

CAREER AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

In addition to programs that prepare students for University transfer, Cuesta also offers career and technical programs designed to prepare students for immediate employment in a specific technical or vocational area. These programs range in length from one semester to several years to complete, depending on the area of study. The curriculum for these specialized programs is monitored by an advisory committee, which includes business and industry leaders, as well as Cuesta faculty and staff from the specific occupation or profession. Cuesta's programs are evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis to make certain that the curriculum is kept up to date with current industry and licensing standards, and to ensure that students are receiving the most relevant training and education available for their chosen field.

Cuesta College offers both Associate Degrees and Certificate Programs with career and vocational emphases:

Associate in Arts and Associate in Science Degrees

Cuesta offers a variety of Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees in Technical and vocational subjects. An Associate Degree requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester credits of degree-applicable course work, to include major related course work, general education, and Cuesta graduation requirements in Health Education and Diversity. A minimum 2.0 overall GPA is required, and all courses required for a major must be earned with "C" grades or better. See the "Associate Degrees and Certificates" section of this catalog for additional information.

Certificate of Specialization

A Certificate of Specialization is a course (or group of courses) designed to prepare a student for work in a specific field or profession. Unlike the Associate's degrees, Certificates of Specialization do not require completion of general education or graduation requirements. Most Certificates of Specialization total 16 semester credits or less. They are awarded to students who have completed the Certificate requirements with a minimum of "C" grade in each course required for the Certificate, who have met Cuesta residency requirements, and who have applied for the Certificate through the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) office.

Certificate of Achievement

A Certificate of Achievement is a group of courses designed to prepare a student for work in a specific field or profession. Unlike the Associate's degrees, Certificates of Achievement do not require completion of general education or graduation requirements. Certificates of Achievement must total 16 credits or more, and the completed Certificate is posted to the student's official transcript. They are awarded to students who have completed the Certificate requirements with a minimum of "C" grade in each course required for the Certificate, who have met Cuesta residency requirements, and who have applied for the Certificate through the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) office.

Certificate of Competency

A Certificate of Competency is a course (or group of courses) designed to those students in a recognized career field articulated with degree applicable coursework, completion of an associate degree, or transfer to a baccalaureate institution. Unlike the Associate's degrees, Certificates of Competency do not require completion of general education or graduation requirements. They are awarded to students who have completed the Certificate based on program requirements for the Certificate who have met Cuesta residency requirements, and who have applied for the Certificate through the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) office.

Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion are state-approved non-credit certificates programs of study. Unlike the Associate's degrees, Certificates of Completion do not require completion of general education or graduation requirements. They are awarded to students who have completed the Certificate based on program requirements for the Certificate, who have met Cuesta residency requirements, and who have applied for the Certificate through the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) office.

Often students who have obtained employment after earning a Certificate of Achievement, a Certificate of Specialization, a Certificate of Competency, or a Certificate of Completion will return to Cuesta to continue with additional requirements needed to earn an Associate in Arts or an Associate in Science degree. Counselors are available to assist students with this process.

EVALUATIONS, SUBSTITUTIONS, WAIVERS AND APPEALS

Degrees and certificates are awarded by the Evaluations Office after a student has applied for the degree or certificate, and after a formal review of the student's academic records has been made. Students who are planning to earn a degree or certificate should schedule regular appointments with a counselor to make sure that they are taking the right courses to meet their desired educational goal.

In certain circumstances, students may initiate a Substitution or Waiver petition through Counseling Services to request use of other coursework to meet requirements for one of Cuesta's degrees or certificates. These substitution and/or course waiver petitions must first be reviewed by a counselor, and then are forwarded to the division office for review and decision by the division chair and Academic Affairs dean. If approved, the approval form is submitted to Admissions & Records to retain a formal record of the decision.

In certain extenuating circumstances, students may submit an Evaluations Office "Policy Appeal for Extenuating Circumstances" to the Director of Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) when they have certain impediments that prevent them from completing all requirements for a degree or certificate, such as all general education course work, or all graduation requirements.

The Director of Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) has final say in the determination about whether to grant this appeal. Contact the Evaluations Office at (805) 546-3141 for further information.

CREDIT FOR ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Cuesta College affirms that there is merit in awarding college credit for other than the traditional classroom experiences. Therefore, Cuesta College awards credit according to the policies stated below.

Advanced Placement Examination

Cuesta College recognizes the completion of College Board Advanced Placement Exams (AP), authorized by the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB). Credit is awarded based upon the criteria established by the college. Advanced placement scores may be ordered by calling the College Board at (888) 308-0013.

International Baccalaureate Examinations

Cuesta College recognizes the completion of International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams. Credit is awarded based upon the criteria established by the college.

Credit for Educational Training in the Military

For currently enrolled students, in good standing, who have completed at least 12 semester credits of "C" average work at Cuesta College, the college may grant up to 12 elective semester credits in accordance with the recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE) for educational training completed in the military service. Educational work completed through the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) will also be accepted with no unit maximum. For more information contact the Veterans Resource Center.

Credit by Examination (Challenge of Courses)

Credit by Examination enables students to use their acquired knowledge, abilities and competencies to challenge certain existing courses for credit.

Petitions for Credit by Examination must be submitted to the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) Office no later than the Friday of the fourth week of the fall or spring semester or the Thursday of the second week of summer session.

These requirements must be met in order to qualify for Credit by Examination:

- The course is listed in the current catalog and is included in the current list of courses that may be challenged (available on the Cuesta website).
- The student has completed all prerequisites for the course.
- The student is duly registered, in good standing, and has completed at least 12 semester credits of "C" average work at Cuesta College. The student may not be on academic probation/dismissal or progress/dismissal.

The following restrictions apply per Cuesta College Board Policy 4235:

- A course may be challenged for a letter grade or on a pass/no pass basis if the course has an either/or grade option code.
- A maximum of 15 semester credits may be challenged.
- A course may not be challenged more than once.
- Credits received through a challenge may not be used to satisfy eligibility requirements for athletics, financial aid or veterans benefits.
- For courses that involve a lab, the examination will include a lab portion, studio portfolio evaluation or a similar demonstration of ability.
- Credits received through challenge may not be used to satisfy residency requirements.

For more information, refer to the "Petition for Credit by Examination" form available in the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) Office or on our website.

Independent Studies

The option of Independent Study at Cuesta College provides an opportunity for an in-depth study or practicum experience by an individual student in a selected topic under the direction of an instructor. In order to qualify, a student must be in good standing, must be enrolled in another class in addition to the independent study course, and must have completed the prerequisite and preparatory course work. A student may not earn more than two credits for an independent study course in any semester/session. To initiate independent study, a student should confirm through the Enrollment Services (Admissions and Records) Office eligibility to enroll in an independent study course and should contact the appropriate academic division.

Independent Studies follows all policies pertaining to academic credit classes.

Credits Not Accepted Toward Degrees/ Certificates/Certifications

Continuing Education Units (CEU)

Continuing education courses are designed for personal enrichment or job advancement and are not applicable to degrees or certificates.

Non-Degree Applicable Credits

Non-degree applicable college courses are not applied to degrees or certificates. Degree applicability is determined according to the catalog for the semester/session in which course was taken.

Credits from Non-Accredited Institutions

Cuesta College only accepts course work from regionally accredited institutions.

Upper Division Course Work

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.

Course Work from Religious-Affiliated Institutions

Course work taken from regionally accredited church or religious-affiliated institutions is accepted as long as the course is not specific to the application of a single doctrine.

TRANSFER TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU) SYSTEM

Cuesta College offers lower division (freshman and sophomore) courses to meet both major preparation and general education requirements for students planning to transfer to the California State University (CSU). Students are advised to check with Cuesta College Counseling Services for detailed information about specific campus, major, and general education requirements.

Minimum requirements for transfer as an upper division student to the CSU

- Complete 60 semester (90 quarter) transferable credits.
- Complete at least 30 semester (45 quarter) credits of general education courses with at least "C-" grade or better including:
 - Oral Communication (Area A1 of the CSU GE-Breadth)
 - Written Communications (Area A2 of the CSU GE-Breadth)
 - Critical Thinking (Area A3 of the CSU GE Breadth)
 - Mathematics (Area B4 of the CSU GE-Breadth)
- Attain a grade point average of 2.0 or better (2.40 for non-California residents) in all transferable college units attempted. (Note that a higher GPA is required for most CSU campuses.)
- Stay in good academic standing at the last college or university attended prior to transfer (e.g. eligible to re-enroll at that college or university).

Completion of General Education (CSU GE-Breadth)

The CSU requires completion of 48 lower division credits of general education for graduation, 39 of which may be certified by Cuesta College. Courses taken to fulfill Areas A1, A2, A3, and B4 of the CSU GE pattern must be completed with grades of "C-" or better, to meet minimum CSU admission requirements. It is strongly recommended that

students complete all or most of their CSU GE as part of their minimum 60 credits required for transfer. Students who complete the CSU GE pattern prior to transfer will not be held to additional lower division GE requirements after transfer. The CSU also accepts the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) toward fulfillment of lower division general educations. Click here to view the most current CSU GE pattern:

https://www.cuesta.edu/student/documents/transfer_center/Fall17_CSUGE.pdf

PARTIAL CSU GE CERTIFICATION

It is possible to complete separately any of the Areas or sections (A-E) at Cuesta College and receive partial CSUGE certification

in any or several of these areas. If you are not fully certified, it will be necessary for you to complete the remaining areas (and perhaps other areas) after transferring as defined by the catalog of the transfer school.

CSU GE Breadth for STEM Majors within ADTs

Students pursuing Chemistry or Biology ADTs may complete CSU GE Breadth for STEM, deferring one lower-division course in Area 3 and one lower-division course in Area 4 until after transfer. CSU GE Breadth for STEM is applicable only to majors for which the Transfer Model Curriculum specifies. A CCC preparing a CSU GE Breadth for STEM certification as part of an ADT shall ensure that the student has completed the following before transfer:

- a. All courses in Areas A, B, and E of the traditional GE curriculum; and
- b. One course in Subarea C1 Arts and one course in Subarea C2 Humanities; and
- c. Two courses in Area D from two different disciplines