

# ASSOCIATE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

To apply for an associate degree or certificate, complete the Cuesta College Associate Degree Application or the Cuesta College Certificate Application. An official evaluation of your records will be completed to determine if you have met your stated degree or certificate requirements. You may be automatically awarded degrees and/or certificates for which you have met the requirements but have not yet applied. You will be notified when your records have been evaluated.

Degree candidates are encouraged to participate in the Cuesta College Commencement Ceremony which takes place each May on the San Luis Obispo campus. Commencement information is available on the Evaluations Office website, in the Commencement channel in myCuesta student portal or commencement website at <http://bit.ly/cuestagrad>

## Catalog Rights

Catalog rights allow a student the ability to self-identify a particular catalog year which he or she will fulfill the published requirements for a particular 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.

## Residency credit requirements for degree, certificate, GE certification and application of alternative education credit

Residency credit does **not** refer to with whether or not a student is a resident of the State of California.

Residency credit is defined as credits earned while in residence at the campus granting the degree, certificate, general education certification, or application of alternative education credit.

Credit that does not satisfy the residency credit requirement:

- Advanced Placement
- Credit-by-Exam
- Military
- Other alternative education credit

Residency credit required for the awarding of Cuesta College degrees, certificates and general education certifications:

- **DEGREES** - Minimum of 12 semester credits
- **CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT** - Minimum of two of the required courses
- **CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY** - Minimum of one of the required courses
- **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION** - Minimum of one of the required courses
- **CERTIFICATE OF SPECIALIZATION** - Minimum of one of the required courses
- **CSU GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION** - Minimum of one course (at least three semester credits)
- **IGETC** (Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum) – Minimum of one course (at least three semester credits)

Residency credit required for the application of alternative education credit:

- **CREDIT-BY-EXAM** – Minimum 12 semester credits with “C” average work
- **ADVANCED PLACEMENT** – Minimum 12 semester credits
- **MILITARY CREDIT** - Minimum 12 semester credits of “C” average work

## Requirements For the Associate Degree

Graduates from Cuesta College have conferred upon them the degree of Associate in Arts or Associate in Science. Requirements for graduation are prescribed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the District Board of Trustees.

### Designated Degree Requirements

- 60 semester degree applicable credits overall - lower division coursework only (use of upper division credits is subject to appeal)
- 18 credits of Cuesta general education coursework with a minimum overall GPA of 2.00
- Prescribed coursework in a specific major with grades of “C” or better
- Residency
- Health Education
- Diversity
- English Competency
- Math Competency
- 2.00 GPA overall

### A.A., Liberal Arts Requirements

- 60 semester transferable credits overall (CSU or UC) - lower division coursework only (use of upper division

credit is subject to appeal)

- Completion of the CSU GE with an overall minimum GPA of 2.00, or
- Completion of IGETC (minimum grade of “C” required in all coursework), or
- Completion of Cuesta AAGE with a minimum overall GPA of 2.0
- 18 semester credits of coursework in one of the following Areas of Emphasis with grades of “C” or better:
  - Arts and Humanities
  - Science
  - Social and Behavioral Sciences

For Depth, two courses must be from a single discipline

For Breadth, at least three disciplines must be selected

## Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT)

### A Degree with a Guarantee

Cuesta College offers Associate Degrees for Transfer to the CSU. This includes Associate in Arts (AA-T) and Associate in Science (AS-T) degrees. These degrees are designed to provide a clear pathway to a CSU major and baccalaureate degree. Cuesta College students who are awarded an AA-T or AS-T degree are guaranteed admission with junior standing in the CSU system and given priority admission consideration to their local CSU campus or to a program that is deemed similar to their community college major. This priority does not guarantee admission to specific or campuses, but can make you more competitive.

Students who have been awarded an AA-T or AS-T are able to complete their remaining requirements for the 120 semester credits baccalaureate degree within 60 semester or 90 quarter credits.

To view the most current list of Cuesta College Associate Degrees for Transfer and to find out which CSU campuses accept each degree, please go to [www.adegreewithaguarantee.com](http://www.adegreewithaguarantee.com). Current and prospective community college students are encouraged to meet with a counselor to review their options for transfer and to develop an educational plan that best meets their goals and needs.

#### Requirements:

- (1) Completion of 60 semester credits or 90 quarter credits that are eligible for transfer to the California State University, including:
  - (A) The California State University General Education Breadth Requirements (CSU GE) or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), and
  - (B) A minimum of 18 semester credits or 27 quarter credits in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by the community college district.
- (2) A minimum overall grade point average of 2.0 in all CSU-transferable coursework.

- (3) A “C” or better grade or a “P” grade if the course is taken on a pass/no-pass basis, in all courses required for the major or area of emphasis. External exams such as Advanced Placement, etc. are not subject to this grade restriction.

Per SB 1440 guidelines, students earning Associate Degree for Transfer are exempt from having to satisfy Cuesta’s local general education/graduation requirements and local residency requirements.

Consult with the Cuesta College Transfer Center for mandatory application, evaluation and notification deadlines.

#### **Important Information for Transfer-bound Students**

Earning an associate degree may not guarantee transfer readiness into a particular CSU or UC campus or major. Consult with an academic counselor for details and a thorough evaluation of your transferable credits, grade point average, and lower division major preparation.

#### **Required Records for Degree Evaluation**

Cuesta College incorporates all associate degree applicable coursework from all regionally accredited institutions attended, into overall totals for the degree.

Official transcripts are required from all post secondary institutions attended. Incomplete or missing transcripts and other records will cause the degree to be denied.

Official documentation is required for Advanced Placement scores and other sources of alternative education.

Any foreign credentials must be independently evaluated and the official independent evaluation submitted to the Evaluations Office. Academic Credentials Evaluation Institute, Inc. (ACEI) is the preferred provider for independent evaluation of foreign credentials (<http://www.acei1.com>), and a “comprehensive” evaluation is required.

#### **CUESTA GENERAL EDUCATION**

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 or allowed as freely chosen electives. Courses in the general education category are “general” in two senses: independently, 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.

Through this program, 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; to understand and appreciate the history of U.S. culture and its governing institutions.

### OVERARCHING GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the general education course pattern, in addition to the area-specific outcomes, students should be able to:

- identify, explain, and analyze the core concepts and methods of the major discipline in which the course is included;
- identify, explain, and analyze the influences and contributions of the specific discipline to other disciplines, cultures, human history, and our quest to understand the universe.
- organize, integrate, and critically analyze information within the course, using these skills to generate and evaluate alternative perspectives; and
- prepare students to live enriched lives in our multicultural society.

### AREA A: PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES

After successfully completing courses in this category, students will:

- demonstrate understanding of the scientific method and its role in research, analyze problems in a structured way, and develop and employ strategies for solutions using scientific principles.
- demonstrate understanding of the empirical bases for current scientific theories, how those theories develop and change, and how they explain the natural world.
- appreciate the influence of scientific knowledge on the development of civilization.

### AREA B: SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

After successfully completing courses in this category, students will:

- demonstrate understanding of the theories and be able to employ and evaluate the methods of social science inquiry.
- analyze and critically assess ideas about the individual, social groups, institutions and society, as well as their interrelationships, structure and function.
- use this knowledge to develop a capacity for self-understanding and to understand contemporary issues, conflicts, problems and their origins.

### AREA C: ARTS AND HUMANITIES

After successfully completing courses in this category, students will:

- recognize the value of the great works of the human imagination in a broad context and understand their contribution to human culture.
- analyze and appraise cultural/artistic achievements in verbal and/or non-verbal forms.

Since language acquisition is a door to understanding the arts and humanities of other cultures, students who acquire second language skills also fulfill the category C requirement.

### AREA D: ENGLISH AND MATH COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT

Competency in reading, written expression, and mathematics must be demonstrated. The reading and written expression competency requirement is satisfied by completing English 201A, or an equivalent college level writing course with a grade of "C" or better, from a regionally accredited institution.

The mathematics competency requirement is satisfied by completing Math 126B or 127, or a higher college level mathematics course, with a grade of "C" or better. Equivalent college level mathematics courses completed at regionally accredited colleges and universities are also acceptable.

(Note: Students who have been in attendance at Cuesta or any regionally accredited institution prior to Fall 2009 should see a Cuesta counselor to establish catalog rights regarding competency requirements.)

### AREA D1: COMMUNICATIONS IN ENGLISH

After successfully completing this category, students will be able to:

- read and write effective expository and argumentative prose with a focus on inquiry as well as persuasion.
- read critically in order to comprehend the central ideas and rhetorical techniques in the assigned texts.
- demonstrate an ethical use of various rhetorical techniques in their written work.

### AREA D2: ANALYTICAL THINKING

After successfully completing this category, students will be able to:

- construct and analyze statements in a formal symbolic system, and understand the relationship between the symbolic system and its various applications in the real world.
- appreciate the strengths and limitations of the system, its logical structure, and its derivation.

### AREA E: AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS

After successfully completing courses in this category, students will:

- demonstrate understanding of the impact of social, political, and economic forces in the historical development of the U.S.
- employ interpretative skills to analyze historical causes and effects.
- demonstrate an enhanced understanding of the interrelationship among the branches of our government over time.
- develop an understanding of U.S. cultural and social diversity, and ethnic, gender, and class conflict.

### DIVERSITY REQUIREMENT

After successfully completing the requirement, students will be able to:

- identify, assess, and challenge biased assumptions and behaviors of individuals and societal institutions.
- analyze inter-group relations within categories of identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual