



Administrative Regulation

Chapter 4 – Academic Affairs

AR 4100 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREES

I. Purpose

This regulation establishes the requirements and procedures for awarding associate and baccalaureate degrees by Santa Monica College. Requirements for certificates are delineated in AR 4100.2 Certificates and General Education Certification.

II. Scope

This regulation applies to all students seeking:

- a) Associate degrees (AA/AS)
- b) Associate degrees for transfer (AA-T/AS-T)
- c) Baccalaureate degrees

III. Definitions

- a. Major: A focused program of study within a specific discipline or an interdisciplinary program of study.
- b. Area of Emphasis: 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.
- c. Residency: Coursework completed at Santa Monica College.

IV. General Provisions

- a. Publication of Requirements
The District shall publish current degree and general education requirements in the College catalog, College website, and schedule of classes, and degree audit program.
- b. Evaluation of External Coursework and Test Scores
 - i. Academic records evaluators and Counselors shall evaluate courses transferred for degree applicability. Coursework deemed to meet or exceed the District standards can be applied toward meeting degree requirements, including major, general education, and elective credit.
 - ii. The appropriate Department Chair or designee shall conduct an initial evaluation of coursework applied to a major when the course has not been previously reviewed by the College.
 - iii. Coursework from non-U.S. institutions shall be evaluated in accordance with AR 4100.5. Students should consult a counselor before requesting to have credits evaluated by an approved external agency.

- iv. Credit awarded through the District's Credit for Prior Learning, including Credit by Examination processes, may be used to satisfy degree requirements in accordance with AR 4235.
 - v. Upper-division coursework may satisfy requirements for associate degrees as evaluated and approved by the appropriate department chair, articulation officer or designee.
 - vi. Noncredit courses may satisfy requirements for associate degrees as evaluated and approved by the appropriate department chair, articulation officer or designee in accordance with AR 4100.6 and AR 4235. Some limitations apply.
 - vii. Courses may be used to simultaneously satisfy major and general education requirements, as applicable i.e "double count", provided the student meets total unit requirements.
 - viii. A student may petition for "exclusion of coursework repeated at another college" to improve their grade point average (GPA) per limitations in AR 4225, when course with substandard grade (D or F) has been repeated.
 - ix. A petition for academic renewal may be submitted in accordance with AR 4240 when eligible, to alleviate the substandard grade (D or F) to improve the GPA.
 - x. When coursework completed beyond degree requirements lowers a student's cumulative grade point average below 2.0, the District may compute the grade point average using only the courses applied to satisfy the associate degree requirements, provided that the coursework used includes all required major/area of emphasis and general education requirements.
 - xi. Coursework from a non-institutionally accredited institution may satisfy requirements for associate degrees as evaluated and approved by the appropriate department chair, articulation officer or designee in accordance with AR 4100.4.
- c. Catalog Rights
See AR 4000 Catalog Rights
 - d. Multiple Degrees Awarded
There shall be no limit on the number of degrees a student may earn, consistent with AR 4100.1.
 - e. Academic Excellence
The College shall recognize academic achievement in accordance with AR 4100.3.
 - f. Course Limitations
 - i. A course may not be counted in more than one general education area for each general education pattern, even if the course is approved in multiple general education areas.
Exceptions:
 - o Local global citizenship requirement
 - o CSU graduation requirement for American History or equivalent
 - o CSU graduation requirement for American and California Government or equivalents
 - o IGETC language other than English (LOTE)
 - ii. Students who intend to transfer shall be advised of limitations that transfer institutions may place on the transferability of credits, based on institutional accreditation, course modality, credit for prior learning, and any other relevant factors.

- iii. Enrollment in upper division courses shall be limited to students admitted to a baccalaureate program.

V. **Associate Degree Requirements
(Associate in Arts "AA" or Associate in Science "AS")**

An Associate Degree will be conferred upon a student who satisfies the following requirements:

- a. **Unit Requirement**
Complete at least 60 semester units of degree-applicable coursework.
- b. **Grade Point Average**
Complete the requirements for the associate degree with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in degree-applicable courses. The District may calculate GPA based solely on courses used to meet degree requirements when units exceed 60.
- c. **Residency Requirement**
Complete at least 12 semester units in residence. The Admissions and Records Office may grant an exception to alleviate undue hardship. The student may submit a Special Consideration petition.
- d. **Major Requirement**
Complete at least 18 semester units in a major.

Each course shall be completed with a grade of "C" or better or "P" notation, provided the "P" is equivalent to "C" or better.

- e. **General Education Requirement**
 - i. Complete one of the following patterns based on catalog rights:
 - SMC General Education for Associate Degree (7 Areas; minimum of 21 units)
 - o 1A: English Composition (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 1B: Oral Communication and Critical Thinking (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 2: Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 3: Arts and Humanities (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 5: Natural Sciences (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 6: Ethnic Studies (minimum of 3 units)
 - o 7: Global Citizenship (minimum of 3 units)
 - may also fulfil a requirement in one other SMC G.E. area
 - Transfer general education pattern:
 - o CSU GE Breadth
 - o IGETC (UC/CSU)
 - o Cal-GETC
 - ii. **Exception:**
Students who have been awarded a baccalaureate degree from an institutionally accredited institution shall be deemed to have satisfied all general education course requirements for an associate degree. Official transcript from degree awarding institution must be filed in the Admissions and Records Office.

VI. **Associate Degrees for Transfer Requirements
(Associate in Arts “AA-T” or Associate in Science “AS-T”)**

- a. Associate Degrees for Transfer are designed to provide a pathway to the California State University system.

The degree will be conferred upon a student who satisfies the following requirements:

- i. Complete a minimum of 60 CSU-transferable semester units.
- ii. Complete one of the following general education patterns: CSU GE Breadth, IGETC or Cal-GETC.
- iii. Complete requirements specified in Section V, subsections b, c, d: GPA, Residency & Major of this regulation, which includes exception for baccalaureate degree holders.

Benefits of this degree:

- b. Students awarded an AA-T or AS-T are required to complete no more than 60 semester or 90 quarter units after transfer to earn a baccalaureate degree if transferred into a program at the CSU that’s similar to the one in which they earned their ADT (unless the major is designated a “high unit” major).
- c. Students awarded an AA-T or AS-T degree are guaranteed admission to the CSU system and given priority admission consideration to their local CSU campus, and to a program that is deemed similar to their major. This priority does not guarantee admission to specific or impacted majors nor to all CSU campuses.
- d. Some majors and CSU campuses may require a higher GPA or specific courses for admission. Students shall meet with a counselor to find out which CSU campuses accept this degree and review options/requirements for transfer.

NOTE: This degree may not be the best option for students intending to transfer to a UC or to a particular university or college that is not part of the CSU system.

VII. **Baccalaureate Degree Requirements**

A Baccalaureate Degree will be conferred upon a student who satisfies the following requirements:

- a. **Unit Requirement**
Complete a minimum of 120 semester units of degree-applicable units.
- b. **Grade Point Average**
Complete the requirements for the baccalaureate degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in degree-applicable courses. The District may calculate GPA based solely on courses used to meet degree requirements when units exceed 120.
- c. **Residency Requirement**
 - i. Complete at least 12 units of upper division in residence.
The Admissions and Records Office may grant an exception to alleviate undue hardship. The student may submit a Special Consideration petition.
- d. **Upper Division Requirements**
 - i. A minimum of 40 semester units must be upper division coursework, including units in the major and in general education. A lower division course may meet an upper division course requirement, but it may not be counted toward the required minimum number of upper division units.

e. Major Requirement

- i. All major coursework must be completed with a grade of “C” or better or “P” notation, provided a “P” is equivalent to a “C” or better.
- ii. All upper division major coursework must be completed at Santa Monica College. Course substitutions/equivalencies may be approved by the Department Chair or designee.

f. General Education

A minimum of 36 semester units of general education that include:

- i. Completion of a SMC bachelor degree general education pattern.
- ii. A minimum of 9 semester units of upper division general education courses must come from at least two disciplines outside of the major, one of which must have emphasis in written communication, oral communication, or computation.
- iii. Completion of additional general education courses to meet the minimum total units may be any combination of lower division and/or upper division.

Exception:

- iv. A student who has been awarded a baccalaureate degree from an institutionally accredited institution shall be deemed to have satisfied general education course requirements (lower/upper). Official transcript from degree awarding institution must be on file in the Admissions and Records Office.
- v. A student who has completed full certification of CSU GE Breadth, IGETC or Cal-GETC shall be deemed to have fulfilled lower division baccalaureate degree general education requirements. Verification of full general education certification must be on file in the Admissions and Records Office.

VIII. **Petitioning for Degrees**

Students are encouraged to petition for the degree during the semester in which the student expects to complete the requirements. Deadline dates and petitions are published on the Admissions and Records webpage for each term. See AR 4100.8 and AR 4100.9

IX. **Honorary Degrees**

See BP 4110 Honorary Degrees

X. **Commencement**

Commencement ceremonies are held once each year at the end of the Spring semester for students that have completed or are expected to complete their degree requirements in accordance with AR 4100.9.

Students who will complete no more than 8 units in the Summer to meet degree requirements, are eligible to participate in Commencement if the student petitions for the degree by the spring deadline.

Related Administrative Regulations

- AR 4000 Catalog Rights
- AR 4100.1 Number of Degrees and Certificates Awarded to a Student
- AR 4100.2 Certificates and General Education Certification
- AR 4100.3 Recognition of Academic Excellence
- AR 4100.4 Institutional Accreditation Requirement of Coursework
- AR 4100.5 Transfer Credit from Non-U.S. Institutions
- AR 4100.6 Other College Credit & Non Credit Allowed & Not Allowed
- AR 4100.7 Transcripts and Test Scores
- AR 4100.8 Petitioning for Degrees and Certificates
- AR 4100.9 Commencement
- AR 4100.10 Updating Diplomas, Transcripts and Other Records Based on Name or Gender Change
- AR 4222 Remedial Coursework
- AR 4225 Credit Course Repetition
- AR 4232 Pass and No Pass Grading
- AR 4235 Credit for Prior Learning and Credit by Examination
- AR 4240 Academic Renewal
- AR 4314.1 Credit by Examination Based on High School Articulation
- AR 5040.2 Transcripts or Verification of Student Records

References:

Education Code §§66055.8, 66746–66749, 70901–70902, 78040–78043, 78213
Title 5 §§40402-40403, 55002, 55022, 55050, 55052, 56032-56046, 55060–55062, 55064,
55061 et seq, 55070–55072, 55090 et seq, 55270 et seq.
CSU Executive Order 1100
IGETC/Cal-GETC Standards

Revised: 4/29/2003, 7/22/08, 5/17/11, 12/3/13, 3/1/17, 5/23/22, 6/2024 (references only), 5/26/2026