

AP 4100 Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates

References: Title 5 Sections 55060 et seq.

Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees

The following guidelines define the conditions under which Cuesta College will award Associate in Arts (AA) Degrees and the Associate in Science (AS) Degrees. Requirements for Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees follow the State guidelines outlined in the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) "Program and Course Approval Handbook". This information is also included in the Cuesta College catalog.

Unit Requirement

Completion of a minimum of 60 associate degree applicable units from Cuesta College or other regionally accredited institutions. Appropriate course work includes those courses that have been properly approved pursuant to Title 5, Section 55002(a) or, if completed at other than a California community college, would reasonably be expected to meet the standards of that Title 5 section.

Grade Point Average Requirement

Attainment of a minimum overall grade point average of 2.00 in all associate degree applicable units attempted at Cuesta College, and at other regionally accredited institutions.

Residency Requirement

Completion of a minimum of 12 semester units of Cuesta College course work. Cuesta course work may be earned via in-seat or distance education instruction. Petitions for exceptions to the residency requirement may be made to the Board of Trustees, in the rare cases of undue hardship to the student.

Major or Area of Emphasis Requirement

Completion of a minimum of 18 semester units of major-specific course work, applicable to a designated AA or AS degree. Effective for all students admitted for the Fall 2009 term or any term thereafter, each course applied towards a major requirement must be completed with a grade of C or better (or a P if the course is taken on a pass/no-pass basis.) (Title 5 Section 55063(a)(2))

General Education/Graduation Requirement

Completion of one of the following three General Education patterns:

1. Completion of Cuesta College's local AA/AS General Education/Graduation Requirements, which include:
 - a. A minimum of eighteen units in general education, includes at least three semester units in the General Education sub-areas identified in Title 5 regulations as "Natural Sciences", "Social and Behavioral Sciences", "Humanities", and "Language and Rationality".

- b. An approved course in American Institutions
- c. An approved course in Health Education
- d. An approved course in Diversity
- e. Verification of Competency in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, which may be attained via placement test or course (see catalog for details)

1) Additional Specifics regarding Cuesta's local AA/AS GE pattern:

- a) Courses that meet both Cuesta College General Education/Graduation requirements and specific major requirements may be "double counted".
 - b) Approved Courses that meet both the Diversity requirement and the Health Education requirement may be double counted.
 - c) Courses that meet both the Diversity requirement and a Social/Behavioral Science general education requirement may be double counted.
2. Completion of the Cuesta College California State University (CSU) General Education pattern
3. Completion of the Cuesta College Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) pattern

Associate Degrees for Transfer

Associate Degrees for Transfer adhere to the CCCC guidelines established under California SB 1440, also known as "A Degree with a Guarantee". They are degree patterns developed at the State-wide level by CSU and CCC discipline faculty, and are designed to facilitate the transfer of California Community College students to the California State University system.

The Associate Degree for Transfer will be awarded to any student upon satisfactory completion of the following:

- 1. Minimum of 60 CSU-transferable semester units.
- 2. Minimum grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in all CSU-transferable coursework.
- 3. Completion of a minimum of 18 semester units in a designated "AA-T" or "AS-T" major. All courses in the major must be completed with a grade of "C" or better or a "P" if the course is taken on a "pass-no pass" basis.
- 4. Completion of either the CSUGE General Education pattern, or the IGETC pattern.
- 5. Per SB 1440 guidelines, students earning Associate Degrees for Transfer are

exempt from having to satisfy Cuesta's local general education/graduation requirements and local residency requirements.

Certificates of Achievement, Specialization, Completion and Competency

Requirements for Certificates of Achievement, Specialization, Completion and Competency follow the State guidelines outlined in the CCCCO Program and Course Approval Handbook.

Certificates of Achievement are state-approved certificate programs of study consisting of 18 or more units of degree-applicable coursework. These certificates appear by name on the student's transcript. These certificates must:

1. Be consistent with the mission of the District.
2. Meet a demonstrated need, typically vocational or trade oriented, within the local community.
3. Be feasible and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement.
4. Demonstrate a well-defined pattern of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities that may be oriented to career or general education.

A Certificate of Achievement will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of the following requirements:

- Successful completion of a course of study (grade point average of 2.0 or higher, with "C" or better in each course) or curriculum that consists of 18 or more semester units of Certificate-applicable coursework.
- An application for graduation/certificate together with relevant petitions and official transcripts by stipulated deadlines.

Certificates of Specialization are locally-approved certificates programs of study consisting of fewer than 18 units of Certificate-applicable coursework. Certificates of Specialization do not need CCCCO approval, and are not posted on a student's official transcript.

These certificates must:

1. Be consistent with the mission of the District
2. Meet a demonstrated need, typically vocational or trade oriented, within the community
3. Be feasible and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement
4. Demonstrate a well-defined pattern of learning experiences designed to develop

certain capabilities that may be oriented to career or general education.

A Certificate of Specialization will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of the following requirements:

- Successful completion of a course of study or curriculum (grade point average 2.0 or higher, with “C” or better in each course) that consists of between 1 and 17 semester units of Certificate-applicable credit coursework.
- An application for graduation/certificate together with relevant petitions and official transcripts by stipulated deadlines.

Certificates of Competency are state-approved non-credit certificates programs of study. These certificates appear by name on the student’s transcript. The Certificate of Competency must be in a recognized career field articulated with degree applicable coursework, completion of an associate degree, or transfer to baccalaureate institution.

Certificates of Completion are state-approved non-credit certificates programs of study. These certificates appear by name on the student’s transcript. The Certificate of Completion must be leading to improved employability or job opportunities.

Catalog Rights

Catalog rights allow a student the ability to self-identify a permissible catalog year which he or she will fulfill the published requirements for a permissible degree or certificate. Catalog rights protect students from being unfairly disadvantaged when degree or certificate patterns change from one catalog year to the next. Thus, students may choose to graduate under catalog requirements in effect during the academic year they first enroll at Cuesta, or, during any preceding catalog year during the time of their continuous enrollment at Cuesta College. Continuous enrollment is defined as enrollment at Cuesta during at least one fall or spring term each academic year. Students who are not enrolled at Cuesta for two regular consecutive semesters (e.g. fall and spring) must follow degree and certificate requirements in effect at the time of their re-enrollment at Cuesta College. Students who are no longer enrolled at Cuesta College, but wish to obtain an active degree or certificate will need to fulfill the current degree/certificate requirements.

General Policies Applying to the Awarding of Cuesta Degrees and Certificates (See Catalog for more information)

- In order to apply units completed at another institution toward a degree or certificate, official transcripts from other colleges and universities must be delivered by appropriate electronic means, mailed or hand delivered, provided they arrive in an officially stamped and sealed envelope by the issuing institution.
- Credit for college-level courses completed at other “regionally” accredited education institutions will be evaluated for content quality upon receipt of an official transcript and during a degree/certificate evaluation. Full unit credit

normally will be granted.

- Cuesta College will accept upper division coursework completed at another college or university for the purpose of fulfilling Associate Degree and Certificate requirements using the following guidelines:
 - Coursework must be completed at a regionally accredited college or university.
 - A student must submit official transcripts from the originating institution.
 - Upper division courses may be applied to Cuesta College general education area or major and/or elective requirements based on content equivalency to general education area, major, or elective requirements.
 - Upper division courses in math or English composition may be used to satisfy competency requirements for the Associate degree.
 - Policy on the use of upper-division coursework on the IGETC and CSU GE is governed by the University of California and California State University system. Consult the IGETC Standards and CSU Executive Order 1100 for complete details.
- Cuesta College cannot accept coursework that is inconsistent with Title 5 regulations nor can it ensure that coursework accepted by the college will be accepted by another institution.
- Transcripts from foreign colleges and universities will be accepted only when evaluated by an evaluating service recognized by Cuesta College. Credits from an evaluation service are typically applied as elective credits only. Grade point averages from foreign institution are not included on the Cuesta academic transcript.
- Students must file a formal application for graduation at the end of any semester or session.

Multiple Majors/Programs

- There is no restriction on the number of degrees or certificates a student may earn at Cuesta College.

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