California Community Colleges

PROGRAM VIABILITY COMMITTEE · NOVEMBER 12, 2026

Community College Bachelor's Degrees

How to apply now, how applications are reviewed, and what changes in 2028

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WHERE THINGS STAND

Bachelor’ s degrees are now part of the system

67

approved programs

50

community colleges

2,790+

graduates since the pilot began

COC: Bachelor of Science in Building Performance

Approved in 2024 and launched in January 2025 from our architecture program. The first 11 students graduated in June 2026.

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VALUE TO STUDENTS

Graduates earn more and pay less

$78,628

Median annual earnings of graduates, 2023–24

About $30,000 more than the typical earnings of students after they leave a community college.

$10,560

Estimated total tuition and fees

As low as $5,040 with the California College Promise Grant, compared with about $34,672 at a CSU.

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APPLYING TODAY (AB 927 RULES)

What a program has to show

An unmet workforce need. Regional employers need more bachelor's graduates in the field than the region now produces.

No duplication of a CSU or UC program. The Chancellor's Office reviews the program as a whole. Some course overlap within a field is expected and does not make a program duplicative on its own.

Room under the limits. Up to 15 approvals per cycle, 30 a year. A district's bachelor's degrees cannot exceed 25 percent of its associate degrees.

Source: Education Code 78042 (AB 927, 2021), in effect through December 31, 2027

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What goes into an application

Workforce need

A Center of Excellence labor market study and employer consultation

Non-duplication

An analysis of CSU and UC programs and a description they review

Quality and curriculum

Program design, upper-division courses, faculty and facilities

Administration and funding

A funding plan and the district's reserve policy

Certified by the president, the VPI and the **academic senate president**

Source: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program application materials

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APPLYING TODAY (AB 927 RULES)

The application at a glance

Need and non-duplication

- Workforce need and demand summary (up to 10 pages)
- Center of Excellence labor market study, with a signed letter
- Regional consultation and a consortium recommendation
- Non-duplication analysis
- Program description for CSU, UC and independent college review

Program and district

- Program quality and curriculum design (up to 12 pages)
- Administrative and funding plan (up to 12 pages)
- District policy on unrestricted reserves
- ACCJC approval letter, if the college already has one

Source: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program application; Cycles 10 and 11 use the current form

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APPLYING TODAY (AB 927 RULES)

How applications are reviewed

1 Compliance check

Staff confirm the application is complete and follows the law.

2 Scoring

Staff score the data. Readers score the narrative, not their own district.

3 Review by CSU and UC

CSU, UC and independents have 30 working days to object.

4 Approval

The BOG President approves on the Chancellor's recommendation.

ACCJC substantive change approval is a separate, required step.

Sources: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program page; Board of Governors Standing Order 429

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APPLYING TODAY (AB 927 RULES)

Three review paths

Full review

For new programs. CSU and UC may object to duplication.

Streamlined review

For programs already approved at another community college. No duplication objections.

Expedited review

For applied degrees on the Chancellor's Office list. No duplication objections.

Streamlined review is a quick check that the curriculum matches the approved program.

Source: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program application, review categories

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Programs eligible for expedited review

- Airframe Manufacturing Technology
- Automotive Career Education
- Automotive Technology
- Industrial Automation
- Mortuary Science
- Dental Hygiene
- Dental Hygiene Administration
- Respiratory Care
- Occupational Studies / Occupational Therapy Assistant
- Histotechnology
- Research Laboratory Technology
- Equine and Ranch Management

With labor market data showing an unmet need, a college could build on one of these programs without facing duplication objections.

Source: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program application, list of programs approved for expedited review

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THE 2027 WINDOW

Two cycles left under the current rules

CYCLE 10

January 15, 2027

Due Friday at 5:00 PM. Decisions by May 31.

CYCLE 11

August 16, 2027

Moved from Sunday, August 15. Decisions by December 31.

- Up to 15 applications can be approved in each cycle.
- Both cycles use the current application and scoring rubric.
- Programs approved before 2028 do not count toward the new tier limits.
- Preparation takes six to eight months, so aim for August 2027.

Sources: Chancellor's Office Baccalaureate Degree Program page; Education Code 78042

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AB 2694 AND SB 960

What changes on January 1, 2028

A path through duplication. A college may offer a program similar to one at the local CSU if that program's transfer acceptance rate has been under 75 percent for three years in a row.

Workforce need can carry the case. A district may ask the Secretary of Labor to confirm an unmet need first. If CSU objects, the Secretary decides within 90 days based on that need.

Cleanup legislation is expected before January 1, 2028. We do not yet know exactly what will change.

Source: Education Code 78042 as amended by AB 2694 and SB 960 (2026)

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STARTING JANUARY 1, 2028

Tiers set each district's program limit

Tier	Rate vs. the mean	New programs
Tier 1	Well above	Up to 10*
Tier 2	Above	Up to 8*
Tier 3	At or just below	Up to 6
Tier 4	Below	Up to 4
Tier 5	Well below	Up to 2

The rate is the share of students who earn an award or transfer within three years. *More for multi-campus or very large districts.

Each district may submit up to three applications a year.

SANTA CLARITA CCD

One preliminary estimate puts the district in **Tier 1, up to 10 new programs.** It uses older 2021–22 data, not Chancellor's Office figures. Tiers will be set from newer data. Building Performance would not count.

Source: Education Code 78042 as amended by AB 2694 and SB 960; tier guidance is expected in 2027

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ON THE HORIZON

A 90-unit option for applied bachelor’s degrees

- ACCJC’s July 2026 manual recognizes an accelerated applied bachelor’s degree of at least 90 semester units.
- The ASCCC Fall Plenary passed Resolution 102.03, supporting it in Title 5 alongside the 120-unit degree.
- The Board of Governors holds a first reading on November 17. Public comment follows, with action planned for January 2027.

An option, not a mandate. Every program still goes through the same review.

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CHOOSING PROGRAMS

Tools for finding the right fit

Center of Excellence study

Required. Compares regional demand with graduates already in the pipeline.

EDD Job Outlook tool

Look up a program by TOP or CIP code to see its job outlook.

EDD Priority Jobs List

Built for Workforce Pell. Flags in-demand jobs and wages by region.

The college keeps offering the associate degree in the same field.

Job Outlook tool: labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/commcolleges

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CHOOSING PROGRAMS

Is a program ready?

Program quality

- Faculty with the expertise to teach upper-division courses
- Interest from current students and associate degree alumni
- A clear design, with outcomes tied to jobs or licensure

Resources

- A documented unmet need from the Center of Excellence study
- Early conversations with CSU and UC in the region
- A budget, facilities and a plan to sustain the program

California law requires a district to have the expertise, resources and student interest to offer a quality degree.

Sources: Education Code 78042; Bragg, " How Community College Baccalaureate Program Approval Works" (2026)

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HELP IS AVAILABLE

Resources from the Chancellor’s Office

Weekly office hours

Wednesdays, 3:30 to 4:30 PM, on Zoom

Questions by email

bdp@cccco.edu

Application and prep hub

The current application (PDF) and the Resource Hub

Community of Practice videos

Video resources from the Bachelor’s Degree Community of Practice

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Questions and discussion

- Which of our associate programs lead to jobs that call for a bachelor’s degree?
- Does a nearby CSU or UC campus offer something similar?
- Could a proposal be ready for August 2027, or is 2028 a better fit?
- Would a 90-unit design fit the field, including licensing and graduate school?

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