiency awards to students under certain criteria which follow below. Students seeking an associate degree(s) and who have a previous degree from an accredited institution will only be required to complete minimum (1) residency, (2) competency, (3) general education minimum Title 5 requirements, (4) major and (5) scholarship requirements. There will be no additional local GE or health/PE requirements (see below).

**U.S. Degrees:** A student who has earned an associate degree or higher at any regionally accredited institution in the United States may earn additional associate degrees. Institutions must be regionally accredited by one of the following accrediting bodies:

- Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Higher Education
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on Technical and Career Institutions
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, The Higher Learning Commission
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

**Foreign Degrees:** A student who already holds an associate degree or higher degree from any foreign institution accredited by one of the above accepted regionally U.S. accrediting bodies or evaluated as equivalent to a regionally accredited institution by one of the member agencies of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services or one approved by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing may also earn additional degrees at one of the colleges of the VCCCD.

Students with transcripts in either of the above categories must complete the following minimum Title 5 requirements for the catalog year covering the additional degree(s). These include:

- Residency requirements: Students must complete a minimum of 12 semester units at the community college granting the degree.

- Competency requirements in reading, written expression and mathematics as defined by Title 5 section 55063. *Students pursuing an AA-T or AS-T will have met these competency requirements by completion of either CSU GE-Breadth or IGETC.*
- General Education - Title 5 minimums include 18 units of General Education with:
  - 3 semester units of Natural Sciences
  - 3 semester units of Social and Behavioral Sciences
  - 3 semester units of Arts and Humanities
  - 3 semester units in English Composition
  - 3 semester units in Communication and Analytical Thinking
  - 3 additional semester units in one of the five areas above.
- Major Requirements: Students must complete all required courses listed in the college catalog for the appropriate year for the specific major, Associate Degree for Transfer, area of emphasis or area of option for the additional degree(s).
- Scholarship: Students must meet the standards of scholarship in effect for the catalog year covering the additional degree(s) including the following:
  - Courses for Associate degree majors must have a grade of “C” or “P” or better beginning fall 2009.
  - Courses for Certificates of Achievement must have a grade of “C” or “P” or better beginning fall 2012.
  - Courses for Proficiency Awards must have a grade of “C” or “P” or better beginning fall 2012.

Additional degree can be in a specific major, General Studies with an area of emphasis, an Associate Degree for Transfer, or an additional option or emphasis within the major of the original degree.

Coursework taken for previously earned degrees may be used to fulfill the above requirements if deemed comparable by a counselor and/or discipline faculty.

No additional general education or local graduation requirements may be required.

### **Exceptions to Graduation Requirements**

Appeals to the above policy may be submitted to the Executive Vice President, or designee. Exceptions may be granted under extenuating circumstances or when there has not been sufficient opportunity to enroll in required courses.

### **Transfer Limitations**

Students should be aware that the conferring of additional degrees by any college within the VCCCD does not always guarantee admission or the accomplishment of general education or major requirements at transfer institutions.