

## **THE TWO R'S: RULES AND REGULATIONS A PRIMER**

This section of *Curriculum Basics* is based on the “Program and Course Approval Handbook” published by the Chancellor’s Office, California Community Colleges. The handbook was updated in March 2003, and replaces all earlier versions. The Introduction states, “This handbook is intended to assist California community college administrators, staff, and faculty who are responsible for designing new programs or courses, and submitting those programs or courses for approval.” The following pages are a slightly adapted, Reader’s Digest condensed version of the manual.

Two websites are available for viewing complete texts of regulations and laws referred to in the handbook. Please see [www.calregs.com](http://www.calregs.com) for the California Code of Regulations and [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) for California statutes, including the Education Code sections cited in the “Program and Course Approval Handbook.”

To review the handbook in its entirety, please go to the Chancellor’s Office web site at [http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa\\_ir/credit/credit\\_attachments/hndbk032003.pdf](http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa_ir/credit/credit_attachments/hndbk032003.pdf).

## CREDIT PROGRAM APPROVAL

### *What Programs Need to Be Approved?*

Title 5 defines a “program” as follows:

55000. Definitions.

For the purpose of this chapter, the following definitions shall apply:

...(b) “Educational Program” is an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education.

The Chancellor’s Office in practice, however, only approves *certificates* and *degrees* that are recommended by the community colleges. All other patterns need not have Chancellor’s Office approval.

There are several types of programs that must be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office:

#### Degrees and Majors

Chancellor’s Office approval is required for all associate degrees and associate degree majors that may appear by name on a student transcript. Examples are: (1) Associate in Science in Ornamental Horticulture (Occupational Program), and (2) Associate in Arts in University Studies – English Emphasis (Transfer Program).

There is no difference in law between the Associate in Science and the Associate in Arts degrees, and no State guidelines for assigning majors to each type of degree.

Each associate degree major must be at least 18 semester units of coursework. The coursework may be in a single discipline or it may include related disciplines.

There are also requirements in law for general education and for demonstration of competency in reading, written expression, and mathematics for the associate degree. Please refer to 55805 (Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education) and 55806 (Minimum Requirements for the Associate Degree) for complete texts.

## Certificates

Chancellor's Office approval is required for all certificates that may appear by name on the student transcript, and which require 18 or more semester units of coursework. Chancellor's Office approval is not required for certificates that require fewer than 18 semester units.

## Substantial Modifications

If a program that has previously been approved by the Chancellor's Office is "modified in any substantial way," it must be submitted for reapproval.

Substantial modifications include:

- The goals and objectives of the program are substantially changed;
- The job categories for which program completers qualify are substantially different from the job categories program completers previously qualified for; or
- The baccalaureate major to which students typically transfer is different from the baccalaureate major students previously typically transferred to.

Changes that are made to keep a program current with changing job requirements, evolving application of technology within the same occupation, or evolving knowledge within a particular field are not necessarily substantial modifications for this purpose.

Non-substantial changes to existing programs that colleges wish to have reflected on the Inventory of Approved and Projected Programs (e.g., name changes, unit changes, T.O.P. code changes) may be reported to the Chancellor's Office on a designated form: "Non-Substantial Changes to Approved Program or Change of Active—Inactive Status."

## Options

New options, emphases, specializations, strands, tracks and so forth also require Chancellor's Office review before they are offered, if they are intended to appear by name on student transcripts, diplomas, or awards.

Often, in the past, it has been difficult to draw a line to determine which options are actually new programs for approval purposes and which are not. To avoid such debates in the future, the Chancellor's Office has adopted a form to be used for all options, concentrations, etc. that a college believes do not represent truly new or substantially modified programs. The form is called "Request to Add New Option Or Certificate Within Existing Program To Inventory." This form requires a minimal amount of information.

### ***Types of Programs***

#### Occupational Programs

An occupational program is defined as one whose primary goal is to prepare students for employment immediately upon completing the program, and/or upgrading employment skills. The "Application for Approval – New Occupational Program" form should be used for these programs. This is a detailed application that requires (1) justification regarding program need and (2) a recommendation for approval from the Regional Occupational Consortium. *The Chancellor's Office will rely heavily upon the advice of the Regional Occupational Consortium in regard to the approval criterion of need.*

Justification for the need for new occupational programs is specifically required through a job market study. Please see Education Code 78015 (Job market study; area; scope).

#### Transfer Programs

A transfer program is a degree, or degree major, that primarily prepares students to major in a particular university subject matter, or that primarily provides baccalaureate-level general education. The form "Application for Approval – New Transfer Program" should be used for these programs. Although transfer documentation is required, employer survey information and a recommendation from the Regional Occupational Consortium are not required for these programs.

#### Conjoint Programs

The Chancellor's Office defines a conjoint program as one offered collaboratively by two or more colleges, whether in the same or different districts (but usually within the same geographical region). Each college participating in a conjoint program is authorized to award the certificate or degree. A single approval application is submitted, as well as an individual cover application form with all

required signatures at each participating college and a list of the coursework used at that college to satisfy the conjoint curriculum pattern.

### ***Apprenticeships***

Chancellor's Office approval must be obtained for all apprenticeship credit programs and noncredit courses offered at the community college (specifically required by the Budget Act).

### ***Special Circumstances***

#### **Inactive Programs**

A program approval is effective until the program is "discontinued" (see Title 5, Section 55130). A program that is not currently offered may be retained for a maximum of three years on the Inventory of Approved and Projected Programs with an "Inactive" designation, if the college has a specific intention to offer the program again. The form "Non-Substantial Changes to Approved Program or Change of Active-Inactive Status" may be used to restore such a program to active status. Programs that have not been offered for more than three years will be removed from the inventory.

### ***Approval Criteria***

#### **Appropriateness to Mission**

The proposed program's goals and objectives, or the objectives stated in the course Outline of Record, is consistent with the mission of the community colleges (see Education Code 66010.4. Missions and function of public and independent institutions of higher education). It is also consistent with the college's mission statement and master plan.

The Chancellor's Office evaluates courses and programs based on the following criteria:

- Appropriate level for community colleges
- Valid transfer, occupational, or basic skills purpose (not avocational or recreational)
- Distinct instructional content and specific instructional objectives

## Need

There is a demonstrable need for a course or program in the region the college proposes to serve with its program. The proposed new program would not cause harmful competition with any existing program at another college.

## Quality

Outlines of Record for each course meet all the requirements of Title 5, especially Sections 55002 and 55805.5.

The program is designed so that successfully completing the program requirements will enable students to fulfill the program goals and objectives.

## Feasibility

The college has the resources to maintain the program realistically at the level of quality described in the new program application. (includes funding, faculty, facilities, equipment).

The college commits to offering all the required courses for the program at least once every two years, unless the goals and rationale for the particular program justify a longer time frame as being in the best interest of students.

## Compliance

The design of the program or the course is not in conflict with any law. (state and federal; statutes and regulations). Some possible compliance issues include:

- Open course regulations
- Course repetition regulations
- Regulations requiring immediate supervision by a qualified instructor
- Statutes and regulations on student fees
- Prerequisite and enrollment limitation regulations
- Particular provisions of the practice act for a health occupation
- Constitutional prohibitions against political and religious activities in public instruction

## ***Chancellor's Office Procedures***

The Chancellor's Office carries out its initial review of applications for approval of new programs within no more than 60 days.

### ***Role of CPEC***

The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) is responsible for reviewing and providing a recommendation regarding approval for most new programs in any segment of public higher education (Education Code 66904).

CPEC's response to program approval requests is termed "concurrence" or "nonconcurrence."

As of December 2002, the Chancellor's Office and CPEC entered into an agreement under which many approval applications will no longer need to be forwarded to CPEC. Under this agreement, CPEC will only review programs that fall into the following categories:

- Programs that are the first of their type in the California Community Colleges
- Programs that involve intersegmental collaboration in the way they are offered
- Programs that require new facilities, major renovation to existing facilities, or an expenditure of over \$100,000 in district and State funds for equipment
- Programs that require joint use facilities
- Programs that involve more than one community college district or are considered as having substantial impact on other community college districts
- Other programs of an exceptional nature as agreed upon by CPEC and Chancellor's Office staff. (This may include on-line programs.)

### ***What does Program Approval Authorize?***

Colleges that receive Chancellor's Office approval of a new program are authorized to:

- Collect State apportionment for the required course and restricted electives that are part of the program

- Award a degree or certificate with the designated title

*There is a direct legal requirement for approval before the program is offered; consequently colleges should not publish the fact that a program exists before it is approved.*

Approval of a program is acknowledged by the Chancellor's Office in two ways:

- A letter of approval from the Chancellor's Office to the chief instructional officer of the college
- Its listing on the Chancellor's Office Inventory of Approved and Projected Programs  
(<http://misweb.cccco.edu/esed/webproginv/prod/invmenu.htm>)

## CREDIT COURSE APPROVAL

### *Local Approval and Chancellor's Office Approval*

Education Code Section 70901(b)(10) requires that the Board of Governors “Review and approve all educational programs offered by community college districts, and all courses that are not offered as part of an educational program approved by the board of governors. This responsibility is delegated to the Chancellor in Title 5, Section 55100.

### Courses Part of an Approved Program

Pursuant to Title 5 Section 55100, the governing board of a community college district may establish policies for, and may approve, courses that are part of an approved program, without separate approval by the Chancellor's Office. However, local approval of courses must include review by the curriculum committee established according to Title 5 Section 55002.

### Blanket Approval of Certain Stand-alone Courses

When a course is *not* part of an approved program as defined above, it is referred to as a “stand-alone course.” By law, stand-alone courses are subject to Chancellor's Office approval. There are, however, some exceptions.

Chancellor's Office approval of new stand-alone courses is waived in the following categories only:

- Courses that are accepted for major requirements or general education requirements at any California State University or University of California campus. Courses that are only transferable for elective credit are not included in this blanket approval.
- Courses in vocational T.O.P. codes, when the college has fewer than 12 semester units of stand-alone coursework in the same T.O.P. code.
- Cooperative work experience courses (both occupational work experience and general work experience).
- Experimental courses, special topics courses and special study courses. An *experimental course* should generally be submitted for approval as a regular course, or discontinued, within one year. A *special topics course* is one which employs a consistent disciplinary framework, but for which the specific focus may change from term to

term. A *special study course* is one that involves an individual student or small group of students in study, research, or activities beyond the scope of regularly offered courses, pursuant to an agreement among the college, faculty member, and student(s).

- Mandated public safety training courses, offered specifically to satisfy certification requirements of the California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training, or the California Fire Service Training and Education System.

It is the local curriculum committee's responsibility to review each new course to determine whether or not it meets the standards of Title 5 regulations and if it falls into one of the blanket approval categories. If it does not, or if it is part of a program that has been disapproved by the Chancellor's Office, it must be submitted individually to the Chancellor's Office for approval before being offered.

#### Stand-alone Courses That Require Chancellor's Office Approval

New courses not part of an approved program, other than those that fall into one of the categories given blanket approval above, must be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for approval before being offered. This includes all non-degree-applicable courses.

Stand-alone courses will be reviewed using the same five criteria that are used for program approval:

- Mission
- Need
- Quality
- Feasibility
- Compliance

## *Standards for All Courses*

It is the responsibility of the governing board of each community college district, under the Education Code (70902) to approve courses offered in that district.

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations (55002) further provides that every course must be recommended for approval by a curriculum committee before it goes to the governing board for approval.

*The curriculum committee and the governing board, and the district's and college's academic administrators (as delegated by the governing board) are thus together responsible for ensuring that regulatory standards are met for the applicable category of community college credit, and also that courses meet other standards, such as standards for university transfer, general education certification, and articulation for particular majors.*

## Associate Degree-Applicable Courses

An associate degree course is a course that has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Section 55805.5 and which has been recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a collegiate course meeting the needs of the students eligible for admission. (55002)

For any course that will apply toward the associate degree, Title 5 regulations require that the curriculum committee determine that the coursework is truly at a college level, and that the course incorporates critical thinking.

Title 5 Section 55002 addresses **standards of approval** for associate degree credit courses:

- **Grading Policy** – The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with section 55658 of this Division. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of essays, or in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students.

- **Units** – The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board, between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course also requires a minimum of three hours of work per week, including class time for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term, laboratory and activity courses.
- **Intensity** – The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that require students to study independently outside of class time.
- **Prerequisites and Corequisites** – When the college and/or district curriculum committee determines, based on a review of the Course Outline of Record, that a student needs knowledge or skills not taught in the course in order to be successful, then the course shall require prerequisites or corequisites that are established, reviewed and applied in accordance with the requirements of Article 2.5 of this Subchapter.
- **Basic Skills Requirements** – If success in the course is dependent upon communication or computational skills, then the course shall require, consistent with the provisions of Article 2.5 of this Subchapter, as prerequisites or corequisites eligibility for enrollment in associate degree credit courses in English and/or mathematics, respectively.
- **Difficulty** – The course work calls for critical thinking and the understanding and application of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.
- **Level** – The course requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.

Title 5 Section 55002 states **additional requirements** for an associate degree credit course:

- **Course Outline of Record** – The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the unit value, scope, objectives, and content in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing

assignments, other outside-of-class assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students.

- **Conduct of Course** – Each section of the course is to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of objectives and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.
- **Repetition** – Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 51000), sections 55761-55763 and 58161 of this Division.

Title 5 also offers a description of the types of courses that may be considered associate degree-applicable. Courses that fall outside the categories listed in the regulation may not be offered for associate degree credit.

#### **55805.5 Types of Courses Appropriate to the Associate Degree**

- All lower division courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by the California State University or University of California or designed to be offered for transfer
- Courses that apply to the major in non-baccalaureate occupational fields
- English courses not more than one level below the first transfer-level composition course, typically known as English 1A. *Each student may count only one such course as credit toward the associate degree.*
- All mathematics courses above and including Elementary Algebra
- Credit courses in English and mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments and which, as determined by the local governing board, require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for the courses specified in sections (c) and (d) above

#### Nondegree-Applicable Credit Courses

Title 5 prescribes that these courses must provide instruction in critical thinking, must prepare students to study independently outside of class, and must include

reading and writing assignments. However, the course materials and level of difficulty do not have to be at the college level.

The **types of courses** that are appropriate for Nondegree credit courses are listed in 55002:

- Precollegiate basic skills courses
- Courses designed to enable students to succeed in college-level work that integrate basic skills instruction throughout and assign grades partly upon the demonstrated mastery of those skills
- Precollegiate occupational preparation courses designed to provide foundation skills for students preparing for entry into college-level occupational courses or programs
- Essential occupational instruction for which meeting the standards of section 55002(a) is neither necessary nor required

Section 55002 also outlines the **standards for approval** of nondegree-applicable courses:

- **Grading policy** – The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with section 55758 of this Division. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of written expression that may include essays, or in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem-solving exercises or skills demonstrated by students.
- **Units** – The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course requires a minimum of three hours of student work per week, per unit, including class time and/or demonstrated competency, for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term laboratory, and activity courses

- **Intensity** – The course provides instruction in critical thinking and generally treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that prepare students to study independently outside of class time and includes reading and writing assignments and homework. In particular, the assignments will be sufficiently rigorous that students completing each such course successfully will have acquired the skills necessary to successfully complete college-level work upon completion of the required sequence of such courses.
- **Prerequisites and Corequisites** – When the college and/or district curriculum committee deems appropriate, the course may require prerequisites or corequisites for the course that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with Article 2.5 (commencing with section 55200) of this Subchapter.

Additional requirements include:

- **Conduct of Course** – All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of objectives and with other specification defined in the course outline of record.
- **Repetition** – Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of Division 2 (commencing with Section 5100) Sections 55761-55763 and 58161 of this Division.

#### Relationship of Hours to Units

According to Title 5 (55002.5), “One credit hour of community college work is approximately three hours of recitation, study, or laboratory work per week throughout a term of 16 weeks.” This applies to both degree-applicable credit and nondegree-credit courses.

One hour of classroom or laboratory time is defined as 50 minutes (Title 5, Section 58023). Out-of-class study time, however, is 60 minutes.

In traditional academic disciplines, it is expected that one-third of these hours will occur in the classroom (lecture) and two-thirds will occur outside the classroom (homework).

Examples (lecture classes):

One-unit class (Note: see Appendix for 17-week semester calculations):

16 hours of classroom time  
32 hours of homework  
48 hours total student learning time

Three-unit class:

48 hours of classroom time  
96 hours of homework  
144 hours total student learning time

One-unit accelerated course – meets for two hours of lecture per day over ten days:

20 hours of classroom time  
28 hours of homework (must be assigned)  
48 hours total student learning time

One-half unit intensive weekend seminar:

16 hours of classroom time (two 8-hour days)  
8 hours of homework (must be assigned)  
24 hours total student learning time

Because of individual differences, these ratios will not hold true for every student. Faculty, however, are required to assign the requisite number of homework hours for the “average” student.

Laboratory courses are a bit different. Generally, it has not been expected that the student will study outside the classroom; therefore, the number of units is based entirely on the number of laboratory hours required. These laboratory hours must be under the immediate supervision and control of a qualified academic employee.

Example (lab class):

One-unit chemistry lab:

48 lab hours (three hours per week over 16 weeks)  
0 hours homework  
48 hours total student learning time

In some laboratory courses (such as computer applications courses), it is expected that students will do some homework; consequently fewer lab hours are assigned. Instructors, however, must assign the required number of hours for out-of-class study. This practice is NOT recommended for transferable laboratory courses. *In the natural sciences, it is standard university practice to base the number of units awarded only on the in-class hours. Any alteration of this relationship for such a course could jeopardize its acceptability for major or general education courses at the four-year level.*

### Course Repetition

Title 5 “Standards of Scholarship” regulations provide that any course may be repeated if the student received a “D,” “F,” or “NC” grade the first time (Sections 55761-55762). In addition, a district may allow a student to repeat a course even if he or she achieved a satisfactory grade (such as a “C”) the first time, if certain justifying circumstances exist (Section 55763). State apportionment may only be claimed for one repetition in either of these circumstances. (See Title 5, Section 58161 for a precise definition of these circumstances.)

Title 5, Section 58161 explains that a district may allow a student to repeat a course in which s/he has received a satisfactory grade if (1) there were extenuating circumstances (accidents, illnesses) or (2) there has been a significant lapse of time since the student previously took the course. (This applies to recency issues for a prerequisite for entrance into a program.)

However, Section 55763 provides that when a course is repeated, and the student did not receive a substandard grade, the grade received for the repetition shall not be counted in calculating the student’s grade point average.

There are several exceptions to this rule (Title 5, Section 58161). Districts may designate certain types of courses as repeatable for apportionment up to three times under the semester system, regardless of the grade previously received or the student’s individual circumstances. Such courses must be specifically designated in the college catalog, and a system must be adopted to track the students’ repetitions. Exceptions include:

- (1) Course content differs each time it is offered.
- (2) Student gains an expanded educational experience for one of the following reasons:

- (a) skills or proficiencies are enhanced by supervised repetition and practice within class periods or
- (b) active participatory experience in individual study or group assignments is the basic means by which learning objectives are obtained.

Physical Education activity courses and performing and studio arts courses may be designated as repeatable under this regulation. Occupational courses may also be designated as repeatable if the course content is determined to differ each time the course is offered. *It is not the intent of the regulation that basic skills or ESL courses generally be eligible to be so designated.*

The limitation of four semesters applies to the total number of repetitions for any given activity, even if the college offers several levels of courses in that activity. An exception to this is contained in Title 5 Section 58161(d) and applies to courses in the arts if the course is part of a sequenced transfer curriculum.

There is a special exception to the limitations on course repetition for apportionment provided for Disabled Students Programs special classes. Title 5, Section 56029 provides that the limitations do not apply:

- (1) When continuing success of the student in other general and/or special classes is dependent on additional repetitions of a specific class;
- (2) When additional repetitions of a specific special class are essential to completing a student's preparation for enrollment into other regular or special classes;
- (3) When the student has a student educational contract which involves a goal other than completion of the special class in question and repetition of the course will further achievement of that goal.

*Please see appendix for a letter from the Chancellor's Office dated January 21, 2004 regarding withdrawal and course repetition.*

### Open Courses

The open course concept means that no course is approvable if it is restricted to a particular group. Certain narrow exceptions include fire service personnel (Title 5, Section 58051[d] and law enforcement trainees (Penal Code Section 832.3[c], courses conducted in a jail or federal prison (Title 5, Section 58051.6), students who are part of a cohort concurrently enrolled in another specified course (Title 5, Section 58106), and apprentices in "related and supplemental instruction" courses ((Labor Code Section 3076.3).

## Transferable Courses

Community college courses may be transferable to a four-year college for different purposes: elective credit, general education, and/or major credit.

Under “Executive Order #167,” the California State University has delegated responsibility, since 1973, to the community colleges to determine which courses shall be considered baccalaureate-level for elective transfer credit. By contrast, the University of California Office of the President reviews the determination of transferability course-by-course for that system; transferability for elective credit requires that the community college course be essentially equivalent to a course already offered for baccalaureate credit on at least one of the UC’s campuses.

A document prepared by the Academic Senate for the California State University dated November 7, 1986 (“Considerations Involved in Determining What Constitutes a Baccalaureate Level Course”) provides some further guidance for transferability:

### **Course Expectations**

- (1) The course is presented in a manner that requires of students:
  - (a) a level of intellect, skill, prior knowledge, and maturity consistent with entry-level collegiate expectations and the stated prerequisite(s), if any for that course;
  - (b) learning skills and a vocabulary necessary to master the subject matter of a baccalaureate level course; and
  - (c) the capacity to think crucially and to understand and apply concepts.
- (2) The course:
  - (a) treats subject matter with an intensity and pace that establishes an expectation for significantly greater learner independence than that required at the secondary level; and
  - (b) requires the student to continue development of communication skills appropriate for higher education.
- (3) Coursework that:
  - (a) enhances understanding of analytical, intellectual, scientific, or cultural concepts and traditions generally shall be considered baccalaureate level.

- (b) enhances understanding of occupational and professional fields usually requiring experience in higher education a prerequisite to employment in such field may be considered baccalaureate level if it includes attention to appropriate theories and concepts.
- (c) provides instruction in occupational fields not usually requiring experience in higher education as prerequisite to such field may be considered baccalaureate level if the primary emphasis is upon understanding the theories and concepts that underlie practice rather than only upon the development of technical skills required for immediate employment.

### *Elective Credit*

Challenges may be raised at the CSU campuses to particular courses that are certified by a community college as transferable, but such challenges are not frequent. Transferability for elective credit, however, does not create any presumption of acceptance for general education or major purposes.

### *Major Credit*

Decisions on transferability for equivalence to particular coursework required as part of a university major are made by departmental faculty and committees at each university campus. Major-specific articulation information for most campuses can be found in the database of the “articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer” (ASSIST) at [www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org). In addition, the “California Articulation Number” (CAN), used in most community college catalogs, is a separate numbering system designed to identify comparable courses that may be used in lieu of lower division major requirements at CSU and some participating independent colleges and universities. The CAN database is available at [www.cansystem.org](http://www.cansystem.org).

### *General Education*

The four-year public segments have extensive requirements for general education. Identifying those community college courses that will be accepted by CSU or UC as satisfying their general education requirements is very important to the success of transfer students.

UC – For the University of California, the acceptability of a course for general education is predicated on the acceptability of the equivalent UC course since each course transferred to UC has been identified, by staff review at the

Office of the President, as essentially equivalent to an existing UC course. UC's general education requirements, moreover, vary greatly from campus to campus.

CSU – For the California State University, general education requirements are standardized through statewide regulations. Procedures for certifying community college courses as meeting CSU's general education requirements are set forth in the CSU Chancellor's Executive Order 595 ([www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-595.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-595.pdf)).

Since 1993, new courses intended for general education transfer have been reviewed for acceptability by CSU Chancellor's Office staff and a subcommittee of the CSU General Education Advisory Committee. This same subcommittee, with the addition of UC representatives, reviews the acceptability of community college courses for IGETC, the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum, which is accepted by both four-year public segments as an alternative pattern for satisfying lower-division general education requirements.

*Determining the eligibility of a particular course for university transfer for **elective credit, major requirements, and general education** is an essential part of the process of local course approval by the curriculum committee, generally with the assistance of a college articulation officer. For course outlines submitted to the Chancellor's Office, evidence of transferability is a quality criterion that is reviewed for all courses and programs in traditionally or potentially transferable disciplines.*

### Prerequisites

Title 5, Section 55002 requires, for degree-applicable courses, that when the curriculum committee determines that it is necessary for student success, the course shall require appropriate prerequisites or corequisites, including prerequisite English or math levels. This section also states that curriculum committees may establish prerequisites or corequisites for non degree-applicable courses.

Title 5 regulations also define the manner in which prerequisites and corequisites may be established. The regulations state that, with certain limited exceptions, prerequisites must be carefully scrutinized before they are established, to be certain that they are necessary and not discriminatory. Most prerequisites are subject to scrutiny through a process of "content review," but prerequisite English and math levels generally require a process of statistical research validation.

Title 5, Section 55201 sets a timeline for review of prerequisites and corequisites by stating that “at least once each six years all prerequisites and corequisites established by the district shall be reviewed.”

### *Special Courses for Students with Disabilities*

Special courses may be one of two types:

- (1) Classes that are simply sections of existing courses. In such a case, the class is taught in accordance with the regular outline of record for that course, but the teaching methods or materials are supplemented to accommodate stated disabilities. Sections of courses in the regular curriculum that are merely adapted to enable students with disabilities to meet the regular course objectives in alternative ways do not require separate Chancellor’s Office approval.
- (2) Distinct courses with their own outlines of record, designed either to meet educational objectives unique to a population with specific disabilities, or to supplement the standard objectives in an otherwise similar course, with objectives unique to that population.

In either case, special classes – like all courses and sections of course – must be primarily instructional in nature and must have objectives that fall within the instructional mission of the California Community Colleges. Such courses cannot be designed primarily to provide group activities or services.

DSP&S course outlines of record should:

- Specify what disability or disabilities the course is designed to address;
- Clarify what objectives the course is to fulfill as they relate to these disabilities;
- Show why a special course is needed to meet this need, rather than its being met through accommodation in a regular course;
- Specify how it will be determined that the objectives have been achieved;
- Explain what disability-specific instructional methods, materials, equipment, etc. will be used and why.

## OTHER CURRICULUM TOPICS

### *Independent Study*

Independent study is a mode of instruction in which students are not required to be under the immediate supervision and control of a qualified academic employee. Apportionment for independent study is calculated based on the academic units the student earns, rather than on the student contact hours (classroom or laboratory time).

Independent study may include courses conducted through television, radio, and correspondence. It also includes individual study as arranged between student and faculty member, with approval of the college. Distance education courses conducted “on-line” may or may not be considered independent study for apportionment purposes, depending on how they are conducted.

### *Distance Education*

In June, 2002, amendments to Title 5 were adopted that removed distance education from under the independent study heading and gave it its own article under a different subchapter. The most important result of this change is that the attendance accounting method for distance education courses is no longer limited to independent study (Title 5, Section 58003.1[a]). For example, if a distance education course is fully interactive (such as a course that uses real-time interactive television, or real-time interactive Internet communication), and is conducted with regularly scheduled hours similar to what would be offered in a classroom setting, then it may be reported as a regular census course.

*Title 5 regulations specify that course quality standards apply to distance education in the same manner as for regular classroom courses, and that each course delivered via distance education must be separately approved as such through local curriculum approval processes. In addition, the regulations require regular effective contact between instructors and students.*

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has published a document titled “Guidelines for Good Practice: Effective Instructor-Student Contact in Distance Learning.” Also, “Distance Education Regulations and Guidelines,” a publication of the Chancellor’s Office, is available at [http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa\\_ir/disted.htm](http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa_ir/disted.htm). A third resource is Title 5 regulations on distance education, Sections 55205-55219.

## ***Cooperative Work Experience Education***

Cooperative work experience education is another exception to the usual requirement that state-reimbursed community college education be under the immediate supervision and control of a qualified academic employee. Apportionment for this mode of instruction is based on the number of hours of employment, paid or non-paid, that a student works during a term, in a job that offers opportunities for on-the-job educational experiences.

There are two types of cooperative work experience education.

- (1) General Work Experience is supervised employment intended to assist students in acquiring desirable work habits, attitudes and career awareness. It need not be related to the student's specific educational goals.
- (2) Occupational Work Experience is supervised employment where on-the-job learning relates to the student's specific educational or occupational goal.

Title 5 regulations covering cooperative work experience education are contained in Sections 55250-55257.

## ***Community Services***

Community colleges are authorized to offer community services classes, which are defined as "classes in civic, vocational, literacy, health, homemaking, technical and general education, including, but not limited to classes in the fields of music, drama, art, handicraft, science, literature, nature study, nature contacting, aquatic sports and athletics." Community services classes are not the same as noncredit courses. They do not require approval from the Chancellor's Office and are not connected with any approved program.

Community colleges do not collect any state apportionment for community services offerings. They must charge students in these classes a fee sufficient to cover the cost of maintaining the classes, or they may provide community services classes by contract or with contributions or donations from individuals or groups.

## ***Contract Education***

Community colleges are authorized to conduct contract education offerings to meet the specific training needs of private corporations or other public agencies. Most contract education offerings do not generate State apportionment because they are customized offerings paid for by businesses for their employees. Since they do not

generate apportionment, they are not required to be open to any student admitted to the college.

The majority of contract offerings do not carry community college credit. They are referred to as “not-for-credit classes.” (The term “noncredit” is reserved for State-authorized and State-funded adult education courses in specific categories authorized by law.) However, contract education classes may carry community college credit, if they meet the same quality standards as equivalent courses taught within the State-funded curriculum. Some may generate apportionment, if they are open to any student of the college and meet all other legal requirements.

Chancellor’s Office approval is not required for a non-apportionment-generating contract class, even if it results in college credit. However, the Chancellor’s Office advises that contract classes that result in credit, whether they generate apportionment or not, should be required to be approved by the college or district curriculum committee, applying the same quality standards as for other credit courses.

### ***Program Review***

Title 5 regulations give the Chancellor’s Office the authority to review established programs (Section 55130). Although the Chancellor’s Office has never been staffed sufficiently to carry out post-approval program reviews in a regular fashion, several times during its history it has collected information from all colleges on the processes for and/or the results of locally conducted program reviews.

In addition, the Education Code specifically requires regular review of the effectiveness of vocational programs:

#### **78016. Review of program; termination**

- (a) Every vocational or occupational training program offered by a community college district shall be reviewed every two years by the governing board of the district to ensure that each program, as demonstrated by the California Occupational Information System, including the State-Local Cooperative Labor Market Information Program established in Section 10533 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, or if this program is not available in the labor market area, other available sources of labor market information, does all of the following:
  - (1) Meets a documented labor market demand.
  - (2) Does not represent unnecessary duplication of other manpower training programs in the area.
  - (3) Is of demonstrated effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students.

- (b) Any program that does not meet the requirements of subdivision (a) and the standards promulgated by the governing board shall be terminated within one year.

Review of instructional programs on a regular basis, and according to a regular procedure, is mandated not only by Title 5 regulations and Education Code statutes, but also by the standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

## NONCREDIT COURSES

Title 5 outlines specific criteria to which all noncredit courses must comply. Section 55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses and Classes states;

### c) Noncredit Course.

A noncredit course is a course which, at a minimum, is recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee (the committee described and established under subdivision (a)(1) of this section) and approved by the district governing board as a course meeting the needs of enrolled students.

- (1) Standards for Approval. The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course if the course treats subject matter and uses resource materials, teaching methods, and standards of attendance and achievement that the committee deems appropriate for the enrolled students. In order to be eligible for state apportionment, such courses are limited to the categories of instruction listed in Education Code section 84711, and must be approved by the Chancellor's Office as noted in Title V, section 55150. (See Appendix page VIII-20.)
- (2) Course Outline of Record. The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the scope, objectives, contents, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met.
- (3) Conduct of Course. All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with the set of objectives and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

See Appendix page VIII-38 for the "Noncredit Course Approval Primer."