

BP 4025 Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education

References: Title 5 Section 55061;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A (*formerly II.A.3*)

The awarding of an associate degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It symbolizes a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Therefore, it requires in-depth focus on a major field of study as well as the breadth of general education requirements. The associate degree and general education philosophies form the foundation for the District's Institutional Learning Outcomes.

General education is a cohesive pattern of courses intended to serve three purposes: to strengthen students' essential intellectual skills, to broadly introduce students to the core concepts and methods of the major disciplines, and to prepare students to lead enriched lives in our multicultural society. General education courses are distinguished from those required for a major discipline and those allowed as freely chosen electives. Courses in the general education category are "general" in two senses: they survey the core concepts and methods of the discipline in which they are included, and they point, where possible, to the influences and contributions of the discipline to other disciplines, culture, human history, and our quest to understand our universe and ourselves.

Through general education, students will acquire the ability to think and communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics and other symbolic systems, to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines, to appreciate the structures and processes of the natural environment; to be aware of other cultures and times, to achieve insights by thinking about ethical and social problems, and to understand the history of the U.S. and appreciate its governing institutions. The district also desires that general education programs involve students actively in examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major social problems.

In addition to general education, the associate degree requires in-depth pursuit of knowledge in a specific, disciplinary field. Criteria for each degree and emphasis area are outlined on the District website and in the District catalog.

The Superintendent/President, in consultation with the Academic Senate, shall establish procedures to ensure that courses used to meet general education and associate degree requirements meet the standards in this policy.

Approved: 12/11/2019