



**15-DAY NOTICE OF MODIFICATIONS TO TEXT OF PROPOSED  
AMENDMENTS TO CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5  
ASSOCIATE DEGREE**

**15-Day Notice published September 7, 2023**

The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges hereby provides notice of changes to the above-referenced proposed regulatory action that was the subject of a public hearing on July 24, 2023. Section 206, subdivision (c), of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors requires the Board to re-notice a proposed regulatory action where the proposed regulations have been previously considered, are being modified, and the modifications are substantial and sufficiently related to the text of the previously-proposed regulations.

**CHANGES TO THE TEXT**

Following the 45-day comment period that ended on August 12, 2023 and the July 24, 2023 Board meeting, changes were made to this regulatory action in proposed sections 55061 and 55062. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office will present the regulatory action to the Board of Governors at its September 26-27, 2023 meeting. The changes are submitted for an additional 15-day comment period effective today, September 7, 2023.

The changes to the proposed regulatory are denoted by double underline for additions to the text and ~~double strikeout~~ for deletions from the text.

**WRITTEN COMMENT PERIOD**

Any interested person may submit written comments relevant to the changes to the proposed regulatory action subject to this 15-day notice. The Chancellor's Office will respond to comments received that are related to title 5, California Code of Regulations, sections 55061 and 55062. Comments should be addressed to:

Regulations Coordinator

California Community Colleges  
Chancellor's Office  
1102 Q Street, Suite 636  
Sacramento, CA 95811-6549  
Email: [regcomments@cccco.edu](mailto:regcomments@cccco.edu)

Comments must be received by the Regulation Coordinator prior to 4:00 p.m. on September 22, 2023. All written comments received by Chancellor's Office staff during the public comment period are subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

## **CHANGES OR MODIFICATIONS TO PROPOSED TITLE 5 AMENDMENTS**

Following the public hearing and considering all timely and relevant comments received, the Board of Governors may adopt the proposed regulations substantially as described in this notice or may modify the proposed regulations if the modifications are sufficiently related to the original text.

## **INFORMATIVE DIGEST**

The Chancellor's Office and the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C) have been reviewing and revising these regulations since 2020, when the Chancellor's Office and 5C brought forward the regulatory recommendation to institute an Ethnic Studies course requirement in Section 55063 (the Board of Governors unanimously approved that revision at the July 2021 Board of Governors meeting). The 2021 revisions streamlined and reorganized Section 55063, but it was not holistically reviewed and revised. The Chancellor's Office and 5C committed to complete that more holistic review and have done so over the past two academic years. This present proposed regulatory action is the culmination of that work, which includes field vetting with amendments to the Title 5 regulations to bring them into alignment with current legislation, allow for innovation in curriculum development, and streamline and simplify requirements for students.

Specific amendments include:

- Removing the requirement of Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite for a course to be approved to meet the mathematics competency;
- Clarifying definitions of course "completion" (student receives credit) and course "satisfactory completion" (student receives "C" or better or "P");

- Allows districts to calculate Grade Point Average (GPA) solely on courses that satisfy degree requirements when a student earns over 60 units (for local degrees);
- Clarifying that a course may be used by a student to meet a general education area, a major/area of emphasis requirement, and a competency demonstration;
- Adding language from Section 55064 regarding the use of noncredit courses to fulfill credit requirements as a form of credit for prior learning;
- Removing references to specific disciplines and adding language focusing on competencies students should be able to demonstrate;
- Alignment with California General Education Transfer Curriculum (CalGETC) pattern;
- Clarifying that Ethnic Studies courses are Baccalaureate-level courses; and
- Clarifying that students who have been awarded a bachelor's degree from an institutionally-accredited institution (new United States Department of Education nomenclature) shall be deemed to have fulfilled the general education course requirements for the associate degree.

The changes to the regulatory action since first reading clarify the courses that are appropriate to complete associate degree ethnic studies requirements.

### **ESTIMATED COST OR SAVINGS OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**

The estimated cost or savings of the proposed amendments are anticipated to be as follows:

Mandate on local agencies or community college districts: *None*.

Cost or savings to state agencies: *None*

Costs to local agencies or community college districts for which reimbursement would be required pursuant to part 7 (commencing with section 17500) of division 4, of title 2, of the Government Code: *None*

Other non-discretionary cost or savings imposed on community college districts: *None*

Cost or savings in federal funding to state agencies: *None*

The proposed amendments to title 5 would result in no fiscal impact to local or state governments, nor will it have any fiscal impact on any federal funding.

### **CONTACT PERSON**

Inquiries concerning the content of these regulations may be directed to:

Raul Arambula, Dean  
California Community Colleges  
Chancellor's Office  
[regcomments@cccco.edu](mailto:regcomments@cccco.edu)

Inquiries concerning the regulatory process may be directed to the Regulations Coordinator, at [regcomments@cccco.edu](mailto:regcomments@cccco.edu).

### **TEXT OF PROPOSED REGULATIONS AND CORRESPONDING DOCUMENTS**

Copies of the proposed regulatory action subject to this 15-day notice are attached as noted above. Information upon which the proposal is based may be obtained online at:

[Office of the General Counsel - Pending Regulatory Action](#)

Those who receive the Board of Governors Agenda package for the September 26-27, 2023, meeting can find a further description of the proposal and the full text of the regulations. You may also request a copy of the proposal from the Regulations Coordinator using the contact information provided above.

## Proposed Revisions to Title 5, California Code of Regulations Relating to Associate Degree Requirements (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)

This document contains underlined and stricken text, which may require adjustments to screen reader settings. Underlined text denoted additions to existing regulations; ~~stricken~~ text denotes deletions from existing regulations. This document also contains double underline and ~~double-strikeout~~ to indicate a new change to the text for second reading.

### SECTION 55060 OF ARTICLE 6 OF SUBCHAPTER 1 OF CHAPTER 6 OF DIVISION 6 OF TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS IS REPEALED AND ADOPTED TO READ:

~~§ 55060. District Policy.~~

~~The governing board of each community college district shall adopt policy consistent with the provisions of this article. The policy shall be published in the college catalog under appropriate headings, and filed with the Chancellor's Office as required by section 51004.~~

~~NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66701, 70901 and 70902, Education Code.~~

#### **§ 55060. Philosophy and Criteria for the Associate Degree and General Education.**

(a) District governing boards shall adopt and maintain a policy that states their goals for offering associate degrees and their specific philosophy on general education. In developing this policy, governing boards shall consider the following policy of the Board of Governors:

The Associate Degree provides a framework within which students complete patterns of learning experiences designed to develop capabilities and insights to support their academic and career goals. Among these capabilities and insights are competencies that are germane to all aspects of higher education and comprise a “general education” curriculum, such as the ability to think critically and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing, to use quantitative reasoning, understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines, to be aware of other cultures and times, to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems, and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.

Furthermore, general education introduces students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. It reflects the conviction of colleges that those who receive their degrees must have mastered principles, concepts, and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. A general education program should create coherence and integration among the separate requirements and involve students actively in examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major social problems.

(b) District governing boards shall establish criteria to determine which courses may be used to implement their goals for the associate degree and their philosophy of general education.

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

**SECTION 55061 OF ARTICLE 6 OF SUBCHAPTER 1 OF CHAPTER 6 OF DIVISION 6 OF TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS IS REPEALED AND ADOPTED TO READ:**

~~§ 55061. Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education.~~

~~(a) The governing board of a community college district shall adopt a policy which states its specific philosophy on General Education. In developing this policy governing boards shall consider the following policy of the Board of Governors:~~

~~The awarding of an Associate Degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It is to symbolize a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding. In addition to these accomplishments, the student shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest.~~

~~Central to an Associate Degree, General Education is designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. It reflects the conviction of colleges that those who receive their degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. College educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most importantly, General Education should lead to better self-understanding.~~

~~In establishing or modifying a general education program, ways shall be sought to create coherence and integration among the separate requirements. It is also desirable that general education programs involve students actively in examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major social problems.~~

~~(b) The governing board of a community college district shall also establish criteria to determine which courses may be used in implementing its philosophy on the associate degree and general education.~~

~~(c) The governing board of a community college district shall, on a regular basis, review the policy and criteria established pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) of this section.~~

~~NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66701, 70901 and 70902, Education Code.~~

**§55061. Associate Degree Course Requirements.**

District governing boards may only 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 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.

(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.

(c) A minimum of 21 semester units (28 – 31.5 quarter units) of general education in the areas described below.

(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.

(B) Oral Communication and 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.

(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.

(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 examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena, helping students appreciate and understand the scientific method and the relationships between science and other human activities. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physical anthropology, physics, and other scientific disciplines.

(6) Ethnic Studies (minimum of 3 semester/4 quarter units). Courses fulfilling this requirement may include ~~introductory or integrative~~ baccalaureate-level courses in the four autonomous disciplines within Ethnic Studies: Black Studies/African American Studies/Africana Studies; Native American Studies/Chicano/a/x and Latino/a/x Studies/La Raza Studies; and Asian American Studies, and related areas of study.

(d) “Integrative baccalaureate-level courses” draw broad connections between multiple perspectives and methodologies and demonstrate relationships within or between disciplines.

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

## **SECTION 55062 OF ARTICLE 6 OF SUBCHAPTER 1 OF CHAPTER 6 OF DIVISION 6 OF TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS IS REPEALED AND ADOPTED TO READ:**

~~§ 55062. Types of Courses Appropriate to the Associate Degree.~~

~~The criteria established by the governing board of a community college district to implement its philosophy on the associate degree shall permit only courses that conform to the standards specified in section 55002(a) or section 55270, and that fall into the following categories to be offered as degree applicable credit courses:~~

~~(a) All lower division courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by the California State University or University of California or designed to be offered for transfer.~~

~~(b) Courses that apply to the major or area of emphasis in non-baccalaureate career technical fields.~~

~~(c) English composition or reading courses not more than one level below the first transfer level course. Each student may count only one such course below transfer level for credit toward the associate degree, except that reading courses which also satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) are not subject to this limit. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses which teach composition or reading skills are not considered to be English composition or reading courses for purposes of this subdivision.~~

~~(d) All mathematics courses above and including Elementary Algebra.~~

~~(e) Credit courses in English and mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments and which, as determined by the district governing board require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for the courses specified in subdivisions (c) and (d) above.~~



NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66701, 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

**§55062. Requirements for Awarding of 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 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 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 institutions-institution 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.

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

## **SECTIONS 55063 AND 55064 OF ARTICLE 6 OF SUBCHAPTER 1 OF CHAPTER 6 OF DIVISION 6 OF TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS ARE REPEALED.**

~~§ 55063. Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree.~~

~~(a) The governing board of a community college district shall confer the associate degree upon a student who has met all requirements of this section.~~

~~(b) General unit requirements.~~

~~(1) The associate degree requires satisfactory completion of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit course work accepted by the degree-granting college. Courses completed at other institutions that meet or exceed the standards of the California Community Colleges may be counted toward associate degree unit requirements. At least 12 semester or 18 quarter units must be completed in residence at the degree-granting college, unless the governing board excuses this requirement to alleviate injustice or undue hardship.~~

~~(2) "Satisfactory completion" means either credit earned on a "pass-no pass" basis, or with a grade point average of 2.0 or better in the associate degree community college credit courses.~~

~~(c) Major or area of emphasis requirement.~~

~~(1) A minimum of 18 semester units or 27 quarter units must be taken in a single discipline, or related disciplines, as listed in the community college's "Taxonomy of Programs," or in an area of emphasis involving lower division coursework to prepare students for a field of study or major at the University of California, or the California State University.~~

~~(2) For all students admitted to a community college for the Fall 2009 term or any term thereafter, each course counted toward the unit requirement of this subdivision must be completed with a grade of C or better or a "P" if the course is taken on a "pass-no pass" basis.~~

~~(d) General Education Requirements. A minimum of 18 semester units or 27 quarter units of general education coursework must be completed in the areas described in this subdivision (d), or as otherwise determined by the degree-granting college.~~

~~(1) Natural Sciences. Courses in the natural sciences examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena. Such courses help students appreciate and understand the scientific method, and understand the relationships between science and other human activities. This category includes introductory or integrative courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physical anthropology, physics, and other scientific~~

disciplines. A minimum of three semester or four quarter units must be completed in this area.

(2) Social and Behavioral Sciences. Courses in the social and behavioral sciences focus on people as members of society. Such courses develop awareness of the method of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. They stimulate critical thinking about the ways people act and have acted in response to their societies, and promote appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate. This category includes introductory or integrative survey courses in cultural anthropology, cultural geography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and related disciplines. A minimum of three semester or four quarter units must be completed in this area.

(3) Humanities. Courses in the humanities study the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings. Such courses develop awareness of the ways in which people throughout the ages, and in different cultures, respond to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation, and develop aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments. Such courses include introductory or integrative courses in the arts, foreign languages, literature, philosophy, and religion. A minimum of three semester or four quarter units must be completed in this area.

(4) Language and Rationality. Courses in language and rationality develop the principles and applications of language toward logical thought, clear and precise expression, and critical evaluation of communication in whatever symbol system the student uses. This includes courses in both English Composition, and Communication and Analytical Thinking as follows:

(A) English Composition. Courses fulfilling the written composition requirement include both expository and argumentative writing, and may be taught in disciplines including, but not limited to, English and English as a Second Language. A minimum of three semester or four quarter units must be completed in this area.

(B) Communication and Analytical Thinking. Courses fulfilling the communication and analytical thinking requirement include, but are not limited to, oral communication, mathematics, and quantitative reasoning courses such as logic, statistics, computer languages, programming, and related disciplines. A minimum of three semester or four quarter units must be completed in this area.

(c) Additional Requirements. The associate degree also requires demonstrated competence in reading, written expression, and mathematics, and satisfactory completion of a course in ethnic studies, as follows:

(1) Satisfactory completion of a course in English at the level of the course typically known as Freshman Composition. This requirement may also be met by satisfactory completion of an English course taught in another department or discipline that requires entrance skills at a level equivalent to those for Freshman Composition, or by demonstrating competency that is comparable to satisfactory completion of a specified English course. The equivalence of English coursework, and the methods of demonstrating comparable competency in written expression and reading is determined by the college/district.

(2) Satisfactory completion of a course in mathematics at or above the level of the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra (either Intermediate Algebra or another mathematics course at or above the same level, with the same rigor, and with Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite, approved locally). This requirement may also be met by satisfactory completion of a mathematics course taught in another department or discipline that requires entrance skills at a level equivalent to Intermediate Algebra, or by demonstrating competency that is comparable to satisfactory completion of a mathematics course at or above the level of the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra. The equivalence of mathematics coursework, and the method of demonstrating comparable competency in mathematics is determined by the college/district.

(3) Satisfactory completion of a transfer-level course (minimum of three semester units or four quarter units) in ethnic studies. This requirement may be satisfied by obtaining a satisfactory grade in a course in ethnic studies taught in or on behalf of other departments and disciplines.

(f) A course may satisfy more than one general education requirement, but course completion may be counted only once toward satisfying the 18 semester unit or 27 quarter unit general education requirement. A course may also satisfy both a general education requirement and a major or area of emphasis requirement, and course completion may be counted toward both requirements, depending upon college/district policy. Students may use the same course to meet a general education requirement for the associate degree, and to satisfy a general education requirement at the California State University or the University of California, if such course is accepted by that system to satisfy a general education requirement.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

#### § 55064. Acceptance of Noncredit Courses.

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. The petition shall be granted if the instructor of the noncredit course certifies that the student has achieved competence in the subject matter at a level and with academic rigor equivalent to that required for a degree-applicable credit course.

This section shall become inoperative on July 1, 2009. After that date, a student may nevertheless seek to receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through completion of a noncredit course in accord with section 55050.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66701, 70901 and 78405, Education Code.