Rancho Santiago Community College District
ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION
Chapter 4
Academic Affairs

AR 4100 Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates

Reference(s):
Title 5 Sections 55060 et seq.55090 et seq., and 55270 et seq.

Coursework for Associate Degrees
The student must satisfactorily complete at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter 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 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 21-24 semester units or 31.5-36 quarter units of general education. General education must include a minimum of work in:

(1) English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking
(2) Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
(3) Arts and Humanities
(4) Social and Behavioral Sciences
(5) Natural Sciences, and
(6) 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 met the following conditions:

- The student satisfactorily completed at least 12 semester unites 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 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 at California State University or 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 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.

Coursework for Baccalaureate Degrees
The student must satisfactorily complete at least 120 semester units or 180 quarter units of degree-applicable credit courses.

Completion of a minimum of 36 semester or 54 quarter units of general education that includes:
(1) Completion of the requirements in Section 55061 and 55062 to align with the lower division general education patterns of the associate and baccalaureate degrees;
(2) Completion of the upper division general education requirements in Section 55091;
(3) Completion of additional general education courses to meet the minimum total units that may be lower division, upper division, or any combination of lower and upper division.

The courses must include at least 40 semester or 60 quarter units or equivalent of total upper-division coursework, including units in the major and in general education. The courses must include a minimum of nine(9) semester or 13.5 quarter units of upper division general education courses.

"Upper division courses" require the application of lower division knowledge and the demonstration of critical thinking through writing, oral communication, or computation. Upper division coursework may encompass research elements, workforce training, apprenticeships,

internships, and may require practicum or capstone projects. Upper division courses may have one or more lower or upper division prerequisites.

A “major” is defined above.

Upper division general education courses must come from at least two disciplines outside of the major, one of which must have an emphasis in written communication, oral communication or computation.

A lower division course may meet an upper division course requirement but may not be counted toward the required minimum number of upper division units.

Other Conditions for Awarding Baccalaureate Degrees
The District will award a baccalaureate degree to students who fulfill the coursework requirements described above and who meet the following conditions:

- The student satisfactorily completed each course designated as an upper-division major requirement with a minimum grade of “C” or “P” if taken on a “pass-no pass” basis.
- The student satisfactorily completed at least 12 semester units or 18 quarter units of upper-division coursework in residence. The Board may excuse the residence requirement to alleviate undue hardship.

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

The District will count courses completed within another California higher education segment, or at an institutionally accredited institution meeting District standards of rigor, toward the baccalaureate degree unit requirements.

Courses may meet multiple requirements, including general education, a major, and additional requirements, if locally approved to do so. A course may not be counted in more than one general education area, even if approved in multiple areas.

- Students may receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through the District’s procedures for awarding credit for prior learning.
- Students who have already been awarded a bachelor’s degree from an institutionally accredited institution shall be deemed to have fulfilled the general education course requirements for the baccalaureate degree.
- Students who have completed the California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC) shall be deemed to have fulfilled the lower-division general education requirements for the baccalaureate degree. (See also previous section on baccalaureate degree general education.
- Students may petition to have noncredit courses counted toward satisfaction of baccalaureate degree requirements.

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 semester/24 quarter units or more or state approved under 16 semester/24 quarter unites 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, intersegmental, general education or local needs.

Shorter credit programs that lead to a certificate may be established by the District.

Certificates for which California Community College 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.

Adopted: **September 17, 2018**
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