



## **AP 4100 Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

### **References:**

Title 5 Sections 55060 et seq. and 55270 et seq.

### **Coursework for Associate Degrees**

The student must satisfactorily complete at least 60 semester units of degree-applicable lower division credit courses, including courses that apply to the major or area of emphasis in career technical fields and courses in composition, reading, and mathematics or quantitative reasoning not more than one level below transfer. Below transfer level course requirements must align with Education Code section 78213.

The courses must include at least 18 semester units of focused study in a major or interdisciplinary area of emphasis.

A “major” is a focused program of study within a specific discipline, which may include some coursework outside the primary discipline. Programs designed to provide transfer preparation must be designed to meet specific lower-division requirements in comparable baccalaureate majors.

An “area of emphasis” is an interdisciplinary program of study encompassing a broad range of courses from multiple related academic disciplines, providing the student with an academic pathway broader than a specific major but more focused than general education.

The courses must include at least 21 semester units of general education. General education must include a minimum of work in (1) English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking, (2) Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning, (3) Arts and Humanities, (4) Social and Behavioral Sciences, (5) Natural Sciences, and (6) Ethnic Studies.

The District shall specify in its catalog the courses that may be taken by a student in each of the required areas listed above.

As outlined below, the Santa Clarita Community College District (“District”) offers Associate Degrees with exceptions made to the general education requirements based on current law or requirements placed on the degree by external certifying boards.

1. Requirements for Associate in Arts for Transfer ("AA-T") and Associate in Science for Transfer ("AS-T") degrees permitted by California law are exempt from any additional local general education requirements.
2. The Paralegal Studies major must meet the American Bar Association criteria. Therefore, restricted general education course requirements apply to this major.

Associate Degree requirements are determined according to the catalog in effect at the time of first enrollment. If enrollment is continuous, then graduation requirements are taken from the catalog in effect at the time of first enrollment or any other subsequent catalog the student chooses.

When a break in enrollment occurs, graduation requirements are determined according to the catalog in effect at the time of re-entry into continuous enrollment. A break is defined as any four consecutive terms; e.g. fall, winter, spring, and summer in which the student is not enrolled.

The District may grant petitions requesting restoration of lost catalog rights upon demonstration of good cause.

A student may choose to meet the requirements of any subsequent catalog for the major while retaining the general education requirements from the original catalog to which the student has rights.

Courses that meet or exceed the standards of the California Community Colleges completed at other institutionally accredited institutions shall be counted toward associate degree unit requirements. A course may not be counted in more than one general education area, even if the course is approved in multiple general education areas. Students may use the same course to meet a local general education requirement and to satisfy a general education requirement at the California State University or the University of California if that segment accepts the course for this purpose.

Students may receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through District's procedures for awarding CPL as described in District policy and procedure.

Students who have been awarded a bachelor's degree from an institutionally accredited institution shall be deemed to have fulfilled the general education course requirements for the associate degree.

Students may petition to have noncredit courses counted toward the satisfaction of requirements for an associate degree, as permitted by the District's policies and procedures regarding CPL.

Students who intend to transfer shall be advised of limitations transfer institutions may place on the transferability of credits, based on institutional accreditation, course modality, and any other relevant factors.

The District may obtain approval of a direct assessment competency-based program from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

### **Other Conditions for Awarding Associate Degrees**

The District will award an associate degree to students who fulfill the coursework requirements described above or complete the requirements for an approved intersegmental lower-division general education pattern used for transfer to the University of California or the California State University and who met the following conditions:

1. The student satisfactorily completed at least 12 semester units of study in residence. The Board may excuse the residence requirement to alleviate injustice or undue hardship.
2. The student satisfactorily completed each general education course required for graduation with a grade of "C-" or better, or of "P" if the course is taken on a "pass-no pass" basis. Students completing general education patterns other than the District's local general pattern are subject to the limitations of that pattern in the number of general education units allowed as P/NP.
3. Students may use a "P" grade, when that grading option is available for students enrolled in the course, to satisfy major requirements for any associate degree that includes the District's local general education pattern.
4. Students may not use a "P" grade in major courses needed to earn associate degrees that do not include the District's local general education pattern, unless a student (1) submits a petition to the Counseling Department requesting an exception to the prohibition and (2) dialogues with a counselor regarding the potential impact of electing P/NP grades for major coursework on the student's educational goals. As an exception to this limitation, students may use a "P" grade in major courses needed to earn associate degrees using any general education pattern if that "P" grade is assigned as Credit for Prior Learning ("CPL"), including Advanced Placement ("AP") credit, approved pursuant to the District's CPL and AP related policies and procedures.
5. The student completed the requirements for the associate degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in the degree-applicable courses.

To receive an associate degree, a student must submit a request according to District processes. Specific dates are published each term in the District calendar.

### **Multiple Majors (Simultaneous Completion)**

Multiple majors are acceptable and occur when a student works toward the simultaneous completion of more than one major field of study. Declaring multiple majors does not alter the requirements for completing any of the declared majors.

An Associate in Science or Associate in Arts degree with a multiple major may be earned by completing all general education requirements and the courses required for the majors as outlined in the District catalog.

### **Additional Degrees Awarded by the District (Sequential Completion)**

The District is authorized to award an additional Associate Degree provided all the following conditions are met:

1. All major requirements for the additional degree and all general education requirements have been satisfied, per the student's catalog rights.
2. Courses used towards the first degree may count towards the major in the second degree.
3. A minimum of 12 semester units have been completed in residence.

### **Academic Recognition at Graduation**

Academic recognition at graduation will be based upon all degree applicable units from the District and from all other regionally accredited colleges where the student has completed units. Categories of academic recognition include the following.

1. Cum Laude Graduate – requires a cumulative associate degree applicable grade point average of 3.5 - 3.69.
2. Magna Cum Laude Graduate - requires a cumulative associate degree applicable grade point average of 3.7 - 3.89.
3. Summa Cum Laude Graduate - requires a cumulative associate degree applicable grade point average of 3.9 - 4.0.
4. President's Honors Scholar – the student or students with the highest cumulative associate degree applicable grade point average and has completed the College of the Canyons Honor's Program requirements; including at least a 3.5 grade point average in all UC transferable courses.
5. Valedictorian – the student or students with the highest cumulative associate degree applicable grade point average.

The grade point averages listed above will be evaluated at the end of the fall term prior to spring and summer graduates and at the end of summer term for fall graduates.

The Admissions and Records office will post the academic recognition on the District's official transcript once all requirements for graduation are verified.

The Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Summa Cum Laude graduation recognition will be included on the diploma.

### **Certificates of Achievement and Other Credit Programs**

For a certificate of achievement, a student must successfully complete a course of study or curriculum that consists of 16 or more semester units of degree-applicable credit coursework that meets the requirements for an approved program of study as specified in the District's catalog. The certificate of achievement shall be designed to demonstrate that the student has completed coursework and developed capabilities relating to career or general education.

1. For all Certificates of Achievement except the CSU General Education Breadth, the UC-IGETC, CSU-IGETC, and Cal-GETC, students must complete at least half of the units required for the certificate program in residence and must earn a grade of “C” or better, “P” or “CR” in each course required for the certificate.
2. For the CSU General Education Breadth Certificate of Achievement, a student must complete a minimum of 12 units in residence and complete a minimum of 30 of the 39 required units with a grade of “C” or better, “P” or “CR”, including the following areas: A1- Oral Communication, A2- Written Communication, A3 – Critical Thinking, and B4- Mathematical /Quantitative Reasoning.
3. For the Cal-GETC, UC-IGETC, and CSU-IGETC Certificates of Achievement, a student must complete at least one course in residence and complete all courses with a “C” or better, “P” or “CR”. “P/NP” or “CR/NC” courses are acceptable up to a total of 14 units.

Shorter credit programs that lead to a certificate may be established by the District.

For a certificate of specialization, a student must successfully complete a course of study or curriculum that requires fewer than 16 semester units of coursework that meets the requirements for an approved program of study as specified in the District catalog. The issuance of this departmental award is not recorded on a student’s official transcript.

Content and assessment standards for certificates shall ensure that certificate programs are consistent with the District’s mission, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic achievement.

Certificates for which California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office approval is not sought may be given any name or designation deemed appropriate except for certificate of achievement, certificate of completion, or certificate of competency.

To receive a credit certificate, a student must submit a request according to District processes. Specific dates are published each term in the District calendar.

The District may obtain approval of a direct assessment competency-based program from the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office.

### **Noncredit Certificate Requirements**

Certificates of Completion and Competency are noncredit awards granted by the District to students who have demonstrated mastery skills within a noncredit area.

1. Students must complete required courses in an approved program of study as specified in the District catalog.
2. For the Certificate of Competency within the noncredit ESL program, the student must meet the criteria for the certificate based on the combination of placement and successful course completion with a grade of “P”.

3. For the Certificate of Completion the student must complete all required courses in the approved program of study as listed in the District catalog.

To receive a noncredit certificate, a student must submit a request according to District processes. Specific dates are published each term in the District calendar.

**Reviewed by CPC: 05/20/2025**

**Next Review Date: Spring 2031**