

# DRAFT

Book VCCCD Board Policy Manual  
Section Chapter 4 Academic Affairs  
Title BP 4025 PHILOSOPHY AND CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND GENERAL EDUCATION  
Number BP 4025  
Status Active  
Legal [Title 5, Section 55805](#)  
[Accreditation Standard II.A.3](#)  
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Courses that are designated to fulfill the general education and depth requirements shall meet the following philosophy.

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 important, general education should lead to better understanding.

In ~~the~~ establishing or modifying a general education program, ways shall be sought to create ~~coherence~~ cohesion 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 society problems.

The Chancellor shall establish procedures to assure that courses used to meet general education and associate degree requirements meet the standards in this policy. The procedures shall provide for appropriate Academic Senate involvement.

See [Administrative Procedure 4025](#).  
Last Modified by Laurie Nusser on July 2, 2012

Book VCCCD Administrative Procedure Manual  
Section Chapter 4 Academic Affairs

Title AP 4025 PHILOSOPHY AND CRITERIA FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND  
GENERAL EDUCATION

Number AP 4025

Status Active

Legal [Accreditation Standard II.A.3](#)

[Title 5, Section 55063](#)

[Title 5, Section 55062](#)

[Title 5, Section 55061](#)

Adopted July 14, 2009

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### **Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree**

The philosophy and criteria for the associate degree and general education of the Ventura County Community College District address the considerations contained in the references listed above. These include, but are not limited to:

The programs of District colleges are consistent with the District mission, objectives, demographics and economics of its community.

The philosophy and criteria regarding the associate degree reference the policy of the Board of Governors that the associate degree symbolizes a successful attempt to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insight, including but not limited to:

- To think, communicate, speak, and write clearly and effectively
- To understand and apply mathematical concepts
- To understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines
- To be aware of other cultures and time periods
- To achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems
- To develop the capacity for self understanding

The Curriculum Committee of each college establishes a curriculum proposal and review process that methodically and consistently validate the above principles within the college's course and program inventory.

At a secondary level, the District Technical Review Workgroup-**Instructional** (DTRW-I) provides technical oversight to ensure that the colleges' course and program curriculum are in regulatory compliance.

### **Philosophy and Criteria for General Education**

The philosophy and criteria regarding general education reference the policy of the Board of Governors that general education should lead to better self-understanding, including:

- Understand the modes of inquiry and critique used in the natural, social, and behavioral sciences and the humanities
- Understand and appreciate the role of culture and the arts in society and in one's personal life
- Think logically and communicate effectively
- Understand and adopt the concepts of personal health and fitness to enhance the quality of life
- Recognize the multitude of diversities in the physical and human environments and how these diversities impact individuals and society
- Understand the connections among the various disciplines
- Use a variety of means to find information, examine it critically, and apply it appropriately
- Work ethically and effectively with others
- Apply the skills necessary for successful living in an ever-changing and global environment
- Become productive workers and life-long learners
- Meet the objectives of general education

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 proficiency, affective and creative capabilities, social aptitude, and an appreciation for cultural diversity.

To meet the objectives of general education, ~~the each~~ District college shall ~~place GE courses develop Student Learning Outcomes~~ in the following areas: ~~nd place general education courses in accordance with those outcomes into the appropriate general education areas:~~

- (A) Natural Sciences: A minimum of 6 units including one course in Biological Sciences and one course in Physical Science.
- (B) Social and Behavioral Sciences: A minimum of 6 units including one course in American History/Institutions and one course in other Social and Behavioral Science.
- (C) Humanities: A minimum of 6 units including one course in Fine Arts/Performing Arts and one course in any other Humanities.
- (D) Language and Rationality: A minimum of 6 units including one course in English Composition and one course from Communication/Analytical Thinking.

Additional District requirements may be met by courses in the previous General Education areas.

(E) Health/Physical Education and Kinesiology: No unit minimum. One Health Education course and one Physical Education Activity course.

(F) Ethnic/~~Women's~~ Gender Studies: Students selecting an Associate in Arts degree in General Studies must complete a course ~~a minimum of 3 units~~ in Ethnic/~~Women's~~ Gender Studies.

The Curriculum Committees of the colleges, as part of the curriculum proposal and review process, will specifically address the placement of courses into the general education areas.

#### (A) Natural Sciences

Courses in the natural sciences are those which 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 the student develop an appreciation and understanding of the scientific methods, and encourage an understanding of the relationship between science and other human activities.

#### (B) Social and Behavioral Sciences

Courses in the social and behavioral sciences are those which focus on people as members of society. To satisfy the general education requirement in Social and Behavioral Science, 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 an appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate.

#### (C) Arts and Humanities

Courses in the humanities are those which 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 help the student develop aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments.

#### (D) Language and Rationality

Courses in Language and Rationality are those which 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. Such courses include:

- (i) English Composition. Courses fulfilling the written composition requirement shall be designed to include both expository and argumentative writing.
- (ii) Communication and Analytical Thinking. Courses fulfilling the communication and analytical thinking requirement include oral communication, mathematics, logic, statistics, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines.

#### (E) Health/Physical Education and Kinesiology

Courses in Health and Physical Education and Kinesiology should help students develop the understanding of integrated wellness strategies and the skills necessary for designing, implementing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle ~~to maintain a healthful life.~~

#### (F) Ethnic/Gender Studies

Courses in ethnic and gender studies should help students develop an awareness of the diverse historical roots and an appreciation of the cultural contribution of minorities and women; and /or should lead to an understanding of the causes and consequence of socio-economic inequality based on race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or ethnicity; and explore ways of eliminating such inequities.

Elements of the review process will include, at a minimum, the following:

- The alignment of the course outcome to general education outcome of the proposed area.
- The rigor and comprehensive nature of the course as a lower-division introduction into the discipline.
- Applicability of the course for fulfilling CSU GE-Breadth or IGETC for transfer.

Each college will have student learning outcomes (SLO) to assess these GE courses.

Completion of the District College General Education pattern shall be required for all Associate degrees except:

1. When prohibited by legislated transfer degrees (Associate in Art for Transfer and Associate in Science for transfer) that require completion of CSU GE-Breadth and/or IGETC and forbid additional District graduation requirements.
  2. General Studies Pattern II requires students to complete a transfer institutions own GE pattern while also meeting the 18 units of general education minimum established in Title 5. The additional District graduation requirements of Health/PE and Kinesiology and Ethnic/Gender Studies still apply.
  3. General Studies Pattern III requires students to complete either CSU GE-Breadth or IGETC. The additional District graduation requirements of Health/PE and Kinesiology and Ethnic/Gender Studies still apply.
- Completion of the District College General Education pattern shall be required for all Associate degrees except: When prohibited by legislated transfer degrees (Associate in Art for Transfer and Associate in Science for transfer) that require completion of CSU GE-Breadth and/or IGETC and forbid additional District graduation requirements.

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~~When the degree is designed specifically for transfer and another general education pattern (such as CSU GE Breadth, IGETC, or a university's native GE pattern) more adequately serves the needs of the students. However, additional District graduation requirements of Health/PE and Kinesiology and Ethnic/Gender Studies still apply.~~

Last Modified by Laurie Nusser on July 2, 2012