

## **PHILOSOPHY AND CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND GENERAL EDUCATION**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The associate degrees offered by District are intended to symbolize the successful completion of a pattern of learning experiences designed to develop 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 insight gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems, and to develop the capacity for self understanding. An associate degree may be conferred upon a student who has demonstrated these competencies and who has satisfactorily completed at least 60 semester units of college work, including course requirements specific to each degree.

### **DEGREES AND REQUIREMENTS**

The District will award the Associate of Science Degree in a specific program area, the Associate of Arts Degree or the Associate of Science Degree in General Studies, and the Associate of Arts degree in University Studies. These degrees will be awarded to students who have completed all requirements with a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average of 2.0 for all courses applied to the degree and who have earned a "C" or better in each course required for the degree except for unrestricted electives. Unrestricted electives are courses that are not specifically required to meet program or general education requirements. The degree course work must include at least 18 semester units in General Education. Of the required units, at least 15 semester units and 12 of the required units in the major field of study must be completed at the District. Specific degree requirements are adopted by the Board of Trustees, relying primarily upon the advice and judgment of the Academic Senate. These requirements will be reviewed periodically by the Academic Senate and its Curriculum Committee to ensure relevance, currency, and consistency with State regulations.

### **GENERAL EDUCATION**

The purpose of general education at the District is to encourage students to think more deeply and more broadly both about their own lives and about the world in which they live. General education provides students with skills in the areas of communication, computation, and critical thinking and introduces them to the basic modes of inquiry in the various academic areas. It promotes an understanding of values, a sense of civic responsibility, a commitment to preserving the natural environment, an appreciation of cultural diversity, and an understanding of the interrelationships among all societies.

### **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

- A. **NATURAL SCIENCE (3 Units).** Courses in the natural sciences are those that examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena. To satisfy the general education requirement in natural sciences, a course shall be

designed to help a student develop an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method and to encourage an understanding of the relationships between science and other human activities. This category may include introductory or integrative courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, environmental science, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physics, and other scientific disciplines.

- B. SOCIAL SCIENCE (3 Units). Courses in the social and behavioral sciences are those that focus on people, group relations, and society. To satisfy the general education requirement in social and behavioral sciences, a course shall be designed to develop an awareness of the method of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. It shall be designed to stimulate critical thinking about the ways people act and have acted in response to their societies and should promote appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate. This category may include introductory or integrative survey courses in cultural anthropology, cultural geography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and related disciplines.
- C. HUMANITIES (3 Units). Courses in the humanities are those that study the cultural activities and artistic expressions of human beings. To satisfy the general education requirement in the humanities, a course shall be designed to help the student develop an awareness of the ways in which people throughout the ages and in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation and to help the student develop aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments. Such courses may include introductory or integrative courses in the arts, foreign languages, literature, philosophy, and religion.
- D. LANGUAGE AND RATIONALITY (9 Units). Courses in language and rationality are those that develop for the student 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.
  - 1. WRITING (3 Units). Courses fulfilling the written composition requirement shall be designed to include both expository and argumentative writing.
  - 2. ORAL COMMUNICATION (3 Units). Courses fulfilling the communication requirement include oral communication and courses in other disciplines that have oral communication as their primary focus.
  - 3. ANALYTICAL THINKING (3 Units). Courses fulfilling the analytical thinking requirement include mathematics, logic, statistics, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines.

NOTE: While a course might satisfy more than one general education requirement, it may not be counted more than once for these purposes. A course may be used to satisfy both a general education requirement and a specific program requirement.

ETHNIC STUDIES will be offered in at least one of the required areas.

#### CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

To receive a certificate of achievement or a certificate of completion, a student must complete all of the courses required for the certificate with a minimum grade of "C" in each course.

Reference: Title 5 Section 55805; Accreditation Standard II.A.3

Adopted by Board of Trustees: 12/5/06

Former Policy #120, "Associate Degree and Certificate Requirements," Adopted by the Board of Trustees: 5/3/82

Amended: 2/3/86, 5/2/94, 3/5/02, 4/5/05, 1/10/06