



2026 | 9th Edition

Program and Course Approval Handbook

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Sonya Christian, Chancellor

2026 PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL HANDBOOK

Prepared By

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Academic Affairs

and

California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C)

The Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) is dedicated to the legacy of Randal “Randy” L. Lawson, beloved colleague, friend, mentor, and champion of students.

One of Randal “Randy” Lawson’s most significant and lasting accomplishments was his partnership with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) and, in 2005, his determination to establish the System Advisory Curriculum Committee (SACC), later renamed the California Community College Curriculum Committee (5C). He worked tirelessly with the ASCCC and the Chancellor’s Office to create a framework for curriculum issues to

be discussed, vetted, and reviewed at a system-wide scale with recommendations to the Chancellor’s Office and to the Board of Governors for final approval. His leadership as CIO co-chair of 5C continued to his death in 2014. Because of his leadership and dedication to this effort, this committee effectively continues its work today.

Randal “Randy” Lawson worked at Santa Monica College for 35 years and was the Executive Vice President and Chief Instructional Officer when he passed away. Randy was an advisor, a mentor, and a tireless advocate for student success. He had the utmost respect and admiration of those who met and knew him. Randy was known for his sense of humor, love of music, and a dedication to education that won him statewide recognition. Randy was often described as a quiet, yet strong, leader. Those who knew him and worked closely with Randy valued his integrity, passion for students, and his transformational leadership.

The PCAH is dedicated to the legacy left by Randy, including the collaborative efforts and system-wide impact of 5C, and to all current, past, and future members of 5C. May their work continue to be defined by the integrity, dedication, transformational leadership, and commitment to students and to student success modeled by Randy.

The Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) is dedicated to the legacy of Dr. Peter John Stanskas, beloved colleague, friend, mentor, equity advocate, and champion of students.

John worked tirelessly for our community college students at San Bernardino Valley College, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, and, most recently, with the Chancellor’s Office. He was a courageous leader, a relentless advocate, and a beloved friend who is deeply missed.

John’s wisdom, integrity, and unyielding commitment to our students left an indelible mark on all who worked alongside him. Among the members of 5C, he was not only a respected voice but a guiding force—someone whose thoughtful and witty insights, along with his deep understanding, shaped countless discussions and decisions. His ability to listen with empathy, challenge with purpose, and lead with conviction earned him the admiration of colleagues across our entire system. His presence brought clarity in complexity, strength in uncertainty, and a steady hand when it was needed most.

The PCAH is dedicated to the legacy left by John. May future versions of the PCAH be guided by his unyielding commitment to students and equitable student outcomes.

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PART I: OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM AUTHORITY AND APPROVAL



SECTION 1: AN OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL

This section provides an overview of program and course approval and identifies portions of the Program and Course Approval handbook (PCAH) relevant to credit and noncredit curriculum.

- Credit Curriculum
- Noncredit Curriculum

I.1.1 Overview

This Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH) assists California community college administrators, faculty, and classified professionals in the development of programs and courses and the submission of these proposals for review and chaptering by the Chancellor's Office.

By regulation, the Chancellor is required to prepare and distribute a handbook for program and course approval (California Code Regulations, Title 5, § 55000.5). The Chancellor has delegated these responsibilities to the Academic Affairs Office in the Educational Services and Support Division of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (Chancellor's Office). The PCAH was developed to provide the California community college system with general guidelines and instructions for the submission of curriculum for approval, chaptering and maintenance.

Since the first publication, updates have been published May 1985, July 1987, 1992, March 1995, September 2001, March 2003, March 2009, September 2012, July 2017, November 2019, February 2023, and July 2026 to improve and incorporate new information, clarify previous language, and inform and provide guidance on updates to California Education Code and California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 5. Each published edition of the PCAH supersedes preceding editions.

The complete and current text of all California statutes, including the California Education Code sections referred to herein, may be viewed at the [California Legislative Information website](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov), <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>. The complete and current text of all regulations in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, including those referred to in this Handbook, may be viewed at the [Westlaw California Code of Regulations website](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs), <https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs>. All regulatory references of "Title 5" are to California Code of Regulations, Title 5. Education, Division 6. California Community Colleges.

This edition of the PCAH is organized into two major components: credit curriculum and noncredit curriculum. Each component is divided into three segments as follows:

Credit Curriculum

1. Introduction to Program and Course Approval

Provides an overview of curriculum regulations and includes a brief history of curriculum approval, outlines the legal authority and roles of state and local entities, explains the underlying minimum conditions and open course regulations and how they interact with curriculum development and approval. It also provides a brief introduction to the Chancellor's Office processes, the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system, and a list of acronyms and definitions for common curriculum and approval terms, concluding with the Development Criteria for Curriculum statement endorsed by the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee.

2. Credit Course Review Criteria

Outlines the curriculum standards and criteria used by Chancellor's Office staff in the review of all types of credit courses. It also covers miscellaneous curriculum standards and topics.

3. Credit Program Approval Standards

Covers all aspects of the curriculum development submission process for Chancellor's Office review and then chaptering of credit programs as per Education Code § 70901(b) (10). This includes program development standards, submission requirements, approval criteria, supporting documentation, requirements for local approval and regional recommendation, and submission categories.

Noncredit Curriculum

1. Introduction to Noncredit Program and Course Approval

Provides overview of curriculum regulations and includes a brief history of curriculum approval, outlines the legal authority and roles of state and local entities and explains the underlying minimum conditions and open course regulations and how they interact with curriculum development and approval. It also provides a brief introduction to the Chancellor's Office review process and then chaptering of noncredit programs per Title 5 § 55150, the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system, and a list of acronyms and definitions for common curriculum and approval terms, concluding with the Development Criteria for Curriculum statement endorsed by the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee.

2. Noncredit Course Criteria and Standards

Provides a general overview of noncredit courses, including development guidelines, review criteria, and chaptering and approval standards for courses.

3. Noncredit Program Criteria and Standards

Provides a general overview of noncredit programs, including development guidelines, review criteria, and chaptering and approval standards for programs

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL

This section provides an overview of program and course approval and identifies portions of the Handbook relevant to credit and noncredit curriculum.

- History and Legal Authority for Curriculum
- Development Criteria
- Open Courses
- Curriculum Regulations

I.2.1 History and Legal Authority for Curriculum

I.2.1.1 Background

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors, by statute, has statewide responsibility for approving all new instructional programs in community colleges. This mandate is one of the earliest and most basic legislative charges to the Board. Before 1968, approval of programs for junior colleges was the responsibility of the State Board of Education. When the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges was created by the Legislature in 1968, this responsibility was transferred to the new board. It is now contained in California Education Code section 70901:

70901: Board of governors; duties; rules and regulations; delegation; consultation

(b) The board of governors shall . . . perform the following functions:...

(10) 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.

The Legislature also established the requirement for state approval as part of the finance law for community colleges. This provision was part of the California Education Code for many decades, but in 1991, it was shifted to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, § 58050:

58050: Conditions for Claiming Attendance.

(a) All of the following conditions must be met in order for the attendance of students enrolled in a course to qualify for state apportionment:

(1) The course or the program of which it is a part must be approved by the governing board of each community college district in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2 (commencing with section 55100) of chapter 6.

(2) The course must meet the criteria and standards for courses prescribed by section 55002.

In 2004, the Chancellor's Office developed the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum (SACC) to coordinate efforts between local and statewide curriculum processes. This committee provides a collaborative forum for statewide discussions pertaining to curriculum to guide related Chancellor's Office policies and practices.

In 2016, the committee endorsed a renaming of the committee to the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C) and updated the committee's charge to reflect its shift from an advisory role to a recommending body.

I.2.1.2 Minimum Conditions for Credit Curriculum

Minimum Conditions are selected areas of regulations that may result in denial or reduction of state aid if violated. These minimum conditions are contained in Title 5, § 51000- 51028.

The Minimum Condition regulation on program and course approval is as follows:

51021: Curriculum

Each community college shall establish such programs of education and courses as will permit the realization of the objectives and functions of the community college. All courses shall be approved by the Chancellor in the manner provided in Subchapter 1 (commencing with Section 55000) of Chapter 6.

I.2.1.3 Background for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Standards

In 2020, California Code Regulations Title 5 § 51201 was updated to include a statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The intent of this language is described in title 5 §51200 as

“...the official position of the Board of Governors and the California Community Colleges on their commitment to diversity and equity in fulfilling the system’s educational mission and that it should guide the administration of all programs in the California Community Colleges, consistent with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.”

The statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion in section 51201 states:

- (a) With the goal of ensuring the equal educational opportunity of all students, the California Community Colleges embrace diversity among students, faculty, staff and the communities we serve as an integral part of our history, a recognition of the complexity of our present state, and a call to action for a better future.
- (b) Embracing diversity means that we must intentionally practice acceptance, anti-racism, and respect towards one another and understand that racism, discrimination, and prejudices create and sustain privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others.
- (c) In order to embrace diversity, we also acknowledge that institutional racism, discrimination, and biases exist and that our goal is to eradicate these from our system. Our commitment to diversity requires that we strive to eliminate those barriers to equity and that we act deliberately to create a safe, inclusive, and anti-racist environment where individual and group differences are valued and leveraged for our growth and understanding as an educational community.
- (d) To advance our goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice for the success of students and employees, we must honor that each individual is unique and that our individual differences contribute to the ability of the colleges to prepare students on their educational journeys. This requires that we develop and implement policies and procedures, encourage individual and systemic change, continually reflect on our efforts, and hold ourselves accountable for the results of our efforts in accomplishing our goals. In service of these goals, the California Community Colleges are committed to fostering an anti-racist environment that offers equal opportunity for all.

(e) As a collective community of individual colleges, we are invested in cultivating and maintaining a climate where equity, anti-racism, and mutual respect are both intrinsic and explicit by valuing individuals and groups from all backgrounds, demographics, and experiences. Individual and group differences can include, but are not limited to the following dimensions: race, ethnicity, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, immigration status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, political beliefs, religion, creed, military or veteran status, socioeconomic status, and any other basis protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance or regulation.

In 2025, the Board of Governors approved Title 5 regulations requiring curriculum committees have a documented procedure for ensuring that course outlines of record for all courses approved pursuant to section 55002 describe approaches that would accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students.

The California Community College Curriculum Committee (5C) created a set of recommended priorities that focuses on championing equity-minded curriculum and practices for credit and noncredit instruction. In 2021, CCCCCO, ASCCC, SCCCC, CCCCCIO jointly approved the DEI in Curriculum: Model Principles and Practices with promising practices for both discipline/teaching faculty and for curriculum committees and local academic senates. Subsequently, in 2023, 5C created DEI In Praxis: Models for Culturally Responsive Curriculum. The DEI in Praxis builds upon the DEI in Curriculum: Model Principles and Practices by offering model questions, ideas, and resources to support deeper levels of local implementation of transformative change in curricular practices.

I.2.1.4 Approval by the Chancellor

Both California Education Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, grant other specific authority for the approval of certain types of curriculum to district governing boards, without requiring separate approval by the Board of Governors through the Chancellor's Office. The authority of district governing boards to approve courses without separate approval from the Board of Governors or the Chancellor is established in Education Code

§ 70902(b)(2), which states that, the district governing board shall “establish policies for, and approve, individual courses that are offered in approved educational programs without referral to the board of governors.” The minimum conditions set forth in Title 5, § 51021 require that all curriculum be approved by the Chancellor in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in subchapter 1 of chapter 6, which falls within the section referenced in § 51021, then reaffirms the authority of district governing boards to approve courses in approved educational programs, stating that they “...need not be separately approved by the Chancellor.” Taken together these regulations underscore the complementary, but distinct, roles and authorities for various components of the California Community College system.

All courses and programs that have been approved by the district governing board and have received a control number, whether through Chancellor's Office review or through automated approval via the Annual Course and Program Certification, are then chaptered by the Chancellor's Office. This is considered to be approval by the Chancellor. A course or program is considered chaptered by the Chancellor's Office when it appears with a valid control number in the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system.

Chancellor's Office Curriculum Review

California Education Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, provide the mandate on the content of program and course proposals. The Chancellor's Office reviews community college proposals pursuant to Title 5 regulations. Community college course and program approval must be submitted electronically using the California Community Colleges curriculum inventory system. All courses and programs are submitted to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering.

Elements of "approval" processes:

1. The District Governing Board approves the course or program as recommended by the local curriculum committee
2. The Regional Consortium recommends the program (only for programs with an occupational goal)
3. The Chancellor's Office chapters the course or program and a control number is issued

I.2.1.5 Annual Course and Program Certification

Every college is required to submit an Annual Course and Program Certification form that is signed by the college Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Instructional Officer (CIO), Academic Senate President and Faculty Curriculum Chair in order to be eligible for automated chaptering of designated courses and programs. Each September, the Chancellor's Office will provide a memo to the colleges indicating which courses and programs may be certified for automated chaptering, along with the Annual Course and Program Certification form. The form certifies the following:

- Course hours and units are correct in accordance with Chancellor's Office Course Calculations;
- The college/district course outline of record has been approved by the District Governing Board;
- The district governing board has a policy specifying the accepted relationship between contact hours, outside-of-class hours, and credit for calculating credit hours to ensure consistency in awarding units of credit – Title 5 § 55002.5;
- Work experience education courses have local board approval;
- Credit courses and programs that are submitted to the Chancellor's Office curriculum

inventory system are accurate and compliant with California Education Code, California Code of Regulations, Title 5, and the current Chancellor's Office Program and Course Approval Handbook (PCAH);

- Credit programs have the required attachments in accordance with the current Chancellor's Office PCAH; and
- Mandatory training for curriculum committees and responsible administrators regarding curriculum rules and regulations to ensure compliance ((CCR, Title 5§55002(a) (1)).

The form also specifies which courses and programs receive automated approval and which courses and programs must undergo a review by the Chancellor's Office before chaptering.

Once a course or program has gone through the above process and has received a control number, the college is then authorized to:

- Publish the description of a new program or course in the catalog or publicize a new program or course in other ways (CCR., Title 5, § 55005).
- Schedule and collect state apportionment for student attendance in the required courses and restricted electives that are part of a credit program (Ed. Code § 70901(b) (10); CCR, Title 5, §§ 55130 and 58050). Colleges that do not secure the required program approval are subject to loss of revenues through audit or administrative action.
- Award a degree or certificate with the designated title and require specific courses for the completion of such degree or certificate (Ed. Code, §§ 70901(b)(10) and 70902(b) (2)). Degree or certificate awards for programs that have not been reviewed and chaptered by the Chancellor's Office when required will not be recognized as valid for any audit or accountability purpose.
- List credit certificates and degrees on student transcripts (CCR, Title 5, §§ 55060-55072).
- Collect Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI) funding if the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) has also formally approved a proposed apprenticeship program.

Colleges submitting the Annual Course and Program Certification form are subject to the following conditions relative to automated approval:

- Colleges will have their curriculum reviewed on a regular basis as determined by the Chancellor's Office.
- Colleges that have been found to have curriculum that does not meet all requirements will be contacted by the Chancellor's Office.

- Colleges may be encouraged to have an assistance visit by representatives from the Chancellor's Office, CIOs, and ASCCC.
- Colleges that do not follow the requirements for automated approval will have the automated approval disabled and all curriculum will need to be reviewed by the Chancellor's Office before a control number will be issued (Title 5 §§ 55100, 55130, 55150).

I.2.2 Development Criteria

The development criteria were honed over many years of work between the Chancellor's Office, the ASCCC, chief instructional officers, and local colleges. The criteria were endorsed by the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum—now the California Community College Curriculum Committee—as the basic framework for curriculum development and approval processes and have been included in every edition of the Program and Course Approval Handbook since the second edition in 2002. However, the basic framework and standards articulated in the criteria date back to earlier guidance for curriculum development in the community college system.

The development criteria are as follows:

- A. Appropriateness to Mission
- B. Need
- C. Curriculum Standards
- D. Adequate Resources
- E. Compliance
- F. Equity & Accessibility

I.2.2.1 Criteria A: Appropriateness to Mission

The stated goals and objectives of the proposed program, or the objectives defined in the Course Outline of Record (COR), must be consistent with the mission of the community colleges as established by the Legislature in Education Code § 66010.4. For courses or programs to be mission appropriate, they must provide systematic instruction in a body of content or skills whose mastery forms the basis of student achievement and learning.

The California Community Colleges offers five types of curriculum that fall within the mission of the community colleges:

1. degree-applicable credit
2. nondegree-applicable credit
3. noncredit
4. fee-based community service classes (not-for-credit).

State chaptering is required for credit programs and for noncredit programs and courses.

The following are points to consider in evaluating how a program or course fits within the system's mission:

- A program or course must be directed at the appropriate level for community colleges; that is, it must not be directed at a level beyond the associate degree or the first two years of college. Those colleges that have been approved to offer a baccalaureate degree may offer baccalaureate level courses appropriate to general education and the major.
- A program or course must address a valid transfer, occupational, basic skills, civic education, or lifelong learning purpose. It must not be primarily avocational or recreational.
- Programs and courses should also be congruent with the mission statement and master plan of the college and district.

In addition, a course must provide distinct instructional content and specific instructional objectives. Non-instructional activities and services, such as assistive or therapeutic activities, use of college facilities or resources without specific instructional objectives, or assessment testing are not considered to be courses and are not supported by apportionment.

I.2.2.2 Criteria B: Need

The proposal must demonstrate that it is designed to meet the needs of the region the college serves, and must not cause harmful competition with an existing program at another college.

Need is determined by multiple factors, such as the educational master plan of the college or district and accreditation standards. Colleges are required to periodically review curriculum as part of the program review process. Both new and revised curriculum should reflect the fulfillment of this planning.

For baccalaureate preparation curriculum, need is presumed to exist if there is student demand for a program or course and its transfer applicability for a university major or general education (GE) has been documented. The proposal for approval must include evidence that the coursework required for the community college program substantially satisfies the lower-division coursework requirements for a university major or for General Education (GE) requirements at the four-year institution.

For college preparation noncredit curriculum, need is presumed to exist if there is a student demand for a program or course and its transition to credit work has been documented. For both credit and noncredit Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, or those that respond to economic development interests, need for the program must be documented by supplying current labor market information (LMI) within the local service area of the individual college and/or a recent employer survey as per Education Code 78015. In addition, a current job market analysis, or other comparable information, must show that jobs are available for program completers within the local service area of the individual college and/or that job enhancement or promotion justifies the proposed curriculum.

However, if cooperative planning with neighboring colleges has occurred, labor market evidence for the region as a whole may be sufficient. Statewide or national labor market evidence may be included as supplementary support, but evidence of need in the specific college service area or region is also necessary. If the college believes the program has statewide or national importance and wishes to substitute statewide or national labor market evidence for local evidence, an explicit justification of why this is appropriate must be included.

Proposals for credit CTE programs must include a recommendation from the appropriate CTE Regional Consortium as per Title 5, § 55130(b)(7)(C). The community colleges in California are organized into economic regions, served by eight consortia of CTE faculty and administrators from community colleges in that region.

The CTE Regional Consortia provide leadership for colleges to:

- Integrate and coordinate economic development and CTE programs and services,
- Develop and coordinate staff development,
- Increase the knowledge of programs and services in the region, and disseminate best practices.

Evidence of labor market need may be submitted in the form of:

- Data for emerging occupations available from the Centers of Excellence, an initiative of the Chancellor's Office Workforce and Economic Development (WED) Division. The [Initiative website](http://www.coeccc.org) (www.coeccc.org) includes comprehensive reports on emerging occupations, called "Environmental Scans," as well as information about requesting customized reports if no scan has been published.
- Statistical projections of growth in specific jobs by county (or labor market area) from the Employment Development Department's (EDD) Labor Market Information (LMI) system
- Recent employer surveys
- Industry studies
- Regional economic studies
- Letters from employers
- Minutes of industry advisory committee meetings (when offered in conjunction with other evidence)
- Job advertisements for positions in the individual college's service area
- Newspaper or magazine articles on industry or employment trends
- Studies or data from licensing agencies or professional associations

I.2.2.3 Criteria C: Curriculum Standards & Compliance

Title 5 mandates that all credit and noncredit curriculum must be approved by the college curriculum committee and district governing board pursuant to Title 5, beginning with § 55100. Title 5, § 55130(b)(7)(C), also requires that CTE credit programs must include recommendations of the CTE Regional Consortia, where applicable. The proposed program or course should also be consistent with requirements of accrediting agencies as applicable.

When a college is submitting a program for chaptering, the Chancellor's Office requires that the college provide a program narrative addressing the elements required in Title 5, § 55130 along with supporting documentation from advisory committees, local industry, and transfer institutions as needed for the program type.

The application process and forms are intended to ensure the following:

- The program is designed so that successful completion of the program requirements will enable students to fulfill the program goals and objectives.
- Programs and courses are integrated, with courses designed to effectively meet their objectives and the goals and objectives of the programs for which they are required.
- The COR meet all the requirements of Title 5, § 55001.5 and 55002 for credit and noncredit course requirements.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) provides additional information about best practices for curriculum development that faculty developers and college curriculum committees may find useful. Links for curriculum resources are available on the ASCCC website.

I.2.2.4 Criteria D: Adequate Resources

The college must demonstrate that it has the resources to realistically maintain the program or course at the level of quality described in the proposal. This includes funding for faculty compensation, facilities and equipment, and library or learning resources. Additionally, the college must demonstrate that faculty are available to sustain the proposed required course(s) and to facilitate student success. The college must commit to offering all required courses for the program at least once every two years, unless the program goals and rationale for the particular program justify or support a longer time frame as being in the best interests of students.

I.2.2.5 Criteria E: Compliance

The design of the program or the course may not be in conflict with any state or federal laws, statutes or regulations. Laws that particularly affect community colleges, as well as any other laws that may affect the program or course, such as licensing laws in a particular occupation, need to be considered. Some of the Title 5 sections to note are:

- Open course regulations (CCR, Title 5, § 51006)
- Course repetition and repeatability regulations (CCR, Title 5, §§ 55040-55046 and 58161)

- Regulations regarding tutoring and learning assistance (CCR, Title 5, §§ 58168-58172)
- Regulations regarding open/entry open exit courses (CCR, Title 5, § 58164)
- Statutes and regulations on student fees (CCR, Title 5, chapter 9, subchapter 6)
- Prerequisite and enrollment limitation regulations (CCR, Title 5, § 55003)
- Particular provisions of the Nursing Practice Act (CCR, Title 16)

I.2.2.6 Criteria F: Equity & Accessibility

Title 5, 55001 requires that curriculum committees have a documented procedure for ensuring that course outlines of record for all courses describe approaches that would accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students, as well as a documented procedure to guarantee accessibility for every student to ensure individuals with disabilities can equally participate in learning through course outlines of record that reflect Universal Design for Learning strategies, which include multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to support learner variability and diversity.

Curriculum committee training must include review of this procedure, and reviewers should therefore be trained to review course outlines with equity and accessibility review criteria in mind. The following regulatory standards further address these requirements:

- Title 5, 55201 Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Title 5, 55001, Curriculum Committee contains requirements for documented policy on equity and accessibility COR review
- Title 5, 55001.5, Course Outlines of Record, section (b) specifies “Course outlines of record shall also include representative descriptions of approaches faculty may use to accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students.”
- Title 5, 55100, Credit Course Approval aligns with the review requirements above by reference

I.2.3 Open Courses

Title 5, § 51006 requires colleges to publish a statement in the official catalog and schedule of classes that all course sections or classes for which state aid is awarded are open to enrollment and participation by any person admitted to the college. The college may only restrict enrollment in a course when the restriction is specifically required by statute or legislation. This section also allows colleges to require that students meet prerequisites that have been established pursuant to Title 5, § 55003.

Situations where enrollment limitation may be allowed are discussed more specifically in Title 5, § 58106. These sections allow the college to restrict students from enrolling in a course when the following are true:

- Prerequisites, corequisites, or other advisories on recommended preparation have been established for the course and/or;
- Health and safety considerations, facility limitations, faculty availability, funding limitations, or other constraints have been imposed by statutes, regulations, or contracts.

The college can limit enrollment only through one or more of the following approaches:

- Enrolling on a “first-come, first-serve” basis or other non-evaluative selection technique (CCR, Title 5, § 58006)
- Offering special registration assistance to the handicapped or disadvantaged student
- Enrolling in accordance with a priority system established by the district governing board
- Allocating available seats to students who have been judged most qualified in the case of intercollegiate competition, honors courses, or public performance courses
- Limiting enrollment to a cohort of students enrolled in two or more courses, provided, however, that a reasonable percentage of all sections of the course do not have such restrictions
- Restricting enrollment of a student on probation or subject to dismissal to a total number of units or to selected courses or of a student who is required to follow a prescribed educational plan

The open course concept means that no course may be offered for apportionment if it is restricted to a particular group, such as employees of a particular company or organization, students concurrently enrolled in a neighboring university, persons of a particular ethnicity, or any other narrowly defined group. Furthermore, although a course may be designed primarily for individuals in a particular group (for example, individuals already employed in a particular occupation), it may not be offered for apportionment unless it is open to, and designed in such a way that it could also be of benefit to, other students. Thus, a course may be primarily intended for skills upgrading of individuals already experienced in a particular occupation, but it must also be possible for a student in training for that occupation to take and benefit from the course, subject to legally established prerequisites as described below.

Certain narrow exceptions to the open course rule are specified in law. These include enrollment preference for fire service personnel (CCR, Title 5, § 58051(d)) and law enforcement trainees (Pen. Code, § 832.3(c)), courses conducted in a jail or federal prison (CCR, Title 5, § 58051.6), students who are part of a cohort concurrently enrolled in another specified course (CCR, Title 5, § 58106), apprentices in “related and supplemental instruction” courses (Lab. Code, § 3076.3), and College and Career Access Pathways (CCAP) dual enrollment courses (Ed. Code §76004(o)(2)).

I.2.4 Curriculum Regulations

The legal parameters and standards for curriculum are established in sections of Education Code and California Code of Regulations as listed in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 — California Education Code

Code Section Number	Laws and Regulations
70900	Creation of the System
70901	Board of Governors
70902	District Governing Board Approval of Curriculum

Table 2 — California Code of Regulations, Title 5. Education, Division 6. California Community Colleges, Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction

Code Section Number	Laws and Regulations
55000	Definitions
55000.5	Handbook; Monitoring and Review of Approved Courses and Programs
55001	Curriculum Committee
55001.5	Course Outlines of Record
55002	Standards and Criteria for Courses
55002.5	Credit Hour
55003	Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites and Advisories on Recommended Preparation
55005	Publication of Course Standards
55006	Records and Reports
55040	District Policy for Course Repetition
55041	Repeatable Courses
55042	Course Repetition to Alleviate Substandard Academic Work
55060	Philosophy and Criteria for the Associate Degree and General Education
55061	Associate Degree Course Requirements
55062	Conditions for Awarding the Associate Degree
55070	Credit Certificates
55072	Award of Certificates
55090	District Baccalaureate Degree Policies
55091	Baccalaureate Degree Upper Division Course Requirements
55092	Conditions for Awarding the Baccalaureate Degree
55093	Admissions
55100	Course Approval

Code Section Number	Laws and Regulations
55130	Approval of Credit Programs
55150	Approval of Noncredit Courses and Programs
55151	Career Development and College Preparation
55154	Adult High School Diploma Program
55155	Noncredit Certificates
55160	Approval of Community Service Offerings
55170	Contract Courses
55180	Definitions
55182	Assessment of Needs and Preferences
55183	Identification of Objectives
55184	Analysis of Alternative Delivery Systems

Code Section Number	Laws and Regulations
55185	Additional Criteria for Approval of Educational Centers
55200	Definition and Application
55250	Approved Plan Required
55250.3	“Work Experience Education”
55252	Types of Work Experience Education
55522	English and Mathematics Placement and Assessment
55260	Correspondence Education
58106	Limitations on Enrollment
58160	Noncredit Course Funding
58161	Apportionment for Course Enrollment
58162	Intercollegiate Athletics
58164	Open Entry/Open Exit Courses
58166	Field Trips
58168	Tutoring
58170	Apportionment for Tutoring
58172	Learning Assistance

Table 3 — Alphabetical List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AA	Associate of Arts
AAM	Articulation Agreement by Major
AA-T	Associate in Arts for Transfer
AB	Assembly Bill
ACCE	Association of Community and Continuing Education
ACCJC	Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
ADT	Associate Degree for Transfer
AHSD	Adult High School Diploma
AS	Associate of Science
AS-T	Associate in Science for Transfer
ASCCC	Academic Senate for California Community Colleges
ASSIST	Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer
BA	Bachelor of Arts

Acronym	Definition
BCT	CSU Baccalaureate Level Course List by Department
BS	Bachelor of Science
C-ID	Course Identification Numbering System
CB	Course Basic
5C	California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee
CCCAOE	California Community College Association for Occupational Education
CCCCO	California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
CDCP	Career Development and College Preparation
COCI	Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system
COR	Course Outline of Record
CIP	Classification of Instructional Programs
CSU	California State University
CSU GE-Breadth	California State University General Education-Breadth
CTE	Career Technical Education
DAS	Division of Apprenticeship Standards
DED	Data Element Dictionary
DSPS	Disabled Students Programs and Services

Acronym	Definition
Ed Code	California Education Code
EDD	Employment Development Department
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETAC	Educational Technologies Advancement Committee
FII	Fund for Instructional Improvement
FTES	Full-time Equivalent Students
GECC	CSU GE Certification Course List by Area
HBA	Hours by Arrangement
ICAS	Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates
IGETC	Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum
IMC	Intersegmental Model Curriculum
JAC	Joint Apprenticeship Committee
LMI	Labor Market Information
LMID	Labor Market Information Division

Acronym	Definition
MC	Model Curriculum
MIS	Management Information Systems
NPA	Nursing Practice Act
OES	Occupational Employment Statistic
PCAH	Program and Course Approval Handbook
RN	Registered Nurse
RSI	Related and Supplemental Instruction
SACC	System Advisory Committee on Curriculum
SAM	Student Accountability Model
SB	Senate Bill
SCANS	Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills
SOC	Standard Occupational Classification
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TBA	To be Arranged
TCSU	Transfer California State University (CSU)
TMC	Transfer Model Curriculum
TOP	Taxonomy of Programs

Acronym	Definition
UC	University of California
UCTP	University of California Transfer Program
WASC	Western Association of Schools and Colleges
WSCH	Weekly Student Contact Hour

I.2.5 Definitions and Terms

I.2.5.1 Catalog Description

The catalog description should summarize the purpose and goals of the course and subject matter to be covered. In those cases where the purpose of the course is to serve a special population, (e.g., older adults, immigrants, persons with substantial disabilities, parents), the catalog description must demonstrate that the course is designed to meet the interests and needs of that target population.

I.2.5.2 Outcomes and Objectives

Course objectives state the concepts or skills faculty introduce to students in a course or program in order to prepare students to meet a student learning outcome (SLO). Objectives are the means, not the ends. Course SLOs are the intended abilities and knowledge students can demonstrate after successfully completing the course objectives. SLOs must be written in measurable or observable terms and as actions that a student will perform in order to display the skills necessary to meet the SLO (See ASCCC paper titled The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide, Revisited).

I.2.5.3 Course Content

Content, in terms of a specific body of knowledge, should depict the scope and depth of topics or subjects to be covered by the course. Classes with lecture and laboratory and laboratory/activity components should include separate content areas for the lecture and laboratory/activity components of the course.

I.2.5.4 Instructional Methodology

Instructional methodology identifies the key methods and activities used to deliver instruction, including, but not limited to, lecture, laboratory, distance education, and independent study.

I.2.5.5 Examples of Assignments

Examples of assignments and/or activities must include at a minimum reading assignments, writing assignments, and where applicable, outside-of-class assignments (“homework”). They should be representative of the types of assignments used by faculty to promote and enhance student learning and achievement of course objectives.

When courses are submitted for UC transferability and intersegmental general education approval, only outside-of-class assignments are included in the proposal submissions.

Therefore, it is very important that the summary of outside-of-class assignments include at a minimum the reading and writing assignments that students are expected to complete as homework, in addition to any other outside-of-class activities such as field trips, museum visits, and so forth.

When submitting CORs to COCI, it is possible to cut-and-paste the same language in the Examples of Assignments field and in the Reading and Writing Assignments field. For Course Outlines of Record with no outside of class assignments, or no separate reading and writing assignments aside from outside of class assignments, colleges may write N/A.

I.2.5.6 Methods of Evaluation

Methods of evaluation for determining student achievement of stated objectives should include the identification and description of assessment or evaluation tools used by the faculty to determine student progress towards achievement of the course objectives. Merely taking attendance or asking if students are satisfied with the course is not sufficient to constitute evaluation of the extent to which students are making progress toward the learning objectives of the course. Title 5 § 55002 states the student's grade in the course must be based solely on the "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 § 55023."

PART II: CREDIT CURRICULUM



SECTION 1: CREDIT COURSE CRITERIA

This section provides an overview of the criteria used by Chancellor's Office staff in evaluating credit course submissions. The review criteria are rooted in the curriculum standards established in Title 5, §55000 et seq. and explained in the Credit Course Standards section of this Handbook. To ensure that standards for all criteria are met, colleges are required to submit and retain the records of the following:

- Criteria for Credit Course Submissions
- Criteria for Data elements
- Criteria for the Course Outline of Record (COR)

II.1.1 Criteria for Credit Course Submissions

Local districts are responsible for ensuring that submitted course outlines of record (COR) contain the required elements specified in Title 5, §§ 55001.5 and 55002, and that local approval is consistent with all standards in § 55000 et seq. The Chancellor's Office periodically reviews credit course submissions to ensure that the associated data elements for each course are correct and compliant with regulations. The review criteria used by Chancellor's Office staff are based on the standards for course curriculum established in Title 5 and explained in the Credit Course Standards section of this Handbook.

Submission and validation of credit courses is conducted through review of the following components submitted by local colleges:

- Completed Curriculum Inventory Proposal Fields for Data Elements
- Course Outline of Record (COR) meeting the standards in Title 5, §§ 55001.5 and 55002, and approved by the district governing board.

II.1.2 Criteria for Credit Data Elements

The following data elements are entered into the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory (COCI) for credit and noncredit courses and validated during the submission review process. The Data Element Dictionary (DED) identifies some data elements as Course Basic (CB) codes. Many course elements require CB codes. Other course elements, such as District Governing Board Approval Date and Catalog Description, do not require CB codes but are critical components of the submission and chaptering process. Entry errors associated with these elements can result in submissions being returned to the college for revisions and in flags when Chancellor's Office staff conducts periodic reviews of approved and chaptered curriculum approved by District Governing Boards and chaptered via the Chancellor's Office curriculum.

Table 4 — Data Element Dictionary (DED)

DED Number	Data Element Name
CB00	Course Control Number (this number is assigned by the Chancellor's Office, it is not necessary for new courses.
CB01	Course Department and Number
CB02	Course Title
CB03	Course TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027)
CB04	Course Credit Status
CB05	Course Transfer Status
CB06	Units of Credit – Maximum
CB07	Units of Credit – Minimum
CB08	Course Basic Skills Status
CB09	Course SAM Priority Code
CB10	Course Work Experience Education Status
CB11	Course Classification Status
CB13	Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class)
CB21	Course Prior to Transfer Level
CB23	Funding Agency Category
CB24	Course Program Status
CB25	Course General Education Status
CB26	Course Support Status
CB27	Course Upper Division Status

Course basic record (CB) codes are used to identify particular components of the course curriculum for tracking, reporting, and apportionment.

CB01: Department and Number

This identifier should be structured to include an abbreviation of the department to which the course belongs, followed by the numbers and/or letters used to distinguish it from other courses in the same department. The identifier appears on the student's academic transcript, for example, ARTS 110. The department number must be entered exactly as it is entered into the college and/or district's enterprise resource system. If there are no spaces between the department and course number, do not add a space. Inconsistencies in data entry will impact MIS reporting.

CB02: Course Title

This data element records the course title exactly as it appears in the COR and the college catalog. If the college uses long and short titles, enter the long title. This field is limited to a maximum of 68 characters, including punctuation and spaces, and must differ from CB01.

CB03: Taxonomy of Programs Code

(This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027)

This field is for recording the appropriate TOP Code for the course. An asterisk (*) in this field denotes a vocational TOP Code. A link to the [Taxonomy of Programs \(TOP\) Code Manual, 7th Edition and TOP/CIP Crosswalk](#) is available on the Chancellor's Office website, under the Educational Services webpage.

The TOP Code should be assigned according to the content and outcomes of the course, and must conform closely to the TOP Code given to similar courses at other colleges around the state. The TOP Code reflects the main discipline or subject matter and is not based on local departmental structure, faculty qualifications, or budget groupings. A college that has difficulty identifying the most appropriate TOP Code should contact the Chancellor's Office; if the proposed TOP Code does not seem appropriate, the Chancellor's Office will advise the college.

CB04: Credit Status

This element indicates the credit status of a course (defined in Title 5, § 55002). All credit courses will use either a "D" (degree applicable) or "C" (not degree applicable) in this field, indicating the appropriate type of credit course.

CB05: Transfer Status

This element indicates the transfer status of a course. The local college determines CSU transferability during the curriculum approval process. The designation of UC transferable requires UC approval. For the purposes of course submissions, the UC transferability indicated in this data element can be aspirational and subsequently amended if the course is denied this status upon UC review.

CB06: Course Units Maximum

This element indicates the maximum number of units (semester or quarter) of academic credit a student may earn from enrolling in a single course section. This number is entered as a decimal. For example, one and one-half units would be entered as 1.5. This number is greater than or equal to the number entered for CB07. The unit value in this field must match the maximum unit value listed on the COR, which is consistent with unit calculations as set forth in Title 5, § 55002.5, and as explained in the standards for credit hour calculations in section II.2.4 Standards for Credit Hour Calculations

CB07: Course Units Minimum

The minimum number of semester or quarter units of academic credit a student may earn from enrolling in a single course section is entered as a decimal. For example, one-half unit would be entered as 0.5. This number is less than or equal to the number entered for CB06. If sections with variable units of credit are not permitted for this course, enter the same value in this field and in Units of Credit Maximum (CB06). The unit value in this field must match the minimum unit value listed on the COR, which is consistent with unit calculations as set forth in Title 5, § 55002.5, and as explained in the standards for credit hour calculations in Part I, Section 2 of this Handbook.

CB08: Basic Skill Status

The basic skills status is indicated as either B (Course is a basic skills course) or N (Course is not a basic skills course). If this element is coded as B (Course is a basic skills course), then the previously selected CB04: Credit Status must be C – Not Degree-Applicable.

CB09: Student Accountability Model (SAM) Priority Code

This element is used to indicate the degree to which a course is occupational, and to assist in identifying course grouping in occupational programs. The SAM Priority Code selected must correspond with the CB03: TOP Code selected (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027). For example, if a vocational TOP Code is selected as denoted by an asterisk (*), then CB09: SAM Priority Code must equal

A (Apprenticeship), B (Advanced Occupational), C (Clearly Occupational), or D (Possibly Occupational) and respectively cannot equal E (Non-occupational). If a non-vocational TOP Code is selected, then CB09: SAM Priority Code must equal E (Non-occupational).

CB10: Work Experience Education Status

This element indicates whether the course is part of a work experience education program, according to the provisions of Title 5, § 55252, and will be coded “C” (Is part of a work experience educational program) or “N” (Is not part of a work experience educational program).

CB11: Course Classification Status

This element classifies a course in accordance with its primary objective. This field is auto-populated with “Y,” denoting the Classification Status as a Credit Course.

CB13: Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class)

This data element indicates whether the course is “educational assistance class instruction” according to the provisions of Title 5, § 56028, and will be coded “S” (Course is designated as an approved special class for students with disabilities) or “N” (Course is not a special class).

CB21: Prior Transfer Level

This element indicates course level status for English writing/reading, ESL, and mathematics/quantitative reasoning courses. The English writing/reading and mathematics/quantitative reasoning rubrics were updated spring 2019. The ESL rubrics were updated fall 2019.

Indicate the relationship of the course to college level by selecting one of the following seven options:

Y - Not applicable

D - Four levels below transfer

A - One level below transfer

E - Five levels below transfer

B - Two levels below transfer

F - Six levels below transfer

C - Three levels below transfer

For example, a course such that when the student successfully completes the course means the student is ready for transfer level would be coded as “A”. Some courses may span several levels.

The selected code must correspond with the CB05: Transfer Status selected, as well as with processing edit checks in the Chancellor’s Office MIS Data Element Dictionary (DED);

consult the DED for a complete listing of fidelity and integrity checks for this element. Additionally, extensive rubrics were created to determine the appropriate coding for this element. These rubrics can be found on the ASCCC website as Fall 2019 Resolution Numbers 09.01 and 09.04.

CB22: Noncredit Category

This field is auto-populated with “Y” denoting the Credit Course is Not Applicable.

CB23: Funding Agency Category

This element describes whether or not a Chancellor’s Office Workforce and Economic Development grant was used to fully or partially develop a course and/or curriculum.

Select one of the following three options:

A - primarily developed using Economic Development funds

B - partially developed using Economic Development Funds, exceeding 40% of total development costs

Y - not applicable

CB24: Program Status

This element indicates whether a course is part of an educational program as defined in Title 5, § 55000.

Select one of the two following options:

1 - Program-applicable – the course is part of a grouping of courses or program that results in a degree or certificate of achievement

2 - Not Program-applicable – the course is not part of a grouping of courses or program that results in a degree or certificate of achievement

CB25: Course General Education Status

This element indicates whether a course fulfills general education requirements for mathematics/quantitative reasoning or English composition/critical thinking in the context of transfer, degree, and certificate programs. Select one of the following four options:

A - Course meets any of the following:

Cal-GETC Area 1A: English Composition

Cal-GETC Area 1B: Critical Thinking and Composition

OR

- Course has a general education certification or articulation agreement that ensures the course fulfills English composition requirements at an accredited four-year institution

OR

- Course fulfills local general education requirements for English Composition as outlined in Title 5 § 55061

B - Course meets any of the following:

Cal-GETC Area 2: Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning

OR

- Course has a general education certification or articulation agreement that ensures the course fulfills mathematics or quantitative reasoning requirements at an accredited four-year institution

C -Course is not transferable to fulfill general education mathematics or quantitative reasoning at a four-year institution, but fulfills local general education requirements for Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning as outlined in Title 5 § 55061

Y - Not Applicable

If the course is coded “A” or “B,” then the CB05 code must be “A” or “B”. If the course is coded as “C,” then the CB04 code must be “D”. This field is auto-populated with “Y,” denoting “not applicable.” The college will update this code when appropriate.

CB26: Course Support Course Status

This element indicates whether a course is associated with another degree-applicable course for the purpose of providing the support necessary to complete the associated course. Courses are coded “S” (the course is a support course) or “N” (the course is not a support course).

This field is auto-populated with “N” denoting “course is not a support course”. The college will update this code when appropriate.

CB27: Course Upper Division Status

This element indicates whether a course is an approved upper-division course associated with a baccalaureate program. Courses are coded “A” (the course is an upper-division course) or “N” (the course is not an upper-division course).

This field is auto-populated with “N” denoting “course is not an upper-division course”. The college will update this code when appropriate.

District Governing Board Approval Date

This section requires the date that the district governing board, pursuant to Title 5, § 55002 and 55100, originally approved the course.

Catalog Description

Enter the catalog description exactly as it appears in the COR and the college catalog.

II.1.3 Criteria for the Course Outline of Record

The Chancellor’s Office review and chaptering processes require the submission of a COR that meets the standards for courses established in Title 5, § 55001.5 and 55002, and contains, at a minimum, the following elements:

II.1.3.1 COR Components Required for Credit Courses

- Expected number of contact hours
- Expected number of outside of class hours
- Expected number of total student learning hours for the course
- Total units of credit for the course as a whole
- If applicable, separately specify the total units of lecture, lab, or activity components
- Prerequisites, corequisites or advisories on recommended preparation (if any) for the course
- Title
- Catalog description
- Outcomes
- Objectives
- Content in terms of a specific body of knowledge
- Representative textbooks including open educational resources that meet universal design course standards

- Types or examples of required reading and writing assignments
- Types or examples of other outside-of-class assignments
- Types or examples of instructional methodology
- Types or examples of methods of evaluation
- The discipline or disciplines assigned to the course pursuant to section 53407

Course outlines of record shall also include representative descriptions of approaches faculty may use to accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students.

II.1.3.2 Unit Values

The unit values listed on the COR must conform to the credit hour calculations standards set forth in Title 5, § 55002.5, and be consistent with the unit values entered into the minimum and maximum unit fields in the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system. The standards for calculating units of credit are specified in section II.2.4 Standards for Credit Hour Calculations. Separately specifying the total units of lecture, lab, or activity components are required components of the COR and form the basis for apportionment.

II.1.3.3 Contact Hours

Contact hours are defined as the total time per term that a student will be under the direct supervision of an instructor or other qualified employee as defined in Title 5, § 55002(a)(3) and 58161. Contact hours are the basis for unit calculations and are a required component of the COR.

SECTION 2: CREDIT COURSE STANDARDS

This section provides an overview of the standards for all credit course curricula, including requirements for local approval, the course outline of record, MIS data elements, credit course categories, credit hour calculations, and standards for particular course types. This section is organized as follows:

- The Course Outline of Record
- Course Types and Definitions
- Standards for Approval
- Standards for Credit Hour Calculations
- Other Course Types and Standards

II.2.1 The Course Outline of Record

All credit courses are required to have an official Course Outline of Record (COR) that meets the standards in Title 5, § 55001.5(a). Course outlines of record shall also include descriptions of approaches faculty may use to accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students Title 5, § 55001.5(b). Current CORs must be maintained in the official college files (paper or electronic database) and made available to each instructor.

The following COR components are required for all credit courses:

II.2.1.1 COR Components Required for all Credit Courses

- Expected number of contact hours
- Expected number of outside of class hours
- Expected number of total student learning hours for the course
- Total units of credit for the course as a whole
- If applicable, separately specify the total units of lecture, lab, or activity components
- Prerequisites, corequisites or advisories on recommended preparation (if any) for the course
- Title
- Catalog description
- Outcomes
- Objectives
- Content in terms of a specific body of knowledge
- Representative textbooks including open educational resources that meet universal design course standards
- Types or examples of outside-of-class assignments, including reading and writing assignments
- Types or examples of instructional methodology
- Types or examples of methods of evaluation
- The discipline or disciplines assigned to the course pursuant to section 53407

II.2.1.2 Suggested Elements for Credit CORs

- Course number
- Status (credit, noncredit, or others)
- Enrollment limitations (if any)
- Repeatability
- Field Trips

These standards place the burden of rigor upon the curriculum committee to determine that course elements of the COR are appropriate to the intended students. Curriculum committees must have completed professional development that engages the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Curriculum committees shall have a documented procedure for ensuring that course outlines of record for all courses approved pursuant to section § 55002 describe approaches that would accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students (Title 5, § 55001(b)).

Curriculum committees shall have a documented procedure to guarantee accessibility for every student to ensure individuals with disabilities can equally participate in learning through course outlines of record that reflect Universal Design for Learning strategies, which include multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to support learner variability and diversity (Title 5, § 55001(c)).

In addition to these components, Chancellor's Office review of credit courses requires the submission of all MIS data elements listed in the previous section of this Handbook. While there is no regulatory requirement that these are listed on the COR, good practice suggests that MIS data elements should be included as part of the local curriculum review and submission process, whether on the COR or on attachments to the COR.

For a detailed discussion of good practices related to COR development and explanations of the standards for local course approval set forth in Title 5, refer to the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) paper titled, *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited* on the ASCCC website under the "publications" tab.

II.2.1.2.1 Cross-Listed Courses (Cross-Listing)

Cross-listed courses are identical courses with identical CORs except for the subject code and number. All other COR elements are the same, including for COCI submission CB 09 (SAM code).

II.2.1.3 Common Course Numbering

The Common Course Numbering (CCN) system ([Section 66725.5 of the California Education Code](#)) will create common course numbers for comparable courses across all community colleges in the state, facilitating smoother transfers to four-year institutions and reducing unnecessary credit accumulation. By maximizing credit mobility, the CCN system will enhance equitable transfer opportunities and support student success by helping students

build cohesive academic plans, understand course transferability, and make informed course selections. This collaborative effort involves faculty, administrators, staff, and system officials to ensure the best outcomes for California community college students.

The ASCCC has been tasked by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with developing the CCN Course Templates. This effort involves organizing and facilitating discipline faculty participation in the development of the CCN Course Templates, which are built on existing C-ID descriptors when available. Intersegmental faculty content experts, under the leadership of the ASCCC, developed CCN course templates for CCN courses. For each CCN course, there are identical course elements that must match the CCN course template, with some elements including the option to add additional details. Colleges are to include all identical elements into local course outlines to maintain the integrity of CCN course templates and to ensure CCN course comparability. Colleges are encouraged to work closely with articulation officers. Each community college campus shall incorporate common course numbers from the adopted system into its course catalog and other student-facing digital registries.

CCN course templates include the following common COR elements:

- Subject Identifier & Course Number (Identical)
- Course Title (Identical)
- Catalog/Course Description (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)
- Units (Lecture/Lab) (minimum standard)
- Pre-requisites (Identical)
- Co-requisites (Identical)
- Course Content (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)
- Lab/Activity Content, if applicable (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)
- Course outcomes/objectives (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)
- Methods of Evaluation (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)
- Representative Texts (Part 1: Identical & Part 2: optional expanded details)

II.2.2 Credit Course Types and Definitions

Credit courses are classified under one or more of the following basic course definitions to determine appropriate standards, criteria, and approval processes:

- Program Applicable
- Degree-Applicable

- Nondegree-Applicable
- Stand-Alone

II.2.2.1 Program Applicable

A course is considered program applicable if it meets one of these criteria:

- The course is required for a degree or certificate in an approved program that has been chaptered by the Chancellor's Office;
- When a course is on a list of restricted electives for a degree or certificate, specified by course title or number, from which students are required to choose to achieve a degree or certificate in an approved program that has **been** chaptered by the Chancellor's Office; or
- The course is part of an approved general education (GE) pattern such as Cal-GETC, or a local pattern conforming to the requirements in Title 5.

A course is not considered program applicable when it is only required for a certificate that has been approved locally, but not chaptered by the Chancellor's Office, such as a certificate requiring fewer than 16 semester or 24 quarter units. A program is considered chaptered by the Chancellor's Office when it appears with a valid control number in the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system (COCI). When new courses are submitted as part of a new or modified program that have not yet been chaptered, these courses may be submitted as "program applicable" during the new course and program submission process.

II.2.2.2 Degree-Applicable

A course is considered to be degree-applicable when it has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Title 5, § 55061 and has been recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board.

This section establishes the following types of courses as degree-applicable:

- All lower division transferable courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by UC or CSU (CB05 = A (CSU and UC) or B (CSU only))
- Courses within a TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) designated as vocational, which are part of an approved CTE program
- English composition or reading courses not more than one level below the first transfer level course (CB21 = A).
- All mathematics courses above and including Elementary Algebra (CB21 = Y, A, or B)
- Credit courses in English or mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments

that are at a level comparable to transferable freshman composition (for English) or comparable to elementary algebra (for mathematics)

NOTE: It is a local responsibility to determine if a course is CSU transferable. The basic requirement for CSU transferability is that a course is baccalaureate level. Only degree-applicable courses may be approved as CSU transferable.

II.2.2.3 Nondegree-Applicable

The category of credit, nondegree-applicable courses (CB04 = C) was created by regulatory amendments adopted by the Board of Governors in 1986, and includes the following types of courses:

- Basic skills courses as defined in Title 5, § 55000(t) and (u)
- Courses designed to help students succeed in degree-applicable credit courses that integrate basic skills instruction throughout and assign grades partly upon the demonstrated mastery of those skills
- Pre-collegiate CTE preparation courses designed to provide foundational skills for students preparing for entry into degree-applicable CTE courses or programs
- Essential career technical instruction for which meeting the standards of subdivision is neither necessary nor required

Title 5, § 55002(b) requires that nondegree-applicable credit courses be approved by the college curriculum committee and district governing board.

II.2.2.4 Stand-Alone

When a course is not a part of an approved program as defined above, it is referred to as a “stand-alone course”. Stand-alone courses are identified in CB24, where it has been coded using the number “2.” This term also refers to credit courses that are required for a certificate of fewer than 8 semester or 12 quarter units that has not been approved and chaptered by the Chancellor’s Office as a Certificate of Achievement. All stand-alone courses, including experimental courses and selected topics courses as described below, must have a control number prior to being offered and claimed for apportionment. The CORs for stand-alone courses must contain all required elements and adhere to the same standards as other credit courses.

A community college district may approve and offer nondegree-applicable credit courses and degree-applicable credit courses that are not part of an approved educational program without review by the Chancellor. However, stand-alone credit courses still need to be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office for chaptering and to receive a control number. The Chancellor will conduct a periodic review to ensure that colleges and districts are compliant with Title 5 regulations. Please refer to Title 5, § 55100 for full language.

Experimental and Special Topics Courses

One type of stand-alone credit course is the “experimental” course. In general, an experimental course is one for which full information on some approval criterion, such as feasibility or need, cannot be determined until the course is actually offered on a pilot basis. After an experimental course has been offered twice, it must be submitted to the college curriculum committee for approval as a regular course, or the college must discontinue offering the course as experimental. As noted above, experimental courses must be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office curriculum inventory system and receive a control number in order for the college to claim apportionment.

A “special topics” course is one which employs a consistent disciplinary framework, but for which the specific focus may change from term to term. For example, a college may develop a Special Topics in Political Science or Current Events in Political Science course in which the content will be different in each term, but the basic disciplinary framework is consistent. If a particular topic is addressed regularly, it should be approved as a regular course. At some colleges, special topics may not be defined as narrowly as this. Some colleges may use the terminology “special topics” in lieu of “experimental.” These terms are not defined in title 5, and may be established by a local district policy; however, the CORs for these courses must meet all requirements and standards.

II.2.3 Standards for Approval for Credit Courses

All credit and noncredit courses offered by a community college are subject to approval by the district governing board (often called “local approval”) and must include review by a curriculum committee established in accordance with Title 5, § 55001. The curriculum committee and the governing board must determine that the course meets the standards of Title 5, §§ 55002, 55002.5, 55003, 55062, and all other applicable provisions of Title 5. These standards are explained in the ASCCC paper, *The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited*. In addition, all courses must be appropriate to the mission of the California community college system, as defined in Education Code section 66010.4, and must be consistent with the requirements of accrediting agencies.

Curriculum approval at the local level plays a central role in ensuring that all students receive the same quality of instruction. More importantly, it is the fundamental mechanism that engages faculty in the design and evaluation of curriculum and its effectiveness in helping students.

Requirements for local curriculum approval include:

- Local curriculum committee approval of all credit courses or grouping of courses constituting a program.
- The curriculum committee conducting the review has been established by mutual agreement between the college and/or district administration and the local Academic Senate. The committee is a committee of the local Academic Senate or a committee that includes primarily faculty.
- Curriculum committees must have completed professional development that engages the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Curriculum

committees shall have a documented procedure for ensuring that course outlines of record for all courses approved pursuant to section 55002 describe approaches that would accommodate and engage diverse student bodies, advance equitable student outcomes, and promote the inclusion of all students.

- Curriculum committees shall have a documented procedure to guarantee accessibility for every student to ensure individuals with disabilities can equally participate in learning through course outlines of record that reflect Universal Design for Learning strategies, which include multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to support learner variability and diversity.
- The curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course only if the course:
 - covers the appropriate subject matter, and
 - uses resource materials, teaching methods and standards of attendance and achievement that the committee deems appropriate of the enrolled students.
- The COR shall specify the scope, objectives, content, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met.
- The COR serves as the official record of the course description; is maintained in the official college files; and is made available to each instructor.
- The COR indicates approval by the curriculum committee and possibly other entities dependent upon local practice.
- All sections of the course are taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with the [Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators in California Community Colleges](#) and the set of objectives and other specifications defined in the COR.
- The district governing board has approved all courses.

Title 5, § 55002, establishes two credit course categories and standards for approval:

- Associate Degree-applicable Credit Courses
- Nondegree-applicable Credit Courses

II.2.3.1 Degree-applicable Credit Courses

Title 5, § 55002(a) defines an associate degree-applicable course as a course that has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Title 5, § 55062. Degree-applicable courses must meet the standards specified in Title 5, § 55002 in the following categories for approval by the local and/or district curriculum committee and district governing board:

- Difficulty, level, and intensity
- Grading Policy

- Units
- Enrollment Requirements, including prerequisites, corequisites, and limitations on enrollment.

Difficulty, Level, and Intensity

Courses require critical thinking, learning skills, vocabulary, and allocation of concepts at college level as determined by the curriculum committee. Courses treat subject matter with a scope and intensity that requires students to study independently outside-of-class.

Grading Policy

Courses provide for measurement of student performance in terms of stated course objectives and culminate in formal, permanently recorded grades based upon demonstrated proficiency in subject matter consistent with the provisions of Title 5 article 2 of subchapter 1 of Chapter 6 (commencing with section 55020). Proficiency may be demonstrated through written assignments, problem solving exercises, skills demonstrations, or other means as deemed appropriate by the curriculum committee.

Units

Courses grant units of credit in a manner consistent with the provision of Title 5 section 55002.5. Course outlines of record shall record the total number of hours in each instructional category specified in governing board policy, the total number of expected outside-of-class hours, and the total student learning hours used to calculate the award of credit.

Enrollment Requirements

Includes prerequisites, corequisites, or limitations on enrollment established in accordance with the requirements that are authorized, reviewed, and applied pursuant to Title 5 sections 55003 and 58106.

II.2.3.2 Nondegree-applicable Credit Courses

Nondegree-applicable credit courses are approved by curriculum committees and recommended by governing boards in one of the following categories:

- Basic skills courses defined in Title 5 § 55000
- Course designed to enable students to succeed in degree-applicable credit courses
- Precollegiate career technical education courses providing foundational skills
- Essential career education courses for which meeting the standards of degree-applicable credit courses is not required

These courses must have the same elements and standards as degree-applicable credit courses.

II.2.4 Standards for Credit Hour Calculations

The standards for calculating units of credit are outlined in title 5 §55002.5. This section includes the following:

II.2.4.1 Minimum Hours for Credit Hour Calculations

One unit of credit represents a minimum of 48 total student learning hours, which include classroom contact hours and outside-of-class hours for semester courses or 33 total student learning hours for quarter courses. In practice, colleges may use a number between 48 and 54 hours for this value. Attendance accounting regulations allow colleges to claim apportionment for the higher end of this range. Accordingly, colleges are encouraged to use the maximum value of 54 hours in local policy and on the course outline of record for consistency with attendance accounting standards.

II.2.4.2 Requirement for Awarding the Second Unit of Credit

Section 55002.5(b) requires colleges to award the second unit of credit when the total student learning hours reach a minimum of 96 semester hours (66 quarter hours). In practice, the second unit of credit only needs to be awarded when the total student learning hours reach double the number of hours required for one unit. If local district policy uses the recommended 54-hour value, the second unit of credit would be awarded when the total student learning hours reach 108.

II.2.4.3 Work Experience Education Formula

Credit hour calculations for work experience course are specified in title 5 §55253. Each unit of credit for work experience courses requires a minimum of 54 hours or the equivalent locally determined minimum threshold for awarding one unit of credit as codified in local policy. Work experience credit may be awarded in half-unit increments.

Direct Assessment Competency-based Education Formula

Competency-based courses use the formula specified in title 5 §55270.12. This section requires direct assessment programs to develop a crosswalk between competencies and traditional credit-bearing courses. Districts may claim apportionment for direct assessment CBE instruction based on guidance provided by the Chancellor's Office.

Clock Hour Program Formula

Programs designated as "clock hour" programs under federal reporting requirements and converted to credit hour use a formula specified in title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, part 600.2.

Incremental Units of Credit

Units of credit may be awarded in incremental units as defined in local board policy. In practice, most colleges use .5-unit increments of credit for courses greater than .5 units and may use smaller increments for courses where the total unit value is less than .5 units.

Local Board Policy

Colleges are required to have locally approved policies for credit hour calculations that define the local standards not otherwise specified in title 5 regulations, including:

- How credit hours are calculated for each academic activity (lecture, lab, activity, studio, clinical, theory, work experience, etc.). This will include the hours-per-unit divisor for each unit of credit, e.g. 48, 51, 52.5, or 54 semester hours.
- The expected ratios of in-class to outside-of-class hours for each type of academic activity
- The increment(s) of credit allowed for credit courses
- The standard term length for the college
- A description of how the college will monitor compliance with state and federal requirements for credit hour calculations.

Standard Formula

The standard formula for credit hour calculations applies to most course types and is derived from Title 5, § 55002.5. The following examples use semester hours. Colleges on the quarter system should use the values outlined in title 5 for quarters. All colleges using semester calculations must require a minimum of 48 total hours of student work, inclusive of all contact hours plus outside-of-class, or homework, hours pursuant to Title 5, § 55002.5(a). This is based on the assumption of 3 hours of student work per week over a 16-week term, for 1 unit of credit. The Chancellor's Office recommends the use of 54 total hours of student work (18 weeks x 3 hours) for this calculation, rather than the minimum 48. As a result, all examples in this section use 54 hours as the basis for this calculation. In practice, local districts may use a value or a range between 48 and 54, depending on local practices, but must apply this value consistently in credit hour calculations. This value is referred to as the "hours-per-unit divisor." The total of all contact hours and outside-of-class hours, as described below, is referred to as "total student learning hours" and is the dividend in the credit calculation formula.

Credit courses not classified as work experience education, clock hour, or open entry/open exit use the following method for calculating units of credit:

Divide total student learning hours by the hours-per-unit divisor, round down to the nearest increment of credit awarded by the college. Expressed as an equation:

$$\frac{(\text{Total Contact Hours} + \text{Outside-of-class Hours})}{\text{Hours-per-unit Divisor}} = \text{Units of Credit}$$

The result of this calculation is then rounded down to the nearest .5 increment or to the nearest fractional unit award used by the district, if smaller than .5. This formula applies to both semester and quarter credit calculations. While this formula can yield a value below the lowest increment of credit awarded by the college, zero-unit courses are not permissible.

Definitions

The following definitions are used in the application of this formula:

Total Contact Hours: The total time per term that a student is under the direct supervision of an instructor or other qualified employee as defined in Title 5, §§ 58050, 58051 and 58161. This number is the sum of all contact hours for the course in all calculations categories, including lecture, recitation, discussion, seminar, laboratory, clinical, studio, practica, activity, to-be-arranged, etc. Contact hours for courses may include hours assigned to more than one instructional category, e.g., lecture and laboratory, lecture and activity, lecture and clinical.

Outside-of-class Hours: Hours students are expected to engage in course work outside of the classroom. Federal and state regulations for credit hour calculations are based on the total time a student spends on learning, including outside-of-class hours. As a matter of standard practice in higher education, lecture and related course formats require two hours of student work outside-of-class for every hour in-class. All other academic work, including laboratory, activity, studio, clinical, practica, To Be Arranged (TBA) etc., must provide an equivalent total number of student learning hours as typically required for lecture, with the ratio of in-class to outside-of-class work prorated appropriately for the instructional category.

Traditionally, these ratios are expressed as shown in the following table:

Table 5 — In-class to Out-of-class Hours Ratio

Instructional Category	In-Class Hours	Outside-of- Class Hours
Lecture (Lecture, Discussion, Seminar and Related Work)	1	2
Activity (Activity, Lab w/ Homework, Studio, and Similar)	2	1
Laboratory (Traditional Lab, Natural Science Lab, Clinical, and Similar)	3	0

Other categories or ratios for inside- to outside-of-class hours are possible but should fall within the parameters for one unit of credit as described above. Standard expectations in higher education for credit hour calculations generally align with the in-class to outside-of-class ratios as described in this table. Since TBA hours are required to be listed separately on the COR, any outside-of-class hours expected of students in relationship to TBA contact hours, must be included in the total student learning hours for the calculation. While most courses fall into one of the calculation categories listed above, some courses use a combination of categories, such as lecture combined with lab, activity, TBA, studio, or clinical hours on a single COR.

Hours-per-unit Divisor: This is the value or value range used by the college to define the number of hours required to award each unit of credit. The value must be minimum of 48 and maximum of 54 hours for colleges on the semester system and a minimum of 33 and maximum of 36 for colleges on the quarter system. This number represents the total student learning hours for which the college awards one unit of credit. Colleges are encouraged to use the maximum value in this calculation to provide maximum flexibility in scheduling. Colleges must maintain consistency between the divisor and the dividend. For example, if a college uses the 51 = 1 unit calculation to determine the hours of lecture and outside-of-class work in the dividend, they should use 51 as the divisor. Colleges that indicate the minimum and

maximum range of 48–54 should show that same range for the dividend in the equation and resulting unit calculation.

Term Length and Hours-per-unit Divisor: Colleges must exercise caution in determining the hours-per-unit divisor for credit hour calculations. California finance laws assume that primary terms average 17.5-weeks on the semester system and 11⅔-weeks on the quarter system (the two semesters or three quarters equal the traditional 35-week academic year), and because student attendance and related apportionment state compliance auditing is based on the student contact hours delineated in the official COR, the Chancellor’s Office strongly recommends that colleges use the 18-week semester or 12-week quarter as the basis for the student contact hour calculation in the COR, even if a college has been approved to use a compressed academic calendar. The 18-week semester or 12-week quarter primary term provides the greatest flexibility in terms of contact hour.

Fractional Unit Awards and Minimum Thresholds

Title 5, § 55002.5 governs the awarding of fractional units of credit. Calculations for each increment of credit awarded by the college represent the minimum threshold for awarding that increment of credit. Students are awarded the next increment of credit only when they pass the next minimum threshold. For example, if a course is designed to require 180 total student learning hours (108 contact hours and 72 outside-of-class hours), the calculation of units works as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l} 180 / 54 = 3.33 \\ 3 \text{ units of credit} \end{array}$$

In this example, the college would not award 3.5 units until the total student learning hours reached the 189-hour minimum threshold for 3.5 units. However, if a college offers credit in .25 increments, this example would yield a 3.25-unit course. Another example is a course offered for 36 contact hours, with 4 hours of homework, resulting in 40 total student learning hours. In a district that awards credit in .5 increments, 40 total student learning hours divided by 54 is .75, which meets the minimum threshold for .5 units of credit, but does not pass the minimum threshold for 1 unit of credit. In this example, 40 total student learning hours (36 contact and 4 outside-of-class) would award .5 units of credit. This is similar to the award of grades where, for example, a student earns a “B” for any percentage between 80 and 89. The student is only awarded an “A” when they reach the minimum threshold of 90 percent. However, attendance accounting standards may not allow districts to claim apportionment for the fractional hours that do not contribute to the unit value of the course.

Open Entry/Open Exit Course Credit Calculation

Courses approved by the curriculum committee as meeting the definitions in Title 5, § 58164, for open entry/open exit courses are required by Title 5, § 58164(b) to calculate one unit of credit as a minimum of 48 hours of total student work, regardless of the course format. This is not functionally different from the standard formula described previously, but it is contained in a separate section of Title 5. Fractional units are awarded in the same proportion.

II.2.5 Other Credit Course Types and Standards

II.2.5.1 Standards for Conditions of Enrollment

Standards for establishing and monitoring Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation are outlined in Title 5, § 55003. This section of regulations includes: definitions; allowance for the establishment of conditions of enrollment (COE) on the basis of content review or content review with statistical validation; the requirement that all conditions of enrollment must be made on a course-by-course or program-by-program basis; requirements for the development of local policy; directions for district governing boards to develop a plan for the establishment of conditions of enrollment by content review for English or mathematics; requirements for course availability; allowed exemptions from content review or content review with statistical validation; and other provisions.

COE are organized into three categories:

- **Prerequisite**

Prerequisites are COE that students are required to meet prior to enrollment in particular courses and programs. The assignment of a prerequisite to a course signifies that the course skills, or body of knowledge described in the prerequisite, are essential to the success of the student in that course and that it is highly unlikely that a student who has not met the prerequisite will receive a satisfactory grade in the course for which the prerequisite has been established.

- **Corequisite**

Corequisites are COE that signify that a body of knowledge or course skills are essential to the success of a student in a course. However, this body of knowledge or course skills can be acquired or developed concomitantly with the primary course. Therefore, a student is required to enroll in a corequisite simultaneously with (or, in some cases, may be allowed to enroll in the corequisite prior to) the primary course.

- **Advisory on Recommended Preparation**

Advisories are COE that a student is advised, but not required to meet before or in conjunction with enrollment in a course or educational program.

Other Limitations on Enrollment

Other limitations on enrollment, including auditions, health and safety, cohorts, and other limitations expressed and authorized by statute may be found in Title 5 § 58106.

II.2.5.2 Credit Course Repetition

The primary regulations for credit course repetition are contained in Title 5, §§ 55040–55046. The bulk of these sections deal with student repetition of credit courses, rather than the development and approval of curriculum. The Chancellor’s Office published the [Credit Repetition Guidelines](#) in November of 2013, to provide guidance to local districts

on establishing policies, processes, and curricula that are compliant with all regulations. Standards for the development of repeatable credit courses and other elements linked to curriculum development and approvals are contained in Title 5, §§ 55040 and 55041.

Repeatable Courses

Title 5, § 55041 permits local districts to designate certain courses as repeatable, permitting up to four takes of a course so designated. This is separate from repeated attempts due to substandard grades or recency. The following types of courses may be designated repeatable:

Courses Required for CSU or UC Major Requirements

Title 5, § 55041(a)(1) permits a district to designate a course as repeatable when repetition is necessary to meet the major requirements of CSU or UC for completion of a baccalaureate degree. The requirement for repetition must be verifiable to the district through the individual CSU or UC's catalog, degree or major requirements documents, or other official publication.

An informal letter from the department or faculty member is not sufficient verification to designate a course as repeatable under this regulation as it is not binding on CSU or UC. This designation is limited to the lower division component of the major at the CSU or UC.

Intercollegiate Athletics Courses

Title 5, § 55041(a)(2) permits a district to designate intercollegiate athletics courses, as defined in Title 5, § 55000, as repeatable. The limit for repeatability in this instance is not a specific number of enrollments, as requirements for student athlete enrollment in these courses are governed by other sections of state regulations, which limit student athletes to 350 contact hours of intercollegiate athletics per year. However, districts may only claim apportionment for four enrollments, no matter the structure of the course established through the curriculum process or the manner in which the course is scheduled.

These types of courses are intended to be narrowly construed, meaning the course is either the one that the athlete must be enrolled in to participate in the sport that is sponsored by the district or the course that is devoted to conditioning the athlete to safely participate in the competitive sport. Typical sports theory courses, e.g., courses in which students watch a game film and discuss the film with coaches, are not conditioning courses that support the organized competitive sport and thus, are not courses that a district may properly designate as repeatable.

Intercollegiate Competition Courses

Title 5, § 55041(a)(3) permits a district to designate courses designed for intercollegiate academic or vocational competition as a repeatable. Intercollegiate academic or vocational competition courses are very narrowly defined as courses that meet all of the following criteria: 1) the course must be designed specifically for participation in non-athletic competitive events; 2) the competition must be between students from different colleges; 3) the competition must be sanctioned by a formal collegiate or industry governing body; and 4) the participation in the sanctioned competitive event between students from different colleges must be a course requirement and that requirement must be specified in the course content and objectives pursuant to Title 5, § 55002 subdivisions (a) or (b).

The [Credit Repetition Guidelines](#) provides greater detail and examples for all of these course types. Districts designating courses repeatable under the provisions of this section must comply with the requirements under Title 5, § 55041(b) requiring the identification of all repeatable courses and the designation of those courses in the catalog. The district and district curriculum committee may not designate any other courses as repeatable. All other components of credit course repetition are tied to the student, not the curriculum. However, in some instances, the curriculum development and approval process can be used to strengthen the ability of the student and the district to apply the other exceptions outlined in Title 5.

Work Experience Education Courses

Work Experience Education courses are repeatable as clarified in [memo ESS 23-49 Work Experience Education Regulations Clarification Regarding Repeatability](#), subject to any limitations established by district policy.

II.2.5.3 Standards for Distance Education

Distance Education (DE) is regulated by Title 5, Chapter 6, Subchapter 3, Article 1 starting with section 55200. DE is defined in Title 5, § 55200, as instruction in which the teacher and student are separated by distance and interact through communication technology. Both credit and noncredit courses may be offered through distance education.

Table 6 — Title 5, Sections on Distance Education

Title 5 Section Number	Topic
55200	Definition and Application
55202	Course Quality Standards
55204	Instructor Contact
55206	Separate Course Approval
55208	Faculty Selection and Workload
55210	Ongoing Responsibility of Districts

Title 5, § 55200-55204, specifies that course quality standards apply to distance education in the same manner as for in-person courses and that each course delivered via distance education provide regular effective contact between instructors and students, and among students.

Title 5, § 55206 states that, “If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, an addendum to the official course outline of record shall be required.” The addendum is to address “...how course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode...” to include meeting regular and effective contact and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. These regulations refer to all courses that are developed with the intent that individual classes or sections, or any portion of the course, may be scheduled as distance education instead of traditional, in-person instruction. There are four types of distance education courses:

- Online Synchronous distance education courses are courses in which class meetings take place on a predetermined schedule, which include regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the student, and all students are required to attend class meetings and interact with the instructor and other students through the use of live, interactive technology.
- Online Asynchronous distance education courses are courses in which there are no scheduled meetings, which include regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the student, and where students are required to complete class activities and assignments as detailed in the course syllabus by logging into an online system, completing assignments and submitting them to the instructor electronically within timelines specified in the syllabus.
- Hybrid course sections include any combination of in-person, synchronous online, and/or asynchronous online instruction including regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the student. The class schedule specifies how students participate in each class session.
- Hyflex course sections include any combination of in-person, synchronous online, and/or asynchronous online instruction including regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the student. Each student determines which modality to participate in for each class session.

II.2.5.4 Standards for Open Entry/Open Exit Courses

Open entry/open exit courses are defined in Title 5, § 58164 as credit or noncredit courses in which students enroll at different times and complete at various times or at varying paces within a defined time period, such as a semester or quarter.

When an open entry/open exit course provides supplemental learning assistance (pursuant to Cal. Code Reg., Title 5, § 58172) in support of another course or courses, the COR for the supplemental open entry/open exit course must identify the course or courses it supports, as well as the specific learning objectives the student is to pursue.

Credit open entry/open exit courses must be designed in such a way that most students who are appropriately placed in the course would be able to master the objectives and complete the course successfully in 48–54 hours per unit of credit. Some students may need more hours to complete the course and may need greater assistance from faculty and staff; whereas other students may need fewer hours to do the same and need little or no assistance. Regardless of the number of hours the student needs to complete the course, the number of units earned will be the same and the number of hours needed units earned will be the same and the number of hours needed by most students to complete the course as approved by the curriculum committee will be recorded in the COR.

II.2.5.5 Work Experience Education

Work Experience Education is authorized by Title 5, § 55250 et seq. This category of course is an exception to the usual requirement that state-reimbursed community college education be under the immediate supervision of a qualified academic employee. A college that offers Work Experience Education must provide contractual services, including supervision by a qualified instructor or coordinator, written evaluation of students’ progress, consultation with employers, specific objectives, and other elements. Units of work experience must be earned in patterns as described in Title 5, § 55002.5.

Table 7 — Title 5, Sections on Work Experience Education

Title 5 Section Number	Topic
55250	Purpose and Definition of Work Experience Education
55251	District Responsibilities
55252	Work Experience Education Documentation
55253	College Credit, Attendance Accounting, Course Repetition
55254	Records

Title 5, § 55250 establishes Work Experience Education. The purpose of work experience education is to provide students with an integrated instructional program that provides opportunities to connect academic curricula to applied experiential learning in the workplace. Work experience education should be substantive in nature, linked in a way relevant to a student’s educational pathway, and contribute to demonstrable learning outcomes that have value towards a degree or certificate. Title 5, § 55253 states that a student may earn up to a maximum of 14 credit hours during one enrollment period. Title 5, § 55253, and related sections allow for student repetition of Work Experience Education courses; however, Title 5, § 55041 does not allow for these courses to be designated as “repeatable” for the purposes of curriculum development processes. Districts may permit students to re-enroll in these courses as many times as it takes to reach the maximum units as described above, within Title 5, § 55253.

When Work Experience Education is reported in the Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems (MIS), the TOP Code 4932.00 (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) must be used for General Work Experience Education.

Resources and information about Work Experience Education can be found on the Chancellor’s Office website (www.cccco.edu) , the Workforce and Economic Development Division page, in the CTE section. The Work-Based Learning Handbook is an online reference to topics and issues central to the effective implementation and operation of Work Experience Education and work-based learning programs.

II.2.5.6 Independent Study Courses

The standards for Independent Study are set forth in Title 5, § 55230 et seq. 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.

Table 8 — Title 5, Sections on Independent Study

Title 5 Section Number	Topic
55230	Purpose
55232	Academic Standards
55234	Student Progress
55236	Availability of Instructor
55238	Eligibility for State Funds
55240	Instruction

This should not be confused with the requirement in Title 5, § 55002 that all courses offered for credit must require students to study independently outside-of-class. Instead, independent study in this context refers to a course that is not regularly scheduled, but for which it is expected that the student will interact directly with the instructor on an individual basis. Title 5, § 55232 requires that independent study courses must maintain the same academic standards as applied to other credit or noncredit courses.

II.2.5.7 Standards for Correspondence Education

Correspondence Education (CE) is regulated by Title 5, Chapter 6, Subchapter 3, Article 1 starting with § 55260. CE is defined in Title 5, § 55260, as instruction provided through one or more courses by a community college or district under which the college or district provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Both credit and noncredit courses may be offered through correspondence education.

Table 9 — Title 5, Sections on Correspondence Education

Title 5 Section Number	Topic
55260	Definition and Application
55261	Course Quality Standards
55262	Instructor Contact
55263	Separate Course Approval
55264	Faculty Selection and Workload
55265	Reporting
55266	Determination of Full-Time Status

These regulations refer to all courses that are developed with the intent that individual classes or sections, or any portion of the course, may be scheduled as correspondence education instead of distance education or traditional, in-person instruction.

Title 5, § 55260-55264, specifies that course quality standards apply to correspondence education in the same manner as standards for regular classroom courses. In addition, each course delivered via correspondence education must be separately approved through local curriculum approval processes. The regulations further state that interaction between the instructor and student is limited due to separation, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student.

Title 5, § 55263 states that, *“If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through correspondence education, an addendum to the official course outline of record shall be required.”*

II.2.5.8 Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class)

Title 5, § 56028 establishes the definition and requirements for educational assistance classes as follows:

Educational assistance classes are instructional activities offered consistent with the provisions of Subchapter 1 of Chapter 7 of this Division, and designed to address the educational limitations of students with disabilities who are admitted to the institution pursuant Educational Code section 76000 et seq. and would be unable to substantially benefit from general college classes even with appropriate academic adjustments, auxiliary aids and services. Such classes generate revenue based on the number of full-time equivalent student (FTES) enrolled in the classes. Such classes shall be open to enrollment of students who do not have disabilities; however, to qualify as an educational assistance class, a majority of those enrolled in the class must be students with disabilities....

Educational assistance classes may also refer, however, to distinct courses with their own CORs, 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 both cases, educational assistance classes 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 (e.g., therapeutic activity, counseling, or assessment testing), but must instead provide systematic instruction in a body of content or skills whose mastery forms the basis of the student grade.

Title 5, § 56028 requires that classes designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities must be open to enrollment of students who do not have disabilities, but provides that in order to qualify as an educational assistance class, a majority of those enrolled must be students with disabilities. The course description published in the college catalog may note that it has been designed for students with specific disabilities, but the college may not restrict enrollment to such students, nor require students to register for classes through the Disabled Student Program and Services (DSPS) program or counselor, nor otherwise violate the open-enrollment provisions of state law (CCR, Title 5, § 51006).

Title 5, § 56208 requires courses designed to meet the needs of students with specific disabilities to adhere to the academic standards for courses as specified in Title 5, § 55002, and meet the following requirements:

- Be designed to enable students with disabilities to compensate for educational limitations and/or acquire the skills necessary to complete their educational objectives;
- Employ instructors who meet minimum qualifications set forth in Title 5, § 53414;
- Utilize curriculum, instructional methods, or materials specifically designed to address the educational limitations of students with disabilities. Curriculum committees responsible for reviewing and/or recommending educational assistance class offerings shall have or obtain the expertise appropriate for determining whether the requirements of this section are satisfied; and
- Utilize student/instructor ratios determined to be appropriate by the District given the educational limitations of the students with disabilities enrolled in each class. Class size should not be so large as to impede measurable progress or to endanger the well-being and safety of students or staff.

Title 5, § 56029 allows extended repetitions of DSPS courses under certain circumstances that are discussed in the Credit Course Repetition chapter of this Handbook.

The COR for a course developed in compliance with Title 5, § 56028, should

- Specify the disability or disabilities the course is designed to address;
- Describe the objectives the course is to fulfill as they relate to these disabilities;
- Describe why a special course is needed to meet this need, rather than being met through accommodation in a regular course;
- Specify how it will be determined that the objectives have been achieved; and

- Explain what disability-specific instructional methods, materials, equipment, etc., will be used and why.

Course sections that are merely adapted to enable students with disabilities to meet the regular course objectives in an alternative way do not require additional Chancellor's Office review.

II.2.5.9 Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are regulated in multiple sections of state regulations and codes, including Title 5, § 55250.5 and Labor Code §§ 3070-3098. These regulations define an apprenticeship as preparation for any profession, trade, or craft that can be learned through a combination of supervised on-the-job training and off-the-job formal education. The California Division of Apprenticeship (DAS) within the California Department of Industrial Relations and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office share responsibility for the approval of credit and noncredit apprenticeship programs. This shared responsibility has created a partnership for developing apprenticeship programs that includes the community college and the employer, also known as the program sponsor. (DAS) within the California Department of Industrial Relations and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office share responsibility for the approval of credit and noncredit apprenticeship programs. This shared responsibility has created a partnership for developing apprenticeship programs that includes the community college and the employer, also known as the program sponsor.

The DAS approves matters related to on-the-job instruction and maintains the standards. Both the California Apprenticeship Law and the annual California Budget Act refer to the off-the-job formal education as related and supplemental instruction (RSI). Providing RSI is the job of the community colleges, adult schools, and regional occupational program centers. In addition, Labor Code section 3074 states that apprenticeship RSI shall be the responsibility of and be provided by state and local boards in charge of CTE in partnership with the program sponsor, who is normally the employer. The program or courses must have the approval by the Chancellor's Office for both curriculum and RSI funding.

Required documentation must be signed by the Chief of the DAS (or designee) to indicate that the apprenticeship has been approved, including the specific campus approved for the RSI, apprenticeship title, file number, and sponsor contact information. Justification of the need for any new CTE programs, including apprenticeships, is specifically required through a labor market study (LMI), pursuant to Education Code section 78015.

The Chancellor's Office has delegated authority to the local apprenticeship program coordinator, who provides support to the college and the program sponsor throughout the development and implementation of an apprenticeship program. The Vice Chancellor of Educational Services (or designee) reviews the programs and courses offered by the community college using criteria that represent the standards of good practice established in the field of curriculum design

Apprenticeship proposals require additional supporting documentation including a [California Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS) Approval Letter.

II.2.5.10 Contract Education

Contract education is one of several educational options authorized by Education Code (Ed. Code § 78020(a)) to be offered within the California Community Colleges. Contract Education is legally defined as “those situations in which a community college district contracts with a public or private entity for the purposes of providing instruction or services or both by the community college.”

Table 10 — Mandates and Regulations Related to Course Standards and Approval

Authority	Topic
Ed. Code § 76300(e)(3)	Contract Education Student Fee Requirement
Ed. Code § 78020(a)	Contract Education Definition
Ed. Code § 78021(a)	Establishing Contract Education
Ed. Code § 78021(c)	Contract Education Attendance Requirements
Ed. Code § 780222(a)	Contract Education Faculty Requirements
Ed. Code § 78022(b)	Contract Education for Credit and Noncredit Faculty Compensation
Ed. Code § 78022(d)	Contract Education Not-for-Credit Faculty Compensation
Ed. Code § 78023	Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporations
Ed. Code § 78020(a)	Contract Education Definition
Title 5, § 55170	Contract Courses

Community colleges are authorized to conduct contract education offerings to meet the specific training needs of private corporations or other public agencies. This authorization is contained in Education Code § 78021.

Most contract education offerings do not generate state apportionment, because they are customized offerings paid for by businesses for their employees. However, contract education courses that are open to any college student and meet all other legal requirements may generate apportionment. Approval of contract education classes is covered in Title 5, § 55170.

Title 5, § 55170 Contract Courses

(a) Any course approved pursuant to section 55002 may be offered by a college through contract education pursuant to Education Code section 78021. Approval of such a contract course may be required by other state agencies, but approval by the Chancellor is not required unless the course is part of a credit educational program subject to approval pursuant to section 55130 or is a noncredit course subject to approval pursuant to article 2 of this subchapter.

(b) The approval of the Chancellor is not required for any contract except for vocational education contracts pursuant to subchapter 7.

SECTION 3: CREDIT PROGRAMS CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

- **Overview of Credit Programs**

This section provides an overview of the standards for all credit programs and is organized as follows:

- Program Types
- General Associate Degree Standards
- Standards for Writing and Computation Competency

- **Baccalaureate Degree: B.S. and B.A.**

This section provides an overview of the standards for all credit programs and is organized as follows:

- Degree Standards
- Criteria for Approval

- **Associate Degree for Transfer Degrees: AA-T and AS-T**

This section provides an overview of the standards for all credit programs and is organized as follows:

- Degree Standards
- Criteria for Approval
- Double Counting Procedures for General Education

- **Career Technical Education Degrees: AA and AS**

This section provides an overview of the standards for all Career Technical Education Degrees (AA and AS) and is organized as follows:

- Degree Standards
- Criteria for Approval

- **Local Associate Degrees: AA and AS**

This section provides an overview of the standards for Local Degrees (AA and AS) and is organized as follows:

- Degree Standards
- Criteria for Approval

- **Certificates of Achievement**

This section provides an overview of the standards for Certificates of Achievement and is organized as follows:

- Standards and Definition
- Criteria for Approval

- **Collaborative Programs**

- **Labor Market Information and Analysis**

II.3.1 Overview of Credit Programs

An educational program is defined in Title 5, § 55000(m) as “an organized grouping of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education.” All baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees and certificates of achievement that appear by name on a student transcript or diploma must be chaptered by the Chancellor’s Office, whether they are intended primarily for employment preparation (CTE), for transfer (ADT) or transfer preparation, as a record of academic achievement, or to fulfill other community needs.

The types of credit educational programs that must be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office for chaptering include: Baccalaureate Degree, Associate Degrees – local AA or AS, AA-T/AS-T, and Certificates of Achievement.

Credit Program Types

All degrees in the California Community College system are classified in five general categories:

- Baccalaureate Degree that meets all the requirements of California Education code § 78042
- Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT) that meet all requirements of Education Codes

§ 66745-66747:

- Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T)
- Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T)
- Local Degrees:
 - Associate of Arts (AA)
 - Associate of Science (AS)

Certificates of Achievement, defined in Title 5, § 55070, are the only credit certificates that may appear by name on a student transcript, diploma, or completion award. Colleges must

submit programs consisting of 16 or more semester units or 24 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework to be chaptered by the Chancellor's Office. Colleges may also submit programs of 8 or more semester units or 12 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework to be chaptered by the Chancellor's Office for the program to be included in the student transcript.

Additionally, each program submitted for the Chancellor's Office review are required to state the program's primary goal. This primary goal is used to determine the standards and documentation for approval but is not a component of state data tracking or reports, and is not included for MIS data submissions. There are three program goals:

- Transfer: All ADTs and Certificates of Achievement for Cal-GETC.
- Career Technical Education (CTE): Limited to programs in a CTE TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027). May include both CTE and transfer goals (not including ADTs).
- Local: All other AA and AS degrees, BS/BA degrees, and Certificates of Achievement that are not in a CTE TOP Code, which are developed to meet locally defined needs consistent with the system's mission, including transfer preparation. These degrees must align with a TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027).

Degrees submitted with a program goal of "CTE" or "Local" may include transfer preparation as a component or as the primary intent of the program, but only ADTs and Cal-GETC Certificates of Achievement may use the goal of "Transfer." Standards and further explanations of these categories and associated approval criteria are discussed in detail in this chapter.

The Chancellor's Office supports ASCCC Resolution 09.03 F08, approved in Fall 2008, which provided guidelines for classifying disciplines into AA or AS degrees as follows:

- Associate of Science (AS) is strongly recommended for any Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) field and CTE programs
- Associate of Arts (AA) is strongly recommended for all other disciplines
- Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) must be used for any Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) field and CTE programs
- Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) must be used for all other disciplines

II.3.2 General Baccalaureate Degree Standards

All baccalaureate degrees offered by a California community college must meet the minimum requirements outlined in this section. These requirements are designed to ensure the baccalaureate degrees are equivalent or superior to other baccalaureate degrees offered by other regionally accredited community colleges or universities throughout the United States.

The legal parameters and standards for baccalaureate programs' curriculum are established in Education Code Sections 78040-78043 and California Code of Regulations as listed in table 10 below. Education Code Section 78042 is the most relevant to curriculum and also outlines the proposal review cycle.

Table 11: Baccalaureate Degree Program Title 5 Sections

Title 5 Section Number	Topic
53410	Minimum Qualifications
53430	Equivalencies
55090	District Baccalaureate Degree Policies
55091	Upper Division Course Requirements
55093	Admission Criteria
58501	Enrollment Fee

In addition to the required Board of Governor's Approval outlined in Education Code section 78042, baccalaureate degree programs must meet the following criteria for Chancellor's Office curriculum approval:

Each degree program must include the following:

1. A combination of lower division and upper division coursework totaling a minimum of 120 semester or 180 quarter units that are applicable to a baccalaureate degree as defined within these guidelines, with a minimum degree requirement of 60 semester credits or 90 quarter units at the associate level.
2. Completion of a minimum of 36 semester or 54 quarter units of general education that includes the following:
 - a. Completion of the requirements of § 55061 and § 55062 to align with the lower division general education patterns of the associate and baccalaureate degrees
 - b. Completion of the upper division general education requirements in Section 55091 that include at least 9 semester or 13.5 quarter units of upper division general education coursework
 - c. Completion of additional general education courses to meet the minimum total units that may be lower division, upper division, or any combination of lower and upper division.
3. Completion of a minimum of 40 semester or 60 quarter units of upper division courses, including units in the major and in general education

Lower Division Coursework

Degree Applicable Lower Division Courses

Lower division courses are consistent with the requirements for associate degree-applicable credit courses outlined in the California Code of Regulations Title 5, § 55061.

Lower Division General Education Requirements

All students are expected to complete lower division general education consistent with Title 5 § 55061 as part of the lower division course requirements for a baccalaureate degree. Additional lower division general education courses apply to the required total units of general education.

Lower Division Major Requirements

As required for associate degrees in Title 5, § 55061, colleges should identify a minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter units of lower division coursework in the major or interdisciplinary area of emphasis for each baccalaureate degree.

Upper Division Coursework

Definition of Upper Division Courses

Upper division courses require the application of lower division knowledge and the demonstration of critical thinking through writing, oral communication, or computation. Upper division coursework may encompass research elements, workforce training, apprenticeships, internships, and may require practicum or capstone projects. Upper division courses may have one or more lower division or upper division prerequisites.

Upper Division Course Requirements

A minimum of 40 semester or 60 quarter units or equivalent of total upper division coursework is required, including units in the major and general education and a minimum of 9 semester or 13.5 quarter units of upper division general education courses is required.

Upper division general education courses must come from at least two disciplines outside of the major, one of which must have an emphasis in written communication, oral communication, or computation. Upper division general education courses are intended only for California Community College baccalaureate students and should not be open to students who are not enrolled in a California Community College baccalaureate program.

Criteria for Approval of Baccalaureate Degrees

In addition to the required Board of Governor's Approval outlined in Education Code section 78042, baccalaureate degree programs must meet the following criteria for Chancellor's Office curriculum approval :

- Submission includes all required documentation, including

- Program Narrative
- CORs for all courses included in major
- Evidence the baccalaureate degree to be offered will help address unmet workforce needs:
 - Labor Market Information (LMI)
 - Employers are having difficulty filling positions that require a baccalaureate degree
 - Employers are willing to pay baccalaureate degree holders more than those with a related associate degree or no postsecondary degree
 - Employers have preference for candidates with the proposed baccalaureate degree.
 - Regional Consortia meeting minutes clearly detailing the title of the program and clearly stating the consortium’s recommendations. (only for new programs)
- Advisory Committee Recommendation – includes advisory committee membership and meeting minutes that clearly detail the recommendation for the specific program being offered by the college and clearly details the committee’s recommendation.
- Consultation with Regional Employers and Workforce Development Boards.

Modified baccalaureate degrees must include the following for approval:

- Narrative
- Required CORs for all courses included in major

All other documentation should already be attached to the program, as was required when submitting a new program. If documents are not attached, they will need to be added.

Baccalaureate Degree Program Narrative

Baccalaureate degree proposals must include a narrative. All sections noted below must be submitted to the District Governing Board for approval, submitted to the Chancellor’s Office curriculum inventory system, and maintained by colleges:

- Program Goals and Objectives - must address unmet workforce needs and may address transfer preparation
- Expertise, Resources, and Student Interest - documentation of the district’s expertise, resources, and student interest to offer a quality baccalaureate degree in the proposed field of study

- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements, faculty, facilities, and grouping of courses that reflect program goals
- Master Planning – describes how the program fits in the mission, curriculum, and master planning of the college and higher education in California
- Enrollment and Completer Projections – project the number of students to earn degree annually
- Place of Program in Curriculum/Similar Programs – how the program fits in the college’s existing program inventory
- Similar Programs at Other Colleges in Service Area – justification of need for program in the local community or region of the district.

Modified baccalaureate degree proposals must include a narrative that includes the following:

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or local purpose
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table.

II.3.3 General Associate Degree Standards

The general standards for the Associate degree are set forth in Title 5, § 55061 which specifies the following requirements:

- At least 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or in an area of emphasis
- At least 21 semester units or 28-31.5 quarter units of GE
- At least 60 total semester units or 90 quarter units

The 18 semester units or 27 quarter units are in the major or area of emphasis that prepares students for a field of study or specific major at a CSU or UC. The standards for GE are further defined in Title 5, § 55061. The remaining units may be used for local graduation requirements or electives, as permitted for the degree type.

II.3.4 Associate Degree for Transfer Degrees: AA-T and AS-T

Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT) were developed in response to Senate Bill 1440 (Padilla, 2010) and subsequent revisions to Education Code § 66746(a) that required community colleges to develop and offer “associate degrees for transfer” which fulfill the lower division component of a baccalaureate major at a California State University. These degrees allow students to fulfill lower division major requirements at a community college and guarantee transfer with junior status to the CSU system. Students who complete an ADT and transfer to a similar major at a CSU are guaranteed a pathway to finish their baccalaureate degrees in 60 semester or 90 quarter units. These degrees require students to meet the following requirements:

- (1) Completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units that are eligible for transfer to the California State University, including both of the following:
 - (A) Cal-GETC (California General Education Transfer Curriculum).
 - (B) A minimum of 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or area of emphasis, as determined by the community college district.
- (2) Obtainment of a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

ADTs include both Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) and Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degrees. The law authorizing these degrees also requires that students earn a “C” or better in all courses required for the major or area of emphasis. A “P” (Pass) grade is also an acceptable grade for courses in the major if the course is taken on a Pass/No Pass basis, where a Pass is defined as a “C” or better. Education Code § 66746(b) prohibits a community college district from imposing any additional course requirements for a student to be eligible for the associate degree for transfer, and subdivision (e) prohibits allowing remedial non-collegiate level coursework to be counted toward the units required for the associate degree for transfer (AA-T or AS-T). Title 5, § 55002(b) describes such courses as “nondegree-applicable credit courses.”

The designators for the Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) and the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degrees have been established by the ASCCC and are reserved only for associate degrees that meet all requirements of SB 1440 and Education Code § 66746. The term “transfer degree” is likewise restricted to ADTs.

ADT Degree Standards

The following standards apply to the development and approval of the Associate Degree for Transfer:

- 60 semester units or 90 quarter units, except where otherwise permitted by law,
- Require a minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter units in the major or area of emphasis,
- Use the Cal-GETC general education pattern

- May include transferable electives to reach 60 semester units or 90 quarter units,
- Does not require local graduation requirements not specified or permitted in the statute,
- Align with structure of the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) framework, and
- Require constituent courses to have either a Course Identification (C-ID) number or articulation/transfer status with CSU, as specified on the TMC and the Chancellor's Office TMC Template.

Major or Area of Emphasis: Transfer Model Curriculum

An inter-segmentally developed Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) defines the major or area of emphasis for all ADT degrees. In the implementation process for SB 1440 and Education Code § 66746 the ASCCC, in collaboration with the Academic Senate of the California State University, has developed a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) for certain majors that have been identified for students who transfer from a California community college to CSU. According to Title 5, § 55061 and Education Code § 66746 the associate degree must include a major or area of emphasis consisting of a minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter units.

When an associate degree for transfer is approved by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the California State University Chancellor's Office will be notified so that the approved associate degree may be included in the Cal State Apply transfer application and in other publications. This data is used to identify eligible students who apply to the CSU for admission as described in Education Code § 66747.

Education Code § 66746 requires that community colleges create an ADT when they offer an associate-level degree in the same discipline (i.e., under the same TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027)). as an existing transfer model curriculum (TMC) within 18 months of the approval of the TMC.

A TMC is considered to have final approval when the template is posted by the Chancellor's Office. The approved submission forms are located on the Chancellor's Office [Educational Services and Support Division webpage](#) under [ADT Submission Forms](#).

Furthermore, similar agreements between UC and the California Community Colleges that depend on an approved transfer pathway template for development and approval of the degree shall be submitted using the same program goal and process as ADTs.

Transfer General Education

Education Code § 66749.8(j) requires that commencing with the fall term of the 2025–26 academic year students complete the Cal-GETC (California General Education Transfer Curriculum) Requirements. Additional GE requirements are not permitted. Courses used to meet the major requirement may also be used to meet the GE requirement if those courses have been approved for Cal-GETC.

ADT Electives

ADTs may include additional transferable electives, if necessary, to bring the total degree-applicable units to 60 semester units or 90 quarter units.

Prohibited Practices

Education Code § 66746(b) states a “community college district shall not impose any requirements in addition to the requirements of this section, including any local college or district requirements” Local college or district requirements that are prohibited include additional graduation requirements, such as additional GE requirements or a residency requirement that exceeds the minimum established in title 5 § 55062.

While the current program submission and approval process requires colleges to design ADTs that do not exceed 60 semester or 90 quarter units, a community college may confer the ADT to students who exceed the minimum units required for the degree.

ADT Criteria for Approval

ADTs must meet the following criteria for approval:

- Submission includes all required documentation:
 - Program Narrative,
 - Completed Chancellor’s Office Submission Form,
 - C-ID or ASSIST Articulation Information, as required by the TMC, and
 - COR for all courses included in major or area of emphasis.
- Degree meets all standards as listed above. Verification of meeting these standards is conducted through review of required documentation.
- Degree is submitted with a program goal of “Transfer.”

ADT Submission Documentation

- ADT Program Narrative
- Completed Chancellor’s Office Submission Form
- C-ID or ASSIST Articulation Information, as required by the TMC, and
- COR for all courses included in major or area of emphasis.

ADT Program Narrative

The college name, program name, program goals and objectives and catalog description are required for the narrative. The catalog description must reflect the following:

- Completion of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable courses, except where otherwise permitted by law,

- Minimum overall grade point average of 2.0,
- Minimum grade of “C” (or “P”) for each course in the major, and
- Completion of Cal-GETC.

Submission of a COR is required for each course specified in the major. All ADT degrees are submitted with “Transfer” as the program goal.

Chancellor’s Office Submission Forms for Approved Transfer Model Curriculum

The Chancellor’s Office develops a submission form for each approved TMC. The forms are located on the Chancellor’s Office [Equitable Student Learning, Experience and Impact Office in the Educational Services and Support Division webpage](#) under [Templates for Approved Transfer Model Curriculum](#). All submissions must include a completed, current template.

Course Identification Numbering System or ASSIST Articulation Documentation

The submission form specifies all of the courses that may be included in the ADT and the documentation required for each course when the degree is submitted for approval. Typically, all required core courses are identified by a Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) descriptor, which sets the minimum standards for what should be included the COR. When a C-ID descriptor is listed on the template, C-ID articulation is required for the course(s) to be included in that section of the template. Additional information on C-ID descriptors and C-ID articulation is located on [C-ID](#) (www.c-id.net). However, courses pending C-ID approval over 45 calendar days may be included in the degree if the program application demonstrates evidence that those courses have been submitted to and are under review in the C-ID System. Thus, for evidence, a screenshot should be submitted from the C-ID website that includes the C-ID descriptor number, descriptor, department name, department number, local course title, college, submitted date, status, expires, and last update columns.

Courses on the template that do not need an approved C-ID descriptor require different documentation to justify the inclusion of the course. These include:

- **Articulation Agreement by Major** (AAM) demonstrating lower division preparation at one CSU campus,
- **CSU Baccalaureate Level Course List by Department** (BCT) showing the courses are CSU transferable, and
- **Cal-GETC Certification Course List by Area** (GECC) identifying the transfer GE area(s) for which the course was approved.

Documentation for the above can be located on the articulation website ASSIST (www.assist.org) for inclusion in the application.

Double Counting Procedures for General Education

To ensure that all ADTs can be completed within 60 semester units, the submission form also requires the Cal-GETC status of each course and how the units may be double counted, i.e., how the units can be used to fulfill both major preparation and transfer GE requirements.

The maximum number of “double counted” units is limited to the number of units assigned to each GE Area. Courses can only be double counted in one GE Area.

Example: A college’s Calculus course is 5 units. The maximum number of units allowed for Cal-GETC Area 2 is 3 units. Thus, only 3 of the 5 units of the calculus course can be double counted.

III.3.5 Career Technical Education Degrees: AA and AS

The standards for all associate degrees are set forth in Title 5, § 55061. These include satisfactory completion of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit course work in a major or area of emphasis, GE, and elective courses as needed to meet the minimum unit requirement. Associate degrees are classified as Career Technical Education (CTE) when they are in a TOP Code designated as vocational in the TOP Manual (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027). CTE degrees may include transfer preparation as a component or as the primary intent of the program.

CTE Degree Standards

Associate degrees classified as CTE must meet the following standards applicable to the development and approval of all AA and AS degrees submitted in this category:

- Minimum of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units;
- Minimum 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in major or area of emphasis as described in title 5, section 55061(b);
- Any GE pattern allowed by regulations, as determined by the college;
- Local graduation requirements;
- Offered in a vocational TOP code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027);
- Recommendation by the appropriate Regional Consortium;
- May be designed for both CTE and transfer preparation.

CTE Degree Minimum Units

Title 5, § 55061(a) requires that students earning the associate degree with the satisfactory completion of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit course work. These units must include at least 21 semester units or 28 – 31.5 quarter units in GE

and at least 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or area of emphasis. Of the total required units, at least 12 semester units or 18 quarter units must be completed in residence at the college granting the degree.

Exceptions to residence requirements for the associate degree may be made by the district governing board when it determines that an injustice or undue hardship would be placed on the student. Satisfactory completion means either credit earned on a “pass-no pass” basis, or with a grade point average of 2.0 or better in the associate degree community college credit courses.

CTE Major or Area of Emphasis

Title 5, § 55061(b)(2) allows colleges to develop associate degrees requiring 18 or more semester (27 or more quarter) units in a major or “area of emphasis.” A major may be defined by the lower-division requirements of a specific major at the UC or CSU or a minimum of 18 semester (27 quarter) units in a field or in related fields selected by the community college. The requirements for a major must consist of courses that all students are expected to complete for a specific number of units. A small number of the required units may be completed by selecting courses from a list of restricted electives.

An area of emphasis is a broader group of courses and may be defined as 18 or more semester (27 or more quarter) units in related fields intended to prepare the student for a single major or related majors at a baccalaureate institution or to prepare a student for a particular field as defined by the community college. Such a degree may be similar to patterns of learning that a student undertakes in the first two years of attendance at a baccalaureate institution in order to prepare for a major, area of emphasis, or field of study. The requirements for an area of emphasis must specify the number of units that students will select from a list of courses that prepare students for a specific academic or professional goal. Each area of emphasis will be awarded as a separate degree and assigned a separate program control number.

If the CTE degree is designed to provide specific transfer preparation in addition to career preparation, the proposal must demonstrate through the narrative and required documentation that required courses in the program substantially satisfy the lower division coursework requirements for the corresponding baccalaureate major or concentration. The submission must show a good-faith effort on the part of the college to assure that, to the extent possible:

- Courses will count not only for transfer elective credit, but specifically toward completion of a major after transfer;
- Courses required in the lower division will not have to be repeated in the upper division; and
- All major requirements usually fulfilled in the lower division can be fulfilled at the community college.

CTE General Education

For all associate degrees, it is important to maintain the philosophy that the associate degree represents more than an accumulation of units. Instead, it embodies completion of a well-

defined pattern of learning experiences that are designed to develop certain capabilities. Title 5, § 55060 describes the completion of GE, one component of the degree, as a learning experience that demonstrates:

...the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use quantitative reasoning; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self- understanding.

Title 5, § 55061(c) requires that students receiving an associate degree shall complete a minimum of 21 semester or 28-31.5 quarter units of baccalaureate-level, except where otherwise noted, GE coursework that includes a minimum of 3 semester or 4 quarter units in each of the following areas:

1. English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking, including:
 - a. English Composition
 - b. Oral Communication and Critical Thinking
2. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
3. Arts and Humanities
4. Social and Behavioral Sciences
5. Natural Sciences
6. Ethnic Studies

GE transfer patterns do not satisfy the requirement for a major or an area of emphasis. In other words, an associate degree cannot consist solely of Cal-GETC or the local GE pattern with the remaining units (to reach 60 semester or 90 quarter) in other GE courses or electives, selected at the student's discretion.

When an associate degree is developed for students who do not intend to transfer, a local GE pattern of a minimum of 21 semester or 28-31.5 quarter units is required. When colleges offer degrees that include transfer preparation with a choice of local or transfer GE, colleges should strongly recommend or require that a student select the appropriate GE pattern for the student's intended goal with advice from a counselor. This may include Cal-GETC, the GE pattern for a four-year institution in an adjacent state, or the local GE pattern. There may also be additional graduation requirements at individual colleges. Some students who intend to transfer will complete more than 60 semester or 90 quarter units in order to meet all requirements for the associate degree. Of the total required units, at least 12 semester units or 18 quarter units must be completed in residence in the district granting the degree.

Exceptions to the residence requirements for the associate degree may be made by the district governing board when it determines that an injustice or undue hardship would be placed on the student.

Electives and Local Graduation Requirements

Associate degrees may include additional graduation requirements or electives, if necessary, to bring the total degree-applicable units to a minimum of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units.

CTE Degree Criteria for Approval

New CTE associate degrees submitted for approval must include all required documentation below:

- Narrative
- CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis
- Labor Market Information (LMI)
- Advisory Committee Recommendation – includes advisory committee membership and meeting minutes clearly detailing the recommendation for the specific program being offered by the college
- Regional Consortia meeting minutes clearly detailing the title of the program and clearly stating the consortium’s recommendations. (Only for new programs)
- Appropriate transfer preparation documentation from the list of allowable documents if the program is designed for both CTE and transfer preparation
- Program goal of “Career Technical Education”

CTE Degree Program Narrative

All new CTE associate degree proposals must include a narrative. All sections noted below must be submitted to the District Governing Board for approval, submitted to the Chancellor’s Office curriculum inventory system (COCI), and maintained by colleges.

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid workforce preparation purpose and may address transfer preparation
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table.
- Master Planning – how the program aligns with the mission, curriculum, and master planning of the college and higher education in California
- Enrollment and Completer Projections – projection of number of students to enroll and earn a degree annually

- Place of Program in Curriculum/Similar Programs – how the program aligns with the college’s existing program inventory
- Similar Programs at Other Colleges in Service Area – justification of need for the program in the region
- Transfer Preparation Information – if transfer preparation is a component of the program

New CTE Degree Required Documentation

In addition to a narrative, all CTE programs must include the following:

- Current Labor Market Information and Analysis – see Section VII for a discussion on LMI analysis and considerations
- Advisory Committee Recommendation – includes advisory committee membership and meeting minutes that clearly detail the recommendation for the specific program being offered by the college and clearly details the committee’s recommendation.
- Regional Consortia meeting minutes clearly detailing the title of the program and clearly state the consortium’s recommendations.

If a CTE program is designed to provide transfer preparation, as a component of or as the primary intent of the degree, then it must include at least one of the following documents to substantiate the alignment of the degree with transfer preparation standards.

Appropriate documentation may include, but is not limited to, any of the following that sufficiently demonstrate this requirement:

- Programmatic articulation agreements
- ASSIST documentation (within the last five years) verifying that a majority of required courses in the program are articulated for the major (AAM) at the single baccalaureate institutions to which the program’s students may be likely to transfer
- Table of major requirements from the most recent catalogs, with catalog dates and page numbers cited, for targeted transfer institutions showing crosswalk with California Community Colleges program requirements
- Summary of lower division major preparation published or endorsed by relevant professional bodies or programmatic accreditors, with citations included
- Formal letters from the intended receiving institution that verify alignment of proposed program with its program curriculum

Criteria for Modified CTE Associate Degree Approval

Modified CTE associate degrees must include the following for approval:

- Narrative
- Required CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis

All other documentation should already be attached to the program, as was required when submitting a new program. If documents are not attached, they will need to be added.

Modified CTE associate degree proposals must include a narrative that addresses:

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or local purpose
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table.

Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship programs do not require advisory committee and regional consortia minutes, but do require labor market information and analysis, and an approval letter from the [California Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS).

II.3.6 Local Degrees: Associate Degree of Art and Associate Degree of Science

The standards for all associate degrees are set forth in Title 5, § 55061. These include satisfactory completion of at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit course work in a major or area of emphasis, GE, and elective courses, if needed to meet the minimum unit requirement. All associate degrees with the exception of ADTs and CTE degrees are considered “local” for the purposes of submission to the Chancellor’s Office. However, this designation may include degrees intended to prepare students for transfer to a particular baccalaureate program or major. The “local” designation is limited to the submission and approval process and has no bearing on how these degrees are tracked for other purposes.

Local Degree Standards

Associate degrees classified as “Local” must meet the following standards:

- Minimum of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units
- Minimum 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in major or area of emphasis as described in Title 5, § 55061(b)

- Any GE pattern allowed by regulations, as determined by the college
- Include any local graduation requirements
- Offered in a non-vocational TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027).
- Designed to serve either transfer preparation and/or community needs

Local Degree Minimum Units

Title 5, § 55061 requires that students earning the associate degree complete at least 60 semester units or 90 quarter units of degree-applicable credit course work. These units must include at least 21 semester units or 28 – 31.5 quarter units in GE and at least 18 semester units or 27 quarter units in a major or area of emphasis. Of the total required units, at least 12 semester units or 18 quarter units must be completed in residence in the district granting the degree. Exceptions to the residence requirements for the associate degree may be made by the district governing board when it determines that an injustice or undue hardship would be placed on the student.

Local Degree Major or Area of Emphasis

Title 5, § 55061(b)(2) allows colleges to develop associate degrees requiring 18 or more semester (27 or more quarter) units in a major or “area of emphasis.” A major may be defined by the lower-division requirements of a specific major at the UC or CSU or a minimum of 18 semester (27 quarter) units in a field or in related fields selected by the

community college. The requirements for a major must consist of courses that all students are expected to complete for a specific number of units. A small number of the required units may be completed by selecting courses from a list of restricted electives.

An area of emphasis is a broader group of courses and may be defined as 18 or more semester (27 or more quarter) units in related fields intended to prepare the student for a single major or related majors at a baccalaureate institution or to prepare a student for a particular field as defined by the community college. Such a degree may be similar to patterns of learning that a student undertakes in the first two years of attendance at a baccalaureate institution in order to prepare for a major/area field of study. The requirements for an area of emphasis must specify the number of units that students will select from a list of courses that prepare students for a specific academic or professional goal. Each area of emphasis will be awarded as a separate degree and assigned a separate program control number.

If a local associate degree is designed to provide transfer preparation, the proposal must demonstrate through the narrative and required documentation that required courses in the program substantially satisfy the lower division coursework requirements for the corresponding baccalaureate major or concentration.

The submission must show a good-faith effort on the part of the college to assure that, to the extent possible,

- Courses will count not only for transfer elective credit, but, specifically, toward completion of a major after transfer;
- Courses required in the lower division will not have to be repeated in the upper division; and
- All major requirements, usually fulfilled in the lower division, can be fulfilled at the community college.

Local Degree General Education

For all associate degrees, it is important to maintain the philosophy that the associate degree represents more than an accumulation of units. Instead, it embodies completion of a well-defined pattern of learning experiences that are designed to develop certain capabilities. Title 5, § 55060 describes the completion of GE, one component of the degree, as a learning experience that demonstrates:

...the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use quantitative reasoning; to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems; and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.

Title 5, § 55061(c) requires that students receiving an associate degree shall complete a minimum of 21 semester or 28-31.5 quarter units of baccalaureate-level, except where otherwise noted, GE coursework that includes a minimum of 3 semester or 4 quarter units in each of the following areas:

1. English Composition, Oral Communication, and Critical Thinking, including:
 - a. English Composition
 - b. Oral Communication and Critical Thinking
2. Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning
3. Arts and Humanities
4. Social and Behavioral Sciences
5. Natural Sciences
6. Ethnic Studies

GE transfer patterns do not satisfy the requirement for a major or an area of emphasis. In other words, an associate degree cannot consist solely of Cal-GETC or the local GE pattern with the remaining units (to reach 60 semester or 90 quarter) in other GE courses or electives, selected at the student's discretion.

When an associate degree is developed for students who do not intend to transfer, a local GE pattern of a minimum of 21 semester or 28-31.5 quarter units is required. When colleges offer degrees that include transfer preparation with a choice of local or transfer GE, colleges should strongly recommend or require that a student select the appropriate GE pattern for the student's intended goal with advice from a counselor. This may include Cal-GETC, GE pattern for a four-year institution in an adjacent state, or the local GE pattern. There may also be additional graduation requirements at individual colleges. Some students who intend to transfer will complete more than 60 semester or 90 quarter units in order to meet all requirements for the associate degree.

Electives and Local Graduation Requirements

Associate degrees may include additional graduation requirements or electives, if necessary, to bring the total degree-applicable units to a minimum of 60 semester units or 90 quarter units.

Local Degree Criteria for Approval

Local associate degrees must meet the following criteria for approval:

- Submission must include all required documentation, including
 - Narrative,
 - CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis, and
 - Appropriate transfer preparation documentation from the list of allowable documents if the program is designed in total or in part for transfer preparation.
- Degree is submitted with program goal of “Local.”

Local Degree Program Narrative

New local associate degree proposals must include a narrative that addresses:

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or local purpose
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table
- Master Planning – ways the program fits in the mission, curriculum, and master planning of the college and higher education in California
- Enrollment and Completer Projections – projection of number of students to earn degree annually

- Place of Program in Curriculum/Similar Programs – ways the program fits in the college’s existing program inventory
- Similar Programs at Other Colleges in Service Area–justification of need for program in the region
- Transfer Preparation Information - if transfer preparation is a component of the program

Criteria for Modified Local Associate Degree Approval

Modified associate degrees must meet the following criteria for approval. Submission must include all required documentation, including:

- Narrative
- CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis.

For modified programs, if any documents are missing that are required when submitting a new program, those documents will need to be added.

Modified local associate degree proposals must include a narrative that addresses:

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or local purpose
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table

Other Documentation for Local Degrees

If a program is designed to provide transfer preparation, as a component of, or as the primary intent of the degree, then it must include at least one of the following documents to substantiate the alignment of the degree with transfer preparation standards. When programs are designed to provide transfer preparation for more than one baccalaureate institution, documentation should demonstrate alignment with the requirements for lower division major preparation at no more than one institution. Appropriate documentation may include, but is not limited to, any of the following that sufficiently demonstrate this requirement:

- Programmatic articulation agreements
- ASSIST documentation (Within the last five years) verifying that a majority (51 percent or greater) of required courses in the program are articulated for the major (AAM) at least one of the baccalaureate institutions to which the program’s students are likely to transfer

- Table of major requirements from the most recent catalogs, with catalog dates and page numbers cited, for targeted transfer institutions showing crosswalk with California Community Colleges program requirements
- Summary of lower division major preparation published or endorsed by relevant professional bodies or programmatic accreditors, with citations included
- Formal letters from the intended receiving institution that verify alignment of proposed program with their program curriculum

If a local program is intended to address community need, the college must submit documentation, such as letters of support, survey results, or other evidence that the program fulfills a need of the community. When seeking approval for such programs, the intent must be clearly expressed in the narrative portion of the proposal.

II.3.7 Certificates of Achievement

Standards and Definition for Certificates of Achievement

Title 5, § 55070 defines a Certificate of Achievement as a credit certificate that appears by name on a student transcript, diploma, or completion award. All Certificates of Achievement must be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering. The college can develop and propose a Certificate of Achievement that includes coursework taken to satisfy transfer patterns established by the UC, CSU, or accredited public postsecondary institutions in adjacent states. Certificates of Achievement that consist solely of basic skills courses are not permitted.

Certificates of Achievement represent a well-defined pattern of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities that may be oriented to career or GE. Colleges must submit programs of 16 or more semester units or 24 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework for Chancellor's Office chaptering. Colleges may submit programs of 8 or more semester units or 12 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework for Chancellor's office chaptering for the program to be titled as a Certificate of Achievement and included in the student transcript.

Community colleges may also award certificates for fewer than 16 semester units or 24 quarter units without Chancellor's Office chaptering, but must call such certificates something other than "Certificate of Achievement." Such certificates may not be noted on the student's transcript. The award names "Certificate of Completion" and "Certificate of Competency" are likewise reserved for noncredit certificates and may not be used for locally approved credit certificates.

Certificate of Achievement Unit Thresholds and Requirements

As detailed above, a certificate that requires 16 or more semester units or 24 or more quarter units of degree-applicable coursework must be chaptered by the Chancellor's Office and must be called a Certificate of Achievement. A certificate that requires fewer than 16 semester units or 24 quarter units may be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering if it requires at least 8 semester units or 12 quarter units of degree-applicable coursework, and it must be called a Certificate of Achievement.

Certificate of Achievement Course Requirements

According to Title 5, § 55070 the award of a Certificate of Achievement should represent more than an accumulation of units. It should symbolize successful completion of patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities that may be oriented to career, intersegmental general education, or local need.

When a college creates a grouping of certificates in a single four-digit TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027), arranged such that a student must complete one level before taking another level and the set or grouping as a whole requires 16 semester units or 24 quarter units or more, then the entire certificate grouping must be submitted to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering. For example, if a college creates the low-unit certificates listed below but then makes the Level I low-unit certificate prerequisite to Level II, the college has essentially created a 16-unit program:

- Multimedia, Basic (or Level I) – 7 units
- Multimedia, Advanced (or Level II) – requires completion of Level I or equivalent skills and knowledge plus an additional 9 units

As such, the college needs to submit the entire 16 units for chaptering as a Certificate of Achievement. However, Chancellor's Office chaptering of these two certificates would not be possible if the Basic (Level I) certificate is not required for the Advanced (Level II) because each certificate requires fewer than 8 semester units.

General Education Certificate of Achievement

Title 5, § 55070 allows for the approval of Certificates of Achievement that satisfy transfer patterns of Cal-GETC or accredited public baccalaureate institutions in adjacent states, which award the baccalaureate degree. To maintain statewide consistency, only the title listed below is permissible for this unique type of certificate:

- California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)

Certificates for public baccalaureate institutions in adjacent states may have any relevant title. Community colleges may not offer a Certificate of Achievement for completion of GE requirements for a private college or university or for completion of community college GE requirements.

Certificate of Achievement Criteria for Approval

All new Certificates of Achievement must meet the following criteria for approval. Submission must include all required documentation, including:

- Narrative
- CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis.
 - GE Transfer Certificates: copy of the current college catalog detailing the Cal-GETC requirements will be sufficient instead of CORs.

- Appropriate transfer preparation documentation from the list of allowable documents if the program is designed in total or in part for transfer preparation.

Narrative for New Certificates of Achievement

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or lifelong learning purpose. For the purposes of Chancellor’s Office submission and approval, programs may select one of three program goals: transfer, CTE, or local.
 - Transfer is applied only to certificates for Cal-GETC.
 - CTE is limited to certificates in a vocational TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027).
 - Local is used for all other certificates, but may include certificates designed to prepare students for transfer.
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals
- Master Planning – describes how it fits in the mission, curriculum, and master planning of the college and higher education in California
- Enrollment and Completer Projections – projection of number of students to earn certificate annually
- Place of Program in Curriculum/Similar Programs – how it fits in college’s existing program inventory
- Similar Programs at Other Colleges in Service Area – justification of need for program in the region

Criteria for Modified Certificate of Achievement Approval

All modified Certificates of Achievement must meet the following criteria for approval. Submission must include all required documentation, including:

- Narrative
- CORs for all courses included in major or area of emphasis.
 - Transfer Certificates: copy of the current college catalog detailing the Cal-GETC requirements will be sufficient instead of CORs.

For modified programs, if any documents are missing that are required when submitting a new program, those documents will need to be added.

Modified Certificates of Achievement proposals must include a narrative that addresses:

- Program Goals and Objectives – must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or local purpose
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The GE pattern and the calculations used to reach the degree total must be shown following the program requirements table

Career Technical Education Certificates–Additional Documentation

In addition to a narrative, all new and modified CTE programs must include:

- Labor Market Information and Analysis – refer to the section VII for additional information.
- Advisory Committee Recommendation – includes advisory committee membership and meeting minutes that clearly detail the recommendation for the specific program being offered by the college.
- Regional Consortia meeting minutes clearly detailing the title of the program and clearly stating the consortium’s recommendations. (only for new programs)

Apprenticeship programs do not require advisory committee and regional consortia minutes, but do require labor market information and analysis and an approval letter from the [California Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS).

Local (non-CTE) Certificates–Additional Documentation

In addition to a narrative, all new local certificates may include:

- Programmatic articulation agreements
- ASSIST documentation (within the last five years) verifying that a majority (51% or greater) of required courses in the program are articulated for the major (AAM) at the single baccalaureate institutions to which the program’s students are likely to transfer
- Table of major requirements from the most recent catalogs with catalog dates for targeted transfer institutions showing crosswalk with California Community Colleges program requirements
- Summary of lower division major preparation published or endorsed by relevant professional bodies or programmatic accreditors, with citations included

- Formal letters from the intended receiving institution that verify alignment of proposed program with their program curriculum

II.3.8 Collaborative Programs

A collaborative program is one in which one or more colleges rely on another college or colleges to offer some of the coursework required for an approved degree or certificate. Collaborating colleges may either be in reasonable proximity to permit students to take classroom-based courses or the courses may be offered online through distance education local or shared platforms. This collaboration may be an ideal option for colleges who find themselves unable to add a specific ADT or a CTE degree or certificate to their offerings as a consequence of their inability to offer the entire breadth of required or restricted elective courses.

The development of collaborative programs can make better use of the California community college system's overall resources, facilitate legislated degree development mandates, and ensure that CTE programs meet regional workforce needs. Colleges determine the most effective and efficient pathway for the student when developing a collaborative program, which must be described through a written agreement between the colleges that delineates the responsibilities of each college with respect to the curriculum offered and the scheduling of classes. Any changes to the agreement should be mutually agreed upon to minimize any negative effects on students. A collaborative program should be designed and offered with students' needs in mind.

See Memo [AA 19-44](#) on Collaborative Programs Eligibility Criteria and Submission Guidelines released October 22, 2019.

II.3.9 Labor Market Information and Analysis

Pursuant to Education Code § 78015 Labor Market Information (LMI) data is specifically required for all new CTE program proposals, where available. Current LMI and analysis, or other comparable information, must show that jobs are available for program completers within the local service area of the individual college and/or that job enhancement or promotion justifies the proposed curriculum. Regional, statewide, or national labor market evidence may be included as supplementary support, but evidence of need in the specific college service area or region is also necessary.

The proposal must include projections from LMI for the most applicable Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes and geographical regions to be served by the program. If these projections do not suggest adequate job openings in the college service area to provide employment for all program completers, then the proposal must explain what other factors may justify the program and make the LMI figures misleading.

Program proposals will be evaluated in light of the data regarding expected job openings within the next five years and the number of students that will complete the program per year, taking into account the number of completers in similar programs at other institutions within the geographical region. Chancellor's Office staff refers to Data Mart (<https://datamart.cccco.edu/>) to confirm the number of completers in a particular discipline.

If LMI is not available, other data sources may include:

- Recent employer surveys
- Industry studies
- Regional economic studies
- Letters from employers attesting to the service area need
- Minutes of industry advisory committee meetings (beyond required advisory committee meeting minutes)
- Job advertisements for positions in the individual college's service area
- Newspaper or magazine articles on industry or employment trends
- Applicable studies or data from licensing agencies or professional associations

A commonly referenced data source is the EDD's LMI system (www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov), which provides statistical projections of growth in specific jobs by county (or labor market area). Title 5, § 55130 requires the college seeking approval of a new program to show the "relation of the proposed program to job market analysis, where applicable."

Table 12 — Labor Market Analysis: Suggested Areas of Discussion

Topic	Discussion Points for Labor Market Analysis
Net Job Market	• Given the number of enrollments that are projected for the program and that are necessary to support the program, are there enough openings locally to permit placement of the expected number of graduates? • Has the job market been declining slowly? Holding steady? Growing slowly? Growing rapidly? Recently emerging?
Earning Potential	• What is the average initial salary? • What is the average percentage of salary increase in two years? Five years?
Program Credibility/ Career Potential	• If advanced degrees are typically needed for career advancement, will the courses required for this program count toward completion of the requirements for those degrees? • Will this preparation permit students to remain current in their field? Does the program teach basic principles and theory, as well as application? Is it current and of sufficient rigor? Does it allow for later shifts in career? • Does this preparation meet the needs of those already employed for upward mobility, entrepreneurship, or a career upgrade? • Does the program prepare students to work in an ethnically diverse workforce and in an ethnically diverse, global market?

Topic	Discussion Points for Labor Market Analysis
Emerging Occupations	When job market data are not available or are not appropriate for a new CTE program in an area of emerging social need or technology, it becomes important to provide a careful analysis and explication of the specific demands of this new occupation. A carefully designed employer survey can elicit documentation demonstrating that employers: • Share the college’s assumption regarding future direction(s) of the field and the skills that this emerging industry will require of employees. • Recognize the value of the proposed degree or certificate in the hiring or promoting of staff.
Competitive Fields	Colleges are often called upon to provide training that students greatly desire, even where the job prospects are limited and the field is highly competitive. In such occupations, often in the arts and entertainment, it is talent rather than education that drives hiring. While no community college certificate can substitute for talent, a program that is exceptionally well designed to identify and develop talent can still be justified when few programs of similar quality exist in the college service area.
Career Technical Education Skills	Many kinds of certificates are of occupational benefit to students already employed. In such circumstances, the program objectives and design, including the grouping of courses of courses, must fit the needs of students likely to be already employed. The course sequence must build on students’ prior experience, and courses must be scheduled to accommodate working students. A program must not establish provisions that exclude students who are not already employed in a particular industry, unless the college makes available to such students a practicable entry-level pathway that would qualify them, upon completion, for the advanced training.
Small Businesses or Cottage Industries	Entrepreneurial opportunities and the market for cottage industries yield few statistics. Yet entrepreneurial opportunities are of value to an increasingly large proportion of the workforce, especially in rural areas. A proposal for approval of a program designed to meet the needs of students interested in pursuing entrepreneurial activities must include a careful analysis of needs and of the market within which they must compete.

When a proposed program is in an emerging occupation, finding relevant regional or local data can be challenging. One source of data for emerging occupations is available from the Centers of Excellence, an initiative of the Chancellor’s Office Workforce and Economic Development (WED) Division. The [Initiative website \(www.coeccc.org\)](http://www.coeccc.org) includes comprehensive reports on emerging occupations, called “Environmental Scans,” as well as information about requesting customized reports if no scan has been published.

II.3.10 Introduction to Competency-Based Education

Competency-based education (CBE) is an educational program design where curriculum and instruction support the demonstration of knowledge, abilities, attitudes, motivations, self-

perceptions, and skills critical to a student’s career and academic goals through rigorous, authentic assessments. In CBE programs, faculty define competencies, high-level learning outcomes essential to the discipline or field of study which form the basis of a learning journey, and students’ progress through their learning by demonstrating mastery of those competencies against transparent standards on assessments. Assessments are developed to authentically measure student mastery of competencies, followed by the development of instructional objectives, topics of study, and activities to ensure a learning journey for students that is clearly related to the learning outcomes of the program and is culturally responsive to student needs. The goal of CBE is to empower students to meet their academic and career goals by providing a personalized, flexible, adaptive, and culturally responsive curriculum with which students can engage. Specifically, CBE allows students to demonstrate mastery of learning and the achievement of competencies at their own pace, aided by customized instructional and support services.

Table 13 — California Code of Regulations, Title 5. Education, Division 6. California Community Colleges, Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction, Subchapter 3. Alternative Instructional Methodologies, Article 6. Direct Assessment Competency-Based Education

Code Section Number	Laws and Regulations
55270	Scope and Intent
55270.1	Definitions
55270.2	Approval of Direct Assessment Competency-Based Education Programs
55270.3	Modality
55270.4	General Academic Standards and Module Approval
55270.5	Direct Assessment Competency-Based Education Faculty Selection and Workload
55270.6	Instructor Contact
55270.7	Program Development, Instruction, and Student Support
55270.8	Academic Record Symbols and Grade Point Average
55270.9	Repetition
55270.10	District Evaluation Plans
55270.11	Academic Calendar
55270.12	Direct Assessment Competency-Based Education Credit Equivalency
55270.13	Eligibility for State Apportionment

II.3.11 The Mission of Direct Assessment Competency Based Education Programs

Title 5, §§ 55270.1 - 55270.13 support the implementation of direct assessment CBE programs to better serve the diversity of California community college students, ensure access to educational pathways and opportunities for academic and career success, and to achieve more equitable student outcomes. The intent of this article is to ensure program quality and to provide learning opportunities that are meaningful and authentic, particularly for students from minoritized communities, and those identified by the college as being disproportionately impacted pursuant to Education Code section 78220.

II.3.12 Defining Competencies

Competencies are statements of performance that serve as the building blocks for CBE programs. Title 5, § 55270.1 defines a competency as an integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes in complex ways that require multiple elements of learning. Competencies define the way a student can demonstrate the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and intellectual behaviors that reflect the balancing of theory and application. Discipline specific competencies for a CBE program often reflect industry standards or the expectations of professional organizations or accreditors for the discipline. For general education CBE curriculum, demonstration of mastery of competencies such as those related to communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, civic responsibility, and the ability to engage with diverse perspectives are identified as essential for a student to thrive in further education and the workplace and are expected by accrediting agencies and transfer institutions.

II.3.13 Writing Competencies

Faculty may use a variety of strategies for CBE program design and to develop competencies.

Deconstruction-Reconstruction

Faculty may choose to “deconstruct” existing curriculum for a certificate or an associate degree. Reviewing existing curriculum, faculty write competencies and then rebuild the new CBE program by using the competencies to backwards design authentic assessments for each competency followed by the learning materials, activities, and content of the course or learning journey in the case of a direct assessment program. This approach usually includes a line-by-line review of existing curriculum to reconstruct instructional content and assessments to support student mastery of competency statements. Competencies may then be the basis for curriculum taught in various modalities.

Framework Origin

Faculty may also use a “framework origin approach” where an external standard of learning, such as a programmatic accreditation body’s standards and principles or a professional organization’s industry expectations, are the basis for a new curriculum. Examples of such frameworks are found in areas of nursing, engineering, teaching, psychology and the liberal arts. Resources such as the U.S Department of Labor’s O*NET database and the Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile are just a few examples of frameworks for developing competencies.

Faculty may choose to use either of these approaches, a hybrid approach, or another approach that best serves the discipline and college culture when developing a CBE program. Regardless, beginning with the end in mind, faculty begin with clear statements of performance that reflect the critical skills students need to succeed in the discipline as a defining characteristic of CBE program development.

II.3.14 CBE Delivery Models

CBE programs can be delivered in a credit or clock hour structure, referred to as a “credit-hour program” or “course-based program,” or through direct assessment within standard,

non-standard, and non-term academic terms as established by longstanding U.S. Department of Education policy. CBE delivery models include fully online, in-person, hybrid, or any combination of instructional modalities. Title 5 regulations do not define course-based CBE programs; however, CBE programs that rely on traditional, credit-bearing courses to deliver the skills-based curriculum that defines a CBE program should adhere to existing regulations regarding course standards.

Course-based CBE programs, unlike direct assessment programs, are comprised of credit courses that carry a Carnegie Unit value, begin and end within the traditional academic term, and follow the existing approval process for a traditional program with no additional approval required from the Chancellor's Office. Competencies in a course-based CBE program may reflect the program's student learning outcomes; however, the curriculum may include clearly defined competencies in addition to the course outline requirements found in Title 5 § 55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses. There may also be an emphasis on mapping curriculum to industry standards as well as on constant formative assessment and feedback as teaching tools and a summative assessment tied to a specific competency or competencies. CBE curriculum that focuses on career pathways with core competencies consistent with employment and industry standards allow colleges to create more streamlined and relevant pathways to support student career goals.

In a direct assessment CBE (DACBE) program, assessment and instruction are mapped across a "student learning journey" that is not subdivided into courses. Instead, they are scaffolded appropriately to prepare a student to demonstrate mastery from one competency in the program to the next by successfully completing a summative assessment. Once a student has demonstrated the required level of mastery of competency on a summative assessment, they can progress to the next competency regardless of how much time is needed to complete instruction and formative assessments. While course-based CBE is largely a shift in the focus of curriculum development, instructional strategies, and assessment standards, DACBE attempts all these andragogical shifts while minimizing reliance on the Carnegie unit as the metric for assessing learning.

Per Title 5, § 55270.3, direct assessment CBE programs shall be offered via partial or fully asynchronous distance education. A program may require an in-person component; however, programs should be designed primarily as distance education programs. Given this requirement, local curriculum approval processes should include a review of the distance education components typically reviewed to comply with Title 5, § 55206. Similarly to distance education instruction, additional considerations should be made when selecting faculty to teach in a direct assessment program as well as considerations of local, state, and federal specifications regarding regular and substantive interaction. Methods for sustaining regular substantive interaction should be integrated into curriculum documents for any direct assessment CBE program.

II.3.15 Chancellor's Office Approval for Direct Assessment CBE Programs

Direct assessment CBE programs adhere to competency-level and program-level approval standards and processes established in Title 5, §§ 55270.2 - 55270.4. Direct assessment CBE programs are vetted through local curriculum approval processes and are required to provide evidence that competencies, assessments, and instructional content are of significant scope and intensity to promote academic engagement in accordance with § 55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses. Colleges may approach how they document these standards for direct assessment in various ways such as creating “competency sets” or “curriculum outlines” that collate related competencies and their associated learning objectives, content, standard of mastery, and other elements unique to direct assessment instruction. Colleges may alternatively create an addendum to an existing course that defines the competencies and the instructional strategies to be used when the curriculum is taught in a direct assessment program.

Per Title 5, § 55270.2, direct assessment CBE programs must submit a Direct Assessment Competency-Based Education Program Map (program map) to the Chancellor's Office. The program map includes elements which have been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Title 5 § 55061 and for certificates in accordance with § 55070.2. The word “module” is used in the map requirements, which can create confusion. In this context, the word module is defined in § 55270.1 as “a curriculum framework for the delivery of learning and assessments tied to measurable competencies leading to mastery. Modules are organized, bundled, and sequenced within a program.”

The program map shall include the following components:

- The name of the proposed program.
- The catalog description of the proposed program.
- A list of all modules to be included in the program, related competencies, and credit hour equivalencies, as referenced in section 55270.7, inclusive of documentation verifying use of the Chancellor's Office approved methodology to determine the number of credit or clock hours to which the program is equivalent, consistent with accrediting agency requirements.
- A description of each module within a program that includes the discipline, subdiscipline, competency outcome statements, competency description, learning objectives, topics of study, learning activities, method for substantive faculty interaction, and documentation of the method of assessment including any formative assessment assignments and summative assessment rubrics.
- A description of faculty and staff roles and responsibilities.
- The methodology used to develop competencies.
- The educational outcomes and specific objectives of the proposed program.
- An explanation of how the program is appropriate to the objectives and conditions

of community college education in California and how it is consistent and aligns with system wide goals.

- The need for and availability of the following resources shall be determined in relation to the proposed program:
 - Adequate or proposed financial support, including a description of how student's eligible for Title IV HEA program funds has been excluded from consideration when based on prior learning;
 - Qualified faculty consistent with the published disciplines list;
 - Library and media center resources; and
 - Access to technology and low- to no-cost digital content.
- An explanation of how student support services will be adapted and integrated within competencies and modules to be delivered in-person or online.
- An outreach strategy that demonstrates a commitment to enroll historically underserved and minoritized students, particularly those identified in the college or districts' Student Equity Plan as being disproportionately impacted pursuant to Education Code Section 78220.
- An evaluation plan which includes review, assessment, and evaluation of the outreach strategy required in subparagraph (11), and of student outcomes that focuses on closing historical equity gaps.
- A professional development plan for faculty and staff designed to foster effective implementation of competency-based education, in accordance with equity-oriented and culturally responsive principles and practices determined in consultation with equity practitioners; and
- All documentation submitted to the institutional accrediting agency, and to the US Department of Education in accordance with Section 668.10 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (where applicable).

The DACBE Program Approval Form

Title 5, § 55270.2 require all colleges to obtain Chancellor's Office approval of their direct assessment CBE programs prior to a district claiming state apportionment. Colleges must submit a program for Chancellor's Office approval by completing a "DACBE Program Approval Form" via email to CBE@CCCCO.EDU with 'DA-CBE Program Approval Form' in the subject line. The "DACBE Program Approval Form" and email includes all elements listed in the program map, including a description of the student competency learning journey for review.

To meet this criterion, each college will submit full learning journeys for the number of competencies that equate to six credits. For example, a college may have two competencies each deemed equivalent to 1.5 credits, which totals to be equivalent to three credits. Or a college may have six competencies each determined to be equivalent to one credit and therefore would submit six competencies. In addition, the submitted competencies should represent different phases in the progression of the student learning journey (i.e., beginning, middle or end of the program). The colleges will submit competencies that represent two phases of the program, one earlier in the program and one later in the program. When submitting the early and later competencies please provide information on how the level of learning or depth of learning is aligned from early to later.

Once a college has one approved DACBE program, the college does not need to submit a DACBE Program Approval Form for subsequent programs at the same level of award or lower. However, colleges will submit subsequent program information into COCI.

Program Approval by the Institutional or Programmatic Accreditor

California community colleges accredited by The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) are required to submit a Substantive Change proposal for approval to offer competency-based education programs, whether the program is credit-based, direct assessment, or a hybrid approach. For direct assessment programs, a substantive change process must be completed to establish and document a methodology to reasonably equate the direct assessment program to credit or clock hours.

Colleges accredited by an agency other than ACCJC or with an additional programmatic accreditor should consult with that accreditor to determine approval requirements. To fulfill this requirement of the program map, colleges must submit formal notice from their accrediting agency or agencies that the college has been approved for direct assessment under that organization's process for approval with the DACBE Program Approval Form. Accreditor approvals are required prior to Chancellor's Office approval.

United States Department of Education Approval

Credit-hour or clock-hour competency-based programs can be accommodated under current Title IV funding statutory and regulatory provisions; however, direct assessment programs require an additional approval step by the U.S. Department of Education. Prior to offering federal financial aid for direct assessment programs, colleges shall acquire documentation confirming approval to offer direct assessment instruction required by the US Department of Education in accordance with Section 668.10 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (where applicable) and submit that approval to the Chancellor's Office. To fulfill this requirement, colleges must submit documentation that the program is included in its Application to Participate in the Federal Student Financial Aid Programs (E-App) and the college has been designated as eligible to participate in federal student financial aid programs. This documentation must be submitted to the Chancellor's Office via email to CBE@CCCCO.EDU with 'DA-CBE Program Approval – Title IV Participation' in the subject line.

II.3.16 Grading Policy

The grading policy for a direct assessment CBE program is defined in Title 5, § 55270.8. Academic Record Symbols and Grade Point Average. Mastery symbols are used to indicate a student has progressed through the curriculum and each symbol carries a quantitative value for purposes of calculating a grade point average.

Mastery symbols defined in regulations for direct assessment CBE programs include the following:

M = Mastery – obtaining at minimum 80 percent of the summative assessment

M+ = Mastery with Distinction - obtaining at minimum 90 percent on the summative assessment

Colleges may develop additional mastery symbols above the mastery level to indicate varying levels of performance required for individual competencies.

Community college districts may authorize the use, under the provisions in § 55270.8, of only the following non-evaluative symbols, in addition to those outlined in section 55023, subdivision (e):

PW = Progress Withdrawal - demonstration of mastery not met after the maximum number of summative assessments attempted

Course-based competency-based education relies on the Carnegie Unit and therefore uses a traditional grading system defined in Title 5 § 55023.

II.3.17 Transcripts

Per Title 5, § 55270.8, students enrolled in a direct assessment CBE program must be provided with a competency-based transcript that details the student's mastered competencies completed in the direct assessment CBE program and a credit-hour equivalency transcript documenting completion or progress in credit-bearing courses that have been cross walked to the competency curriculum. These transcript notations may appear on a single document or in separate documents.

The purpose of the dual transcripts to provide students with a competency-based transcript that can be used with potential employers to communicate the scope and breadth of the student's mastery of competencies. An effective direct assessment CBE program will provide guidance for students on how to use their competency transcript. It also provides students with a traditional credit-hour transcript based on a crosswalk between a competency set and an equivalent credit-bearing course to facilitate transfer of credit to other higher education institutions.

PART III: NONCREDIT CURRICULUM



SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO NONCREDIT PROGRAM AND COURSE APPROVAL

- History and Philosophy
- Legal Authority
- Development Criteria
- Open Courses
- Noncredit Curriculum Regulations

III.1.1 History and Philosophy

Noncredit instruction evolved from the first adult school in California in 1856. It was established by the San Francisco Board of Education, followed by Oakland in 1871, Sacramento in 1872, and Los Angeles in 1887. Adult Education has some roots in the military. During World War II (1939-1945), thousands of members of the armed forces left high school early to serve their country. The General Education Development, or GED, was created to give military service members a chance to earn their high school equivalency and it is still used today as a pathway to pursue a better job and enroll in college. In the 1970s, the California Department of Education (CDE) played a critical role in the national competency-based adult education movement which is built upon the adult learning theory of andragogy. In 1974, the CDE sponsored the first statewide Competency-Based Adult Education conference in San Diego that attracted educators from several states.

For decades, California legislation authorized individual school districts to offer postsecondary courses and provided funding to these independent districts. Prior to the modern community college system, adult education was a responsibility of the State Board of Education. When the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges was created by the Legislature in 1968, this action formally established the community college district system, and approval of curriculum transferred to the new Board as part of its responsibility to oversee districts. While some adult education is still provided by K-12 school districts, the community colleges now offer a far wider range of adult education in the form of noncredit courses and programs and community service offerings. California continues to affirm the importance of community college adult and noncredit curriculum in legislation. Education Code section 84756 states that “It is the intent of the Legislature that community college districts with noncredit programs recognize the importance of noncredit programs and that they will continue to support these offerings.”

The nature of Noncredit Education inherently lends itself to the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA). The benefits of noncredit curriculum for community college students are many. Vulnerable, marginalized and underserved students can access a variety of tuition free courses in ten instructional areas to include English as a Second Language (ESL), immigrant education, elementary and secondary basic skills, health and safety, substantial disabilities, parenting, home economics, courses for older adults, short term vocational programs, and workforce preparation. Supervised tutoring and learning assistance may also be offered as noncredit courses. Students facing economic barriers, systemic inequities, historical challenges, or the lack of preparation/basic support, can enter the college community through noncredit education to enhance their capacity for college readiness, career preparation and skills to successfully navigate the systems that impact them in college, community and civic life.

Noncredit courses are tuition free; thereby, providing equitable options for students who do not qualify for financial aid. Noncredit courses focus on skill attainment, measuring student performance with pass, satisfactory progress, no pass, or letter grades (Title 5, § 55023). Unlike credit courses, students can take noncredit courses multiple times to achieve mastery of the content. Many noncredit courses are offered online as Distance Education (DE) for students with limited time or resources. Noncredit courses can be offered as open entry/open exit for even more flexibility.

Noncredit programs and courses often serve as a first point of entry for those who are underserved in a community, as well as a transition point to prepare students for credit instruction and entry into the workforce, providing vulnerable populations a connection to the campus and to credit-bearing, guided pathways. Noncredit instruction is especially important for students who are the first in their family to attend college, for those who are underprepared for college-level coursework, and for those who are not native English speakers, among others. Noncredit courses are accessible to nearly all students and can serve as skill building courses leading to collegiate curriculum. Noncredit courses can also serve as a bridge to career pathways through preparation, hands-on training, and certification in short- term vocational programs and work experience.

III.1.2 Legal Authority

The Board of Governors, by statute, has statewide responsibility for approving and chaptering all new instructional noncredit programs in community colleges. This mandate is one of the earliest and most basic legislative charges to the Board. California Education Code Title 3, Division 7, Part 43, California Community Colleges, lays out the requirements of the Board of Governors, the district governing boards, and other agencies as determined by law, including curriculum responsibilities:

70901: Board of governors; duties; rules and regulations; delegation; consultation

(a) The Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges shall . . .

perform the following functions:...

(b)(1) Establish minimum standards as required by law, including but not limited to, the following:

(b)(1)(D) Minimum standards for credit and noncredit classes.

(b)(6)(A) Establish minimum conditions entitling districts to receive state aid for support of community colleges

(b)(10) 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.

(c) Subject to and in furtherance of, subdivision (a), the board of governors shall have full authority to adopt rules and regulations necessary and proper to execute the functions specified in this section as well as other functions that the board of governors is expressly authorized by statute to regulate.

The Board of Governors produced the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 6 California Community Colleges to comply with the Board's legislative mandate to "adopt rules and regulations necessary and proper to execute the functions specified..." in sections 70900 et sec. Title 5, Division 6 encompasses the statutory requirements levied on the Board of Governors, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and community college districts to operate the California community college system. All noncredit as well as credit course and program policies and procedures are included in this document.

The Legislature establishes the funding allowances for districts who offer approved courses and programs. Ed Code section 84750.5 specifies the separate funding rates for noncredit courses in section (d)(3). Districts can claim apportionment for both individual noncredit courses and courses associated with noncredit programs (which are discussed further in this section).

To facilitate coordinated efforts between local and system responsibilities and curriculum processes, in 2004, the Chancellor's Office developed the System Advisory Committee on Curriculum (SACC), which in 2016 was renamed the California Community Colleges Curriculum Committee (5C) to more accurately reflect its charter. The committee, consisting of college faculty, staff, students, administrators and Chancellor's Office representatives, provides a collaborative forum for system-level discussions pertaining to curriculum to guide related Chancellor's Office policies and practices. Both credit and noncredit courses, programs, and related topics are addressed and recommendations made to the Board of Governors as needed. Minutes and recommendations from these meetings are posted on the Chancellor's Office website.

Minimum Conditions

Minimum Conditions are selected areas of regulations that may result in denial or reduction of state aid if violated. These minimum conditions are contained in Title 5, § 51000- 51027. The Minimum Condition requirement for community college curriculum is as follows:

51021: Curriculum

Each community college shall establish such programs of education and courses as will permit the realization of the objectives and functions of the community college. All courses shall be approved by the Chancellor in the manner provided in Subchapter 1 (commencing with section 55000) of Chapter 6.

While the Chancellor is responsible for establishing the manner in which curriculum is approved, both California Education Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, grant other specific authority for the approval of certain types of curriculum to district governing boards, without requiring separate approval by the Board of Governors through the

Chancellor's Office. The authority of district governing boards to approve courses without separate approval from the Board of Governors or the Chancellor is established in Education Code § 70902(b)(2), which states that, "The [district] governing board shall establish policies for, and approve, individual courses that are offered in approved educational programs without referral to the board of governors." Title 5, § 55150, Approval of Noncredit Courses and Programs, specifies the responsibilities of the governing board of each community college district for establishing policies for, and approving noncredit courses. This section further establishes each district's responsibilities for approving noncredit educational programs and the process for submitting these courses and programs to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering. Ultimately, the Chancellor has the authority to conduct reviews of these courses and programs, and limit or terminate a district's ability to approve or offer noncredit courses if the district fails to comply with statutory requirements. Taken together, these statutes and regulations underscore the complementary, but distinct, roles and authorities for various components of the California Community Colleges system.

Chancellor's Office Curriculum Review

California Education Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, provides the mandate on the content of program and course proposals. The Chancellor's Office reviews community college proposals pursuant to Title 5 regulations. All courses and programs offered by a college, eligible for apportionment and meeting the specifications of title 5 are submitted to the Chancellor's Office for chaptering in the Chancellor's office curriculum inventory system.

Annual Course and Program Certification

Every college is required to submit an Annual Course and Program Certification form that is signed by the college Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Instructional Officer (CIO), Academic Senate President, and Faculty Curriculum Chair in order to be eligible for automated chaptering of designated courses and programs. Each September, the Chancellor's Office will provide a memo to the colleges indicating which courses and programs may be certified for automated chaptering, along with the Annual Course and Program Certification form. The colleges must annually certify noncredit as well as credit course and program approval to continue automated chaptering.

Colleges that receive Chancellor's Office chaptering of a new noncredit program or course are authorized to:

- Publish the description of a new program or course in the catalog or publicize a new program or course in other ways (CCR, Title 5, § 55005).
- Collect state apportionment for student attendance (Ed. Code § 87450.4 and 87450.5; CCR, Title 5, §§ 55150, 55151 and 58050). Colleges that do not secure the required program approval are subject to loss of revenues through audit or administrative action.
- Award a certificate with the designated title and require specific courses for the completion of a certificate (Ed. Code, §§ 70901(b)(10) and 70902(b)(2)).
- Collect Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI) funding if the [Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS) has also formally approved a proposed apprenticeship program.

Development Criteria

Five criteria are used by the Chancellor's Office to review and chapter both credit and noncredit programs and courses that are subject to Chancellor's Office review. They were derived from statute, regulation, intersegmental agreements, guidelines provided by transfer institutions and industry, recommendations of accrediting institutions, and the standards of good practice established in the field of curriculum design.

These criteria have been endorsed by the community college system as an integral part of the best practice for curriculum development.

The five criteria are as follows:

- A. Appropriateness to Mission
- B. Need
- C. Curriculum Standards
- D. Adequate Resources
- E. Compliance
- F. Equity & Accessibility

Full explanations of these criteria are provided in Part 1, Section 2 of this Handbook.

Open Courses

Title 5, § 51006, requires colleges to publish a statement in the official catalog and schedule of classes that all course sections or classes for which state aid is awarded are open to enrollment and participation by any person admitted to the college. The college may only restrict enrollment in a noncredit course when the restriction is specifically required by statute or legislation. This section also allows colleges to require that students meet advisories that have been established pursuant to Title 5, § 55003. Situations where enrollment limitation may be allowed are discussed more specifically in Title 5, § 58106.

See Part 1, Section 2 of this Handbook for additional details.

Noncredit Curriculum Regulations

Noncredit instruction is one of several educational options authorized by Ed Code section 84757 to be offered within the California community college system. The legal parameters and standards for noncredit courses and programs are established in the following sections of Education Code and California Code of Regulations, Title 5. The most current version of each can be found by conducting an online search.

Noncredit curriculum is defined in Title 5, § 55002(b): “Noncredit courses are recommended by the curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a course meeting the needs of enrolled students.”

Table 14 — Mandates and Regulations Related to Noncredit Course Standards and Approval

Authority	Topic
Ed. Code, § 66010.4(a)(1)	Missions and Functions of California Community Colleges
Ed. Code, § 70901(b)(1)(D)	Minimum Standards for Credit and Noncredit Courses
Ed. Code, § 78401(a)	Governing Board of any community college district’s authority to maintain and establish courses for adults

Authority	Topic
Ed. Code, § 79144 - 79149.2	Apprenticeship Programs
Ed. Code, § 84750.5	Annual Budget Requests
Ed. Code, § 84757(a)(1-9)	Noncredit Courses Eligible for Funding
Ed. Code, § 84760.5	Attendance Hours Generated by Instruction in Career Development and College Preparation
Ed. Code, § 84810.5(a)(2)	Inmate Education Programs
Title 5, § 51006	Open Course Regulations
Title 5, § 53200	Definitions (Faculty, Academic Senate, Academic and Professional Matters, and Consult Collegially)
Title 5, § 53412	Minimum Qualifications for Instructors of Noncredit Courses
Title 5, § 53414(e)(1-4)	Minimum Qualifications for Disabled Students Programs and Services Employees
Title 5, § 55000	Definitions
Title 5, § 55000(g)	Contract Course
Title 5, § 55001	Curriculum Committee
Title 5, § 55001.5	Course Outlines of Record
Title 5, § 55002	Standards and Criteria for Courses
Title 5, § 55002(b)(1-2)	Standards and Criteria for Courses (b) (Noncredit Course Standards)
Title 5, § 55003	Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites and Advisories o Recommended Preparation.
Title 5, § 55021	Grading Policies
Title 5, §§ 55040-55046	Course Repeatability Regulations
Title 5, § 55050	Credit for Prior Learning
Title 5, § 55064	Acceptance of Noncredit Courses
Title 5, § 55100	Course Approval
Title 5, § 55150	Approval of Noncredit Courses and Programs
Title 5, § 55151	Career Development and College Preparation
Title 5, § 55154	Adult High School Diploma Programs
Title 5, § 55155	Noncredit Certificates
Title 5, §§ 55200-55210	Distance Education
Title 5, § 55220	Excursions and Field Trips
Title 5, § 55222	Provision of Medical or Hospital Service for Students
Title 5, § 55260-3	Correspondence Education

Authority	Topic
Title 5, § 56028	Educational Assistance Class Instruction
Title 5, § 58003.1(f)(2)	Full-time Equivalent Student; Computation
Title 5, § 58006	Application of Actual Student Contact Hours of Attendance Procedures
Title 5, § 58007	Noncredit Courses
Title 5, § 58009	Application of Alternative Attendance Procedures for Independent Study, Correspondence, Work Experience and Certain Distance Education Courses
Title 5, § 58051	Reports for Apportionment; Prohibited Classes
Title 5, § 58102	Course Description
Title 5, § 58104	Dissemination of Information
Title 5, § 58106	Limitations on Enrollment
Title 5, § 58130	Noncredit Classes in Dancing of Recreational Physical Education; State Aid or Apportionment for Attendance
Title 5, § 58160	Noncredit Course Funding
Title 5, § 58161.7	Recommendations Regarding Repetition of Noncredit Courses and Related Issues
Title 5, § 58164	Open Entry/Open Exit Courses
Title 5, § 58168	Criteria for Supervised Tutoring
Title 5, § 58172	Learning Assistance
Title 5, § 58760	Description of Noncredit Activities
Title 5, § 58762	Noncredit Activities
Title 5, § 55250	Purpose and Definition of Work Experience Education

SECTION 2: NONCREDIT COURSE CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

- Noncredit Course Criteria
- Criteria for Data Elements
- Noncredit Course Standards

III.2.1 Noncredit Course Criteria

This section provides an overview of the criteria used by the Chancellor's Office staff in reviewing noncredit course submissions. These criteria are derived from the curriculum standards established in title 5 section 55000 et. seq., and explained in the noncredit course standards section of this handbook.

The Noncredit Course

A noncredit course is defined in Title 5 section 55002(b): "Noncredit courses are recommended by the curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a course meeting the needs of enrolled students."

Noncredit Course Criteria

Noncredit courses are classified into ten legislated instructional areas as derived from Ed Code section 84757 and defined in title 5 section 55151. The placement of a course in a given instructional area is driven by the course objectives and target population to be served.

Refer to the Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems Data Element Dictionary (DED) for a list of TOP codes (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) assigned to each noncredit category (CB22) below. The DED can be found on the Chancellor's Office website at <https://webdata.cccco.edu/ded/cb/cb.htm>.

The 10 instructional areas are:

1. English as a Second Language (ESL)*
2. Immigrant Education
3. Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills*
4. Health and Safety
5. Substantial Disabilities
6. Parenting
7. Home Economics
8. Courses for Older Adults
9. Short-term Vocational Programs*
10. Workforce Preparation*

In addition, community colleges can claim apportionment for supervised tutoring and learning assistance subject to regulations under Title 5, § 58168 and 58172.

*Courses in English as a Second Language, Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills, Short-term Vocational Programs, and Workforce Preparation noncredit courses are eligible for career development and college preparation ("CDCP") enhanced funding

when approved in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory policies. Refer to the Noncredit Career Development and College Preparation section of the PCAH for additional information on noncredit CDCP certificate programs. (See title 5 Section 55151 and Ed. Code § 84757(a)(3)).

- 1. English as a Second Language (ESL)** courses provide instruction in the English language to adult, non-native English speakers with varied academic, career technical, and personal goals. ESL courses include, but are not limited to: skills or competencies needed to live in society; skills and competencies needed to succeed in an academic program; preparation for students to enter career and technical programs at the community colleges; programs focusing on skills parents need to help their children learn to read and succeed in society; skills needed to fully participate in the United States civic society or to fulfill naturalization requirements; ESL-based skills and competencies in computer software, hardware, and other digital information resources; and functional language skills.
- 2. Immigrant education** courses are designed for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation courses in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem-solving skills, and other classes required for preparation to participate in job-specific technical writing. Instructional courses and programs should support the intent of the Immigrant Workforce Preparation Act. In those cases where the purpose of the course is to serve a special population, (e.g., older adults, immigrants, persons with substantial disabilities, parents), the catalog description must demonstrate that the course is designed to meet the interests and needs of that target population.
- 3. Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills** includes basic skills academic courses such as reading, mathematics, and language arts. Basic skills courses provide instruction for individuals in elementary and secondary-level reading, writing, computation, and problem-solving skills in order to assist them in achieving their academic, career, and personal goals. Elementary-level coursework addresses the content and proficiencies at levels through the eighth grade. Secondary-level coursework focuses on the content and proficiencies at levels through the twelfth grade. High school diploma programs include pre-transfer level courses in the sciences, social sciences, and arts.
- 4. Health and Safety** courses focus on lifelong education to promote health, safety, and the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Courses and programs in health and safety provide colleges with the opportunities to network or partner with other public welfare and health organizations.
- 5. Substantial Disabilities** courses are designed to provide individuals with life-skill proficiencies essential to the fulfillment of academic, career technical, and personal goals. A student with a disability is a person who has a verified disability which limits one or more major life activities, as defined in 28 Code of Federal Regulations § 35.104, resulting in an educational limitation as defined in Title 5, § 56001. Courses

for students with substantial disabilities are an “assistance class” according to title 5 section 56028. Educational Assistance Classes are instructional activities designed to address the educational limitations of students with disabilities who would be unable to substantially benefit from regular college classes even with appropriate support services or accommodations. Such classes shall be open to enrollment of students who do not have disabilities; however, to qualify as a special class, a majority of those enrolled in the class must be students with disabilities. In those cases where the purpose of the course is to serve a special population, (e.g., older adults, immigrants, persons with substantial disabilities, parents), the catalog description must demonstrate that the course is designed to meet the interests and needs of that target population.

6. **Parenting** includes courses and programs specifically designed to offer lifelong education in parenting, child development, and family relations in order to enhance the quality of home, family, career, and community life. Instructional areas may include, but are not limited to the following: ages and stages of child growth and development; family systems; health nutrition and safety; family resources and roles; family literacy; fostering and assisting with children’s education; guiding and supporting children; and court-ordered parenting education. In those cases where the purpose of the course is to serve a special population, (e.g., older adults, immigrants, persons with substantial disabilities, parents), the catalog description must demonstrate that the course is designed to meet the interests and needs of that target population.
7. **Home Economics** or family and consumer sciences includes courses and programs designed to offer lifelong education to enhance the quality of home, family, and career and community life. This area of instruction provides educational opportunities that respond to human needs in preparing individuals for employment, advanced study, consumer decision making, and lifelong learning. Instruction in family and consumer sciences emphasizes the value of homemaking. The focus of the categories of coursework includes, but is not limited to, child development, family studies and gerontology, fashion, textiles, interior design and merchandising, life management, nutrition and foods, and hospitality and culinary arts.
8. **Courses for Older Adults** offer lifelong education that provides opportunities for personal growth and development, community involvement, skills for mental and physical well-being, and economic self-sufficiency. Courses in the category of noncredit instruction for older adults may include, but are not limited to, health courses focusing on physical and mental processes of aging, changes that occur later in life, and steps to be taken to maintain independence in daily activities; consumer resources, self-management and entitlement; creative expression and communication; or family, community, and global involvement. In those cases where the purpose of the course is to serve a special population, (e.g., older adults, immigrants, persons with substantial disabilities, parents), the catalog description must demonstrate that the course is designed to meet the interests and needs of that target population.

9. Short-term Vocational Programs are designed for high employment potential that lead to a career-technical objective, or a certificate or award directly related to employment. Short-term vocational programs should be designed to: improve employability; provide job placement opportunities; or prepare students for college-level coursework or transfer to a four-year degree program. They shall also be mission appropriate (Ed. Code § 66010.4(a)(1)), meet a documented labor market demand, ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of other employment training programs in the region, demonstrate effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of students, and be reviewed in the institution's program review process every two years. Generally, noncredit short-term vocational educational programs are designed in a manner that allows for a completion time frame of one year or less.

10. Workforce Preparation courses provide instruction for speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making, problem-solving, and universal skills that are necessary to participate in job-specific technical training in any field.

In addition to the ten eligible areas, Title 5, §§ 58168, 58172 authorize community colleges to claim apportionment for supervised tutoring and learning assistance under noncredit. Refer to the section on noncredit supplemental learning assistance and tutoring, below, for specific guidelines in these areas.

Criteria for Noncredit Course Submissions

Local districts are responsible for ensuring that the submitted Course Outline of Record (COR) contains all required elements as specified in section 55002 and that local approval is consistent with all standards in Title 5, § 55000 et seq. The Chancellor's Office chapters and periodically reviews noncredit course submissions to ensure that courses meet these standards and to validate that the associated data elements for each course are correct and compliant with regulations. The review criteria used by the Chancellor's Office staff are based on the standards for course curriculum established in Title 5 and explained in the Noncredit

Course Standards section of this Handbook. Submission and approval of noncredit courses is conducted through review of the following components submitted by local colleges:

- Completed Curriculum Inventory Proposal Fields for Data Elements. Refer to the [Chancellor's Office Management Information System Data Element Dictionary](https://webdata.cccco.edu/ded/ded.htm) (DED) for the complete set of elements associated with courses and programs, at <https://webdata.cccco.edu/ded/ded.htm>.
- COR meeting the standards in Title 5, § 55002, and approved by the district governing board. Additional COR elements are required for Apprenticeship and DE courses. See sections on apprenticeship and DE, below for additional information on these requirements. DE courses also require an Addendum. See the section on DE, above.

Criteria for Data Elements

The following data elements are entered into the Chancellor’s Office curriculum inventory (COCI) for credit and noncredit courses and validated via technology during the submission review process. The Data Element Dictionary (DED) identifies some of these data elements as Course Basic (CB) codes. Many course elements require CB codes. Other course elements, such as District Governing Board Approval Date and Catalog Description, do not require CB codes but are critical components of the submission and chaptering process. Entry errors associated with these elements can result in submission being returned to the college for revisions as well as in flags when Chancellor’s Office staff conducts periodic reviews of approved and chaptered curriculum approved by District Governing Boards and chaptered via the Chancellor’s Office curriculum.

Table 15 — Data Elements

DED Number	Data Element Name
CB00	Course Control Number (this number is assigned by the Chancellor’s Office, it is not necessary for new courses)
CB01	Department Number
CB02	Course Title
CB03	TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027)
CB04	Credit Status
CB05	Transfer Status
CB08	Basic Skills Status
CB09	SAM Priority Code
CB10	Work Experience Education
CB11	Course Classification Status
CB13	Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class)
CB21	Course Prior to College Level

DED Number	Data Element Name
CB22	Noncredit Category
CB23	Funding Agency Category
CB24	Course Program Status
CB25	Course General Education Status
CB26	Course Support Course Status
CB27	Course Upper Division Status

CB01: Department Number

This identifier should be structured to include an abbreviation of the department to which the course belongs, followed by the numbers and/or letters used to distinguish it from other courses in the same department. It is the identifier that occurs on the student's academic transcript, for example, ESL501. The department number must be entered exactly as it is entered into the college and/or district's enterprise resource system. If there are no spaces between the department and course number, do not add a space in the COCI. **Inconsistencies in data entry will impact MIS reporting.**

CB02: Course Title

This data element records the course title exactly as it appears in the COR and the college catalog. If the college uses long and short titles, enter the long title. This field is limited to a maximum of 68 characters including punctuation and spaces, and the title must be different from what is entered in CB01. Inconsistencies in data entry will impact MIS reporting.

CB03: TOP Code

(This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027)

This field is for recording the appropriate TOP Code for the course. An asterisk (*) in this field denotes a vocational TOP Code. A link to the [Taxonomy of Programs \(TOP\) Code Manual](https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/curriculum/final-top-code-manual-2023edit-4-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=28074BFE9915B49A7688B8BDEF0DB7E55FEB3A2C) (<https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/curriculum/final-top-code-manual-2023edit-4-a11y.pdf?la=en&hash=28074BFE9915B49A7688B8BDEF0DB7E55FEB3A2C>) is available on the Chancellor's Office website, under [Educational Services and Support Curriculum and Instruction page](#).

The TOP Code should be assigned according to the content and outcomes of the course and must conform closely to the TOP Code given to similar courses at other colleges around the state. The TOP Code reflects the main discipline or subject matter and is not based on local departmental structure, faculty qualifications, or budget groupings. A college that has difficulty identifying the most appropriate TOP Code should contact the Chancellor's Office; if the proposed TOP Code does not seem appropriate, the Chancellor's Office will advise the college.

CB04: Credit Status

This element indicates the credit status of a course (defined in CCR, title 5, § 55002). All noncredit courses will select "N" (noncredit) in this field, indicating the course is noncredit.

CB05: Transfer Status

This element indicates the transfer status of a course. The Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system automatically populates this field with C-Not Transferable, the only available option for noncredit courses.

CB08: Basic Skills Status

The basic skills status is indicated as either B (Course is a basic skills course) or N (course is not a basic skills course). This data element is related to the CB21 and CB22 data fields, discussed below.

CB09: Student Accountability Model (SAM) Priority Code

This element is used to indicate the degree to which a course is occupational, and to assist in identifying course grouping in occupational programs. This element corresponds with the CB03 TOP Code (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) selected. For example, if a vocational TOP Code is selected as denoted by an asterisk (*), then CB09: SAM Priority Code must equal A (Apprenticeship), B (Advanced Occupational), C (Clearly Occupational), or D (Possibly Occupational), and respectively cannot equal E (Non-occupational).

CB10: Work Experience Education

This element indicates whether the course is part of a work experience education program, according to the provisions of title 5, § 55252.

CB11: Course Classification Status

This element classifies a course in accordance with its primary objective. Noncredit courses fall into one of three categories, two of which are associated with approved noncredit programs, discussed below:

J – Workforce preparations Enhanced Funding. Use code “J” if the course is part of an approved noncredit program in the area of Workforce Preparation authorized by title 5 section 55151

K – Other noncredit Enhanced Funding. Use code “K” if the course has been approved for noncredit enhanced funding but does not meet the criteria for “J” as authorized by title 5 section 55151

L – Non-enhanced Funding. Use code “L” if the course has not been approved for noncredit enhanced funding under title 5 section 55151

These codes identify courses eligible to receive enhanced funding associated with programs approved as a Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) as authorized by Ed Code section 84750.5 and 84760.5, and defined in title 5 section 55151.

Courses that are not part of a CDCP program must use the code of L when submitting the proposal. No course is authorized to claim enhanced apportionment as CB11 J or K until the course is part of an approved CDCP program.

CB13: Educational Assistance Class Instruction (Approved Special Class)

This data element indicates whether the course is “educational assistance class instruction” according to the provisions of title 5, § 56028, and will be coded “S” (Course is designated as an approved special class for students with disabilities) or “N” (Course is not a special class).

CB21: Prior Transfer Level

This element indicates the course's prior to college (transfer) level status for English writing/reading, ESL, and mathematics/quantitative reasoning courses. The English writing/reading, mathematics/quantitative reasoning, and ESL rubrics were updated in 2019. These rubrics were adopted by the ASCCC and can be found on the ASCCC website as resolution 09.01 S19 "Course Basic (CB) 21 Rubrics for Coding Course Outcomes" and resolution 09.04 F19 "English as a Second Language (ESL) Course Basic (CB) 21 Rubric Coding of Multiple Courses to the Same CB21 Competency". Indicate the relationship of the course to college level by selecting one of the following seven options:

- Y - Not applicable
- A - One level below transfer
- B - Two levels below transfer
- C - Three levels below transfer
- D - Four levels below transfer
- E - Five levels below transfer
- F - Six levels below transfer

The selected code must correspond with the CB08: Basic Skills Level, and the CB22: Noncredit Category, as well as with processing edit checks in the DED; please consult the DED for a complete listing of fidelity and integrity checks for this element.

CB22: Noncredit Category

This element classifies a noncredit course in accordance with its primary objective within the ten state-supported noncredit categories set forth in Education Code section 84757(a) and title 5 section 58160. Select the appropriate noncredit category for the course objectives:

- A - ESL
- B - Citizenship for Immigrants
- C - Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills
- D - Health and Safety
- E - Courses for Persons with Substantial Disabilities
- F - Parenting
- G - Home Economics
- H - Older Adults
- I - Short-term Vocational
- J - Workforce Preparation

A list of TOP codes (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) associated with each of these categories is included in the description of this data element. The proper coding of this data field is associated with the CB08, CB09, CB11, CB21 and CB24 data fields. Courses supporting transfer-level courses and supervised tutoring can be coded to CB22 “C.”

CB23: Funding Agency Category

This element describes whether or not a Chancellor’s Office Economic Development Grant was used to fully or partially develop a course and/or curriculum. Select one of the following three options:

A - primarily developed using Economic Development funds

B - partially developed using Economic Development Funds, exceeding 40% of total development costs

Y - not applicable

CB24: Course Program Status

This element indicates whether or not a course is part of an educational program as defined in title 5, § 55000. Select one of the two following options:

1. Program-applicable – the noncredit course is part of a grouping of courses or program that results in a certificate of completion or certificate of competency
2. Not Program-applicable – the noncredit course is not part of a grouping of courses or program that results in a certificate of completion or certificate of competency

Only certain courses can be considered program applicable as determined by title 5 section 55151. Courses that are a part of an CDCP program can be coded “1” - Program-applicable. This enables them to receive enhanced funding. A course becomes program applicable when it is approved as part of an approved CDCP program.

CB25: Course General Education Status

This element indicates whether a course fulfills general education requirements for mathematics/quantitative reasoning or English composition in the context of transfer, degree, and certificate programs.

CB26: Course Support Course

This element indicates whether a course is associated with another degree-applicable course for the purpose of providing the support necessary to complete the associated course.

CB27: Course Upper Division Status

This element indicates whether a course is an approved upper division course associated with a baccalaureate program. Courses are coded A (course is an upper division course) or N (course is not an upper division course).

This field is auto-populated with “N” denoting “course is not an upper division course”. The college will update this code when appropriate.

Course Hours

Course Hours Minimum

This field indicates the minimum number of contact hours for the course as a whole. The minimum contact hours stated in the COR is used for this field. This value does not include out-of-class hours. Enter the minimum number of regularly scheduled hours of instruction that are normally required for a student to achieve the course objectives, sufficiently covering the course scope and breadth of topic.

Course Hours Maximum

This field indicates the maximum number of contact hours of the course as a whole. The maximum contact hours stated in the COR is used for this field. This value does not include out-of-class hours. Enter the maximum number of regularly scheduled hours of instruction that are normally required for a student to achieve the course objectives, sufficiently covering the course scope and breadth of topics. This number must be greater than or equal to the number entered in the course hours minimum field.

Special Characteristics Code Descriptor (under review)

This code is used to identify special characteristics of the noncredit course. Select the appropriate characteristic(s) from the following seven options (if applicable):

- Learning Assistance – a form of supplemental instruction
- Bilingual Instruction – a system of instruction that builds upon the language skills of a pupil whose primary language is not English or derived from English
- Convalescent Setting – a course taught in a convalescent home, skilled nursing facility, residential care home, day care center, or nursing home
- Correctional Facility – a course taught either at or through a federal, state, or local correctional institution
- Apprenticeship – a course that provides related and supplemental instruction for apprenticeship and coordination of instruction with job experience, upon agreement with the program sponsor/employer and the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards, and the US Department of Labor if the College chooses.
- Persons of Substantial Disabilities – a course designed to serve persons with substantial disabilities
- Citizenship for Immigrants – a course designed to provide instruction and services in citizenship

District Governing Board Approval Date

This section requires the date that the district governing board, pursuant to title 5, §§ 55002 and 55100, originally approved the course.

Catalog Description

Enter the catalog description exactly as it appears in the COR and the college catalog.

Noncredit Course Standards

The Course Outline of Record for Noncredit Courses

All noncredit courses are required to have an official Course Outline of Record (COR) that meets the standards in title 5, § 55002 (b)(1) and § 55001.5. Current CORs must be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor.

The following COR components are required for noncredit courses (Title 5 § 55001.5 and §55002(b)(1)):

- Expected number of contact hours
- Expected number of outside of class hours
- Expected number of total student learning hours for the course
- Prerequisites, corequisites or advisories on recommended preparation (if any) for the course
- Title
- Catalog description
- Outcomes
- Objectives
- Content in terms of a specific body of knowledge
- Representative textbooks including open educational resources that meet universal design course standards
- Types or examples of outside-of-class assignments, including reading and writing assignments
- Types or examples of instructional methodology
- Types or examples of methods of evaluation
- The discipline or disciplines assigned to the course pursuant to section 53407
- It is recommended that CORs include, at a minimum, the following elements:

It is recommended that CORs include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- Course number
- Status (credit, noncredit, or others)
- Enrollment limitations (if any)
- Repeatability
- Field Trips

These standards place the burden of rigor upon the curriculum committee to determine that course elements of the COR are appropriate to the intended students.

In addition to these components, Chancellor's Office chaptering of noncredit courses in the curriculum inventory system requires the submission of all MIS data elements listed above. While there is no regulatory requirement to list the data elements in the COR, best practice suggests that they be included as part of the local curriculum review and submission process, whether in the COR or on attachments to the COR.

For a detailed discussion of statutory requirements and recommended practices related to COR development refer to the ASCCC paper titled, "The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited (2017)", on the ASCCC website.

Contact Hours

This is the number of instructional hours normally required for a student to complete the course of study. Instructional hours should be sufficient to cover the scope and breadth of the course and to ensure student progress toward achieving the course objectives. Contact hours may be stated as a specific number or a range of minimum to maximum number of hours according to local practice. The contact hour identified in the COR should match the minimum and maximum contact hours shown in the COR as required by title 5 section 55002.

Standards for Approval of Noncredit Curriculum

Curriculum committees shall have a documented procedure to guarantee accessibility for every student to ensure individuals with disabilities can equally participate in learning through course outlines of record that reflect Universal Design for Learning strategies, which include multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to support learner variability and diversity per Title 55001(c). District board approval is required for each noncredit course that is chaptered in the Chancellor's office curriculum system. Local approval of noncredit courses must include review by a curriculum committee established in accordance with title 5, § 55002. The curriculum committee and district governing board must determine that the noncredit course meets the standards of title 5, §§ 55002, 55003, 55150, and all other applicable provisions of Title 5. These standards are explained in the ASCCC paper, "The Course Outline of Record: A Curriculum Reference Guide Revisited (2017)" on the ASCCC website. In addition, all noncredit courses must be appropriate to the mission of the California Community College system, as defined in Education Code § 66010.4, and must be consistent with the requirements of accrediting agencies. In addition, all noncredit courses

must be appropriate to the mission of the California Community College system, as defined in Education Code § 66010.4, and must be consistent with the requirements of accrediting agencies.

Requirements for district approval and Chancellor's office chaptering include the following:

- Local curriculum committee approval of all noncredit courses or grouping of courses constituting a program.
- The curriculum committee conducting the review has been established by mutual agreement between the college and/or district administration and the local academic senate. The committee is a committee of the local academic senate or a committee that includes primarily faculty who have training regarding rules, regulations, and local policies applicable to the approval of noncredit courses
- The curriculum committee recommends approval of the course only if the course meets all standards set forth in title 5 section 55001.5, 55002, and other portions of title 5 that apply.
- The COR serves as the official record of the noncredit course description, is maintained in the official college files, and is made available to each instructor. If additional attachments are required such as approval by DAS or a DE addendum, these documents are approved and kept on file.
- The COR indicates approval by the curriculum committee and other entities dependent upon local practice.
- All sections of the noncredit course are taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with the set of objectives and other specifications defined in the COR.
- The district governing board has approved all noncredit courses that qualify to be offered for state apportionment.
- For the purposes of noncredit state apportionment, noncredit courses fall within one of the categories listed in Education Code §§ 84757, 84750.5, and 84760.5 and are chaptered by the Chancellor's Office.

Other Topics and Standards in Noncredit Courses Conduct of Noncredit Courses

Conduct of Noncredit Courses

The conduct of noncredit courses is defined in title 5, § 55002(b)(2) Conduct of Course: "All course sections must be taught by qualified instructors, and taught in accordance with the elements specified in the course outline of record". All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor pursuant to Title 5, § 53412.

Repetition and Noncredit Courses

There are no specific limitations on noncredit course repetition. Noncredit repetition and multiple enrollments are defined as follows:

- Repetition in noncredit courses – the student has completed the maximum number of hours required for the course and re-enrolls and repeats the same course content.
- Re-enrollment in noncredit courses – a student has completed fewer than the maximum number of hours required for the course and re-enrolls in the same course during another term. The student then proceeds in the course and completes subsequent content or another portion or all of the required hours for the course.
- Multiple enrollments in noncredit courses – a student enrolls in more than one section of the same course during the same term to provide additional opportunity for instruction and mastery of skill of knowledge.
- Completion of noncredit courses – a student has participated in the course for the total number of hours specified on the course outline. The hours required for a noncredit course completion may be accumulated in one section during one term, over multiple terms or by enrolling in multiple sections during a single term or terms.

Grading Policy for Noncredit Courses

The grading policy for noncredit courses is defined in Title 5, § 55021(c): “The grading policy may provide for award of grades in noncredit courses, including courses which are part of a high school diploma program or may be accepted for high school credit by a high school.”

Acceptance of Noncredit Courses towards Requirements for an Associate Degree

Students may seek to receive credit for knowledge or skills acquired through completion of a noncredit course in accordance with title 5, § 55050. The governing board of each community college district shall establish and publish administrative procedures to implement Credit for Prior Learning, including credit by examination. These procedures shall assure all such examinations are established by faculty in accordance with the standards set out in Title 5, § 55050. Refer to your local credit by examination policy and procedure.

Apportionment and Noncredit Courses

State apportionment for noncredit courses is established in Ed Code sections 84757 and 84750.5. Title 5 section 58160 contains the list of eligible course categories established by statute and described in detail in the section above, titled Noncredit Course Criteria.

Title 5, § 58050 et. seq. explicitly states the conditions for claiming attendance in a course to qualify for state apportionment. The importance of adhering to these conditions cannot be overstated. Failure to comply can result in the loss of funding for the district or other actions as determined by state auditing standards.

Noncredit course attendance is determined by actual contact hours of enrollment as specified in Title 5 sections 58003.1 (e) and 58007. Typically and historically, noncredit courses have been offered as taught synchronously using what is commonly called “Positive Attendance” or where the student is present with the instructor for a specified period of time. title 5 section 55002(c)(2) requires the noncredit COR for all courses to include “...the number of contact hours normally required for a student to complete the course,...”. This value does not include outside of class instruction.

Contact hours of enrollment for noncredit is defined in title 5 section 58007 as “...the count of students present at each course meeting.” FTES is calculated for course funding purposes based on this value.

Noncredit FTES (for funding) can be computed using only two methods. The first method is described above and in more detail in Title 5 section 58007. The second method, Alternative Attendance Accounting Procedure for noncredit courses offered as Distance Education (DE) where instruction is delivered asynchronously and for noncredit independent study courses, districts must use the provisions of title 5 section 55003.1(f)(2) as summarized in the [Student Attendance Accounting Manual on the CCCCO website \(https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/College-Finance-and-Facilities-Planning/Fiscal-Standards-and-Accountability-Unit/Manuals\)](https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/College-Finance-and-Facilities-Planning/Fiscal-Standards-and-Accountability-Unit/Manuals) (SAAM), beginning on page 3-20.

Title 5, § 58130, clearly states, “[n]o state aid or apportionment may be claimed on account of the attendance of students in noncredit classes in dancing or recreational physical education.” While the courses may still be approved and offered under the current noncredit course approval policies, these courses may not be included in attendance data for apportionment purposes. Determining whether or not a course falls into these categories and deciding if a course should be added to the schedule is a matter of careful consideration for each campus. Respectively, an ongoing review of noncredit course offerings in the TOP Codes (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) of 0835.XX (Physical Education) or 1008.XX (Dance) is imperative. If a college chooses to offer these courses, they may not include the courses in its noncredit attendance calculations for the Apportionment Attendance Reports (CCFS-320) submitted to the Chancellor’s Office. According to Title 5, § 51006, each governing board of a community college district is required to adopt a policy or resolution stating “[t]he policy of this district is that, unless specifically exempted by statute or regulation, every course, course section, or class, reported for state aid, wherever offered and maintained by the district, shall be fully open to enrollment and participation by any person who has been admitted to the college(s) and who meets such prerequisites as may be established pursuant to section 55003 of division 6 of title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.” This policy must be available to students. It “shall be published in the official catalog, schedule of classes, and addenda to the schedule of classes for which full-time equivalent student (FTES) is reported for state apportionment.” Additionally, “a copy of the statement shall also be filed with the Chancellor.”

Title 5, § 58051.5(a), states “No community college district may claim for purposes of state apportionment any classes: ...(3) if such classes are not located in facilities clearly identified in such a manner, and established by appropriate procedures, to ensure that attendance

Noncredit and FTES and Computation of Enrollment

Attendance reporting procedures for noncredit courses are defined in title 5, § 58007, and the SAAM. See the section above, titled Apportionment and Noncredit Courses.

Noncredit Distance Education

Pursuant to title 5, §§ 55200-55208, and 58003.1(f)(2), noncredit courses may be offered via distance education. Title 5 specifies that course quality standards apply to distance education in the same manner as for all courses. For any noncredit course offered via DE, the COR or an addendum to the official COR must address how course outcomes will be achieved in a DE modality. The course design and all materials must be accessible to every student, including students with disabilities. The COR or addendum must also convey how the portion of instruction delivered by DE meets the requirement for regular and substantive interaction as specified in title 5 section 55204. The district uses its adopted curriculum approval process to evaluate DE offerings.

Substantive interaction is thus defined by Title 5 section 55204:

“(b) “Substantive interaction” means engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also includes at least two of the following:

- (1) Providing direct instruction;
 - (2) Assessing or providing feedback on a student’s coursework;
 - (3) Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
 - (4) Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
 - (5) Other instructional activities approved by the institution’s or program’s accrediting agency.
- (c) Regular interaction between a student and instructor(s) is ensured by, prior to the student’s completion of a course or competency:
- (1) Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and
 - (2) Monitoring the student’s academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.
- (d) Regular and substantive interaction is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.”

Noncredit Apprenticeship Courses

Noncredit Apprenticeships are regulated in multiple sections of state regulations and code, including Title 5, § 55250.5 and Labor Code sections 3070-3098. These regulations define an

apprenticeship, credit or noncredit, as preparation for any profession, trade, or craft that can be learned through a combination of supervised on-the-job training and off-the-job formal education. [The California Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS) within the California Department of Industrial Relations and the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges share responsibility for the approval of noncredit apprenticeship programs. This shared responsibility has created a partnership for developing apprenticeship programs that includes the community college and the employer, also known as the program sponsor.

The DAS approves matters dealing with on-the-job instruction and maintains the standards. Both the California Apprenticeship Law and the annual California Budget Act refer to the off-the-job formal education as related and supplemental instruction (RSI). Providing RSI is the job of the community colleges, adult schools, and regional occupational program centers. In addition, Labor Code section 3074 states that apprenticeship RSI shall be the responsibility of and be provided by state and local boards in charge of CTE in partnership with the program sponsor, who is normally the employer. The noncredit programs or courses must be chaptered by the Chancellor's Office for both curriculum and RSI funding (note: CDCP in the short-term vocational instructional domain requires Chancellor's Office approval).

Required documentation must be signed by the Chief of the DAS (or designee) to indicate that the apprenticeship has been approved, including the specific campus approved for the RSI, apprenticeship title, file number, and sponsor contact information. Justification of the need for any new CTE programs, including apprenticeships, is specifically required through a job market study (LMI), pursuant to Education Code § 78015.

The Chancellor's Office has delegated authority to the Apprenticeship Program Coordinator, who provides support to the college and the program sponsor throughout the development and implementation of an apprenticeship program. The Chancellor (or designee) reviews the programs and courses offered by the community college using criteria that represent the standards of good practice established in the field of curriculum design.

Apprenticeship proposals require additional supporting documentation including a [California Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS) Approval Letter.

Standards for Open Entry/Open Exit Noncredit Courses

Open entry/open exit courses are defined in Title 5, § 58164 as credit or noncredit courses in which students may enroll at different times and complete at various times or at varying paces within a defined period, such as a semester or quarter.

When an open entry/open exit course provides supplemental learning assistance (pursuant to CCR, title 5, § 58172) in support of another course or courses, the COR for the supplemental open entry/open exit course must identify the course or courses it supports, as well as the specific learning objectives the student is to pursue. Determination of student contact hours must be based on the maximum number of hours that discipline faculty and the curriculum committee consider reasonably necessary to achieve the learning objectives of the primary course or courses being supplemented. Thus, the supplemental COR must be prepared in light of the primary course objectives, but the hours for the supplemental COR will then be based on the objectives and related assignments specified in the supplemental COR.

Noncredit Learning Assistance and Tutoring

Colleges may claim noncredit apportionment for providing supplemental learning and tutoring to students who need additional help in other courses when offered in accordance with title 5 sections 58168 and 58172.

Supplemental Learning Assistance

Title 5 section 58172, Learning Assistance states:

Attendance for supplemental learning assistance when offered as part of a course may only be reported for state apportionment when either:

- a) The learning assistance is a required component of another course, for all students in that course; or
- b) The learning assistance is optional and is provided through an open entry/open exit course conducted pursuant to subdivision (c) of section 58164, which is intended to strengthen student skills and reinforce student mastery of concepts taught in another course or courses.

Supplemental learning assistance is linked to a primary/parent course. The supplemental course is designed to further students' ability to succeed in the "primary" or "parent" course and the course outline of record must identify the parent course with which it is linked.

Adhering to the general provisions of Title 5, §§ 58172, 58164, 58009, 58050, and 59402 will help to ensure compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.

Apportionment for supplemental learning assistance may be claimed for credit supplemental courses in support of primary/parent credit courses, or for noncredit supplemental courses, in any of the noncredit eligible areas outlined in Education Code § 84757 and title 5 section 58160, in support of primary/parent noncredit courses.

Districts shall provide access to supervised tutoring for students who need or desire extra academic support when enrolled in transfer-level mathematics or English coursework to maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete coursework in English and mathematics within a one-year timeframe of their initial attempt. The district shall not claim state apportionment for supervised tutoring services that is being paid from state categorical funds.

A separate course outline of record is required for a supplemental learning assistance course. A supplemental course needs to be approvable on its own merit in accordance with title 5 section 55002 and, at the same time, address skills and/or concepts covered in the primary/parent courses that it supports. In order to be approved on its own merit, noncredit short-term vocational courses (one of the noncredit categories eligible for apportionment) need to prepare students for employment. Refer to the section above for standards on open entry/open exit noncredit courses.

Apportionment may not be claimed for optional attendance at artistic and cultural presentations or events or for using college/district facilities, equipment or resources that are not related to instructional learning objectives and competencies as outlined in course

outline of record. There must be instruction that involves objectives and competencies that are described in an approved course outline of record.

Tutoring

Tutoring, when provided by a college, shall be considered a method of instruction that involves a student tutor who has been successful in a particular subject or discipline, or who has demonstrated a particular skill, and who has received specific training in tutoring methods and who assists one or more students in need of special supplemental instruction in the subject or skill. Student attendance in tutoring is eligible for apportionment only in a noncredit course offered under the provisions of Education Code § 84757.

Community Services Offerings

Community Services Offerings are defined in title 5 section 55000(e) and described in section 55002(d). Such courses are fee-supported community services classes offered pursuant to Education Code section 78300. As such, they are ineligible for apportionment and are not included in the Chancellor's Office curriculum inventory system.

SECTION 3: NONCREDIT PROGRAM CRITERIA AND STANDARDS

This section provides an overview of the standards for all noncredit programs and is organized as follows:

- Definitions of Noncredit Program and Award Types
- Noncredit Program Approval
- Noncredit Career Development and College Preparation
- Adult High School Diploma
- Noncredit Apprenticeship Programs
- Locally Approved Programs

III.3.1 Definitions of Noncredit Program and Award Types

An education program is defined in Title 5, § 55000(m), as "... an organized grouping of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education." All noncredit programs that receive state funding require Chancellor's Office chaptering (note: CDCP in the short-term vocational instructional domain requires Chancellor's Office review before chaptering).

The Board of Governors, by statute, has statewide responsibility for oversight on all new instructional programs in community colleges. The authority is contained in Education Code § 70901. Title 5, § 55150 – Approval of Noncredit Courses and Programs, sets forth the basic requirements for chaptering of a noncredit instructional program.

Approval of a noncredit educational program is effective until either:

- The noncredit educational program or implementation of the noncredit educational program is discontinued or modified in any substantial way; or
- The Chancellor evaluates the noncredit educational program after chaptering on the basis of factors listed in Title 5, § 55151 or 55154, as applicable. If the Chancellor determines that the noncredit educational program should no longer be offered based on the evaluation, the Chancellor may terminate the approval and determine the effective date of termination.

III.3.2 Noncredit Program Approval

There are five criteria used by the Chancellor's Office to chapter noncredit programs and courses. The five criteria were derived from statute, regulation, intersegmental agreements, guidelines provided by transfer institutions and industry, recommendations of accrediting agencies, and the standards of good practice established in the field of curriculum design.

These criteria are as follows:

- A. Appropriateness to Mission
- B. Need
- C. Curriculum Standards
- D. Adequate Resources
- E. Compliance
- F. Equity & Accessibility

Full explanations of these criteria are provided in Part 1 of this Handbook.

The types of noncredit educational programs that must be submitted to the Chancellor's

Office for chaptering include (Title 5 § 55151):

- Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) Programs (note: CDCP certificate programs in the short-term vocational instructional domain require Chancellor's Office review before chaptering)
 - Certificate of Competency—a certificate in a recognized career field articulated with degree-applicable coursework, completion of an associate degree, or transfer to a baccalaureate institution
 - Certificate of Completion—a certificate leading to improved employability or job opportunities
- Adult High School Diploma
- Noncredit Apprenticeship Programs

III.3.3 Noncredit Career Development and College Preparation

Programs and required courses classified as noncredit Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) prepare students for employment or to be successful in college level-credit coursework. In accordance with Title 5, § 55151 colleges may offer an approved grouping of noncredit courses that culminates in one of the following awards: Certificate of Competency, Certificate of Completion, or Adult High School Diploma. Once a program is approved and chaptered, the noncredit courses that comprise a CDCP program will be eligible for enhanced funding pursuant to Education Code §§ 84750.5 and 84760.5. CDCP certificates can be awarded in the following four noncredit categories: elementary and secondary basic skills, workforce preparation, short-term vocational with high employment potential program, English as a Second Language (ESL) and vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) (see Title 5, § 55151). CDCP programs in the short-term vocational instructional domain require Chancellor's Office review before chaptering.

CDCP funding for courses that are part of a CDCP program cannot be received until the program is chaptered.

For program proposals in the CDCP category of short-term vocational with high employment potential, colleges must provide evidence of high employment potential. See Part II Section 3 Labor Market Information and Analysis for more information.

CDCP programs must be approved in accordance with Title 5, §§ 55150, 55151 and 55155. Upon chaptering, a program is assigned a unique Program Control Number. For more information regarding MIS data elements, refer to the discussion above, on noncredit course data criteria elements, and the [Data Element Dictionary](https://webdata.cccco.edu/ded/cb/cb.htm) (DED) available on the Chancellor's Office website at <https://webdata.cccco.edu/ded/cb/cb.htm>.

Table 16 — Noncredit Coding Guide for CDCP Enhanced Funding

CDCP Category of Certificate	CB24: Course Program Status	CB22: Noncredit Category	CB11: Course Classification Status
Workforce Preparation	1 – Program Applicable	J – Workforce Preparation	J – Workforce Preparation
ESL Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills Short-term Vocational with High Employment Potential	1 – Program Applicable	A - ESL C - Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills I - Short-term Vocational with High Employment Potential	K – Other Noncredit Enhanced Funding

Note: refer to the Noncredit Categories section of this Handbook, above, for additional information on the noncredit instructional categories and Course Basic (“CB”) fields listed in this table.

Certificate of Competency

Pursuant to Title 5, § 55151, students completing noncredit courses in a prescribed pathway, chaptered by the Chancellor’s Office, that prepares students to take non-degree-applicable credit coursework, including basic skills and English as a Second Language (ESL), or to take degree-applicable credit coursework leading to completion of a credit certificate, an associate of arts degree, or transfer to a baccalaureate institution, a Certificate of Competency may be awarded. A noncredit Certificate of Competency is a document confirming that a student enrolled in a noncredit educational program of noncredit courses has demonstrated achievement in a set of competencies that prepares the student to progress in a career path or to undertake degree-applicable or non-degree-applicable credit courses (CCR, Title 5, §55151(i)).

The Certificate of Competency must include the name of the certificate and the date awarded, be identified by a TOP Code number (This information will be updated to reflect the transition from TOP to CIP classifications scheduled for 2027) and program discipline, and list the relevant competencies achieved by the student.

Certificate of Completion

Pursuant to Title 5, § 55151, students completing noncredit courses in a prescribed pathway, chaptered by the Chancellor’s Office, leading to improved employability or job opportunities, a Certificate of Completion may be awarded. This type of program is designated as Short-Term Vocational or Workforce Preparation. A noncredit Certificate of Completion is a document confirming that a student has completed a noncredit educational program of noncredit courses that prepares the student to progress in a career path or to take degree-applicable credit courses (CCR, Title 5 §55151(h)). The Certificate of Completion must include the name of the certificate and the date awarded, be identified by a TOP Code number (This

for 2027) and program discipline, identify the goal of the program, and list the courses completed by the student.

Criteria for Approval

The background and criteria of some of the required elements for noncredit program approval are briefly discussed below. All CDCP certificate programs in the short-term vocational instructional domain require Chancellor's Office review before chaptering.

The submission must include all required documentation, including:

- Narrative
- Course Outlines of Record (COR) for all courses
- Labor Market Information (LMI) for short-term vocational with high employment potential only
- NOTE: unlike credit Career Technical Education programs, noncredit vocational programs do not require Advisory Committee or Regional Consortium recommendations

Narrative

All new and modified noncredit certificates must include a narrative that addresses the following four items:

- Program Goals and Objectives - must address a valid transfer preparation, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or lifelong learning purpose. The stated goals and objectives of the program must be consistent with the mission of the community colleges as established by the Legislature in Education Code section 66010.4. Often, colleges will include the program level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in this section that identify the program's goals and objectives. Select an appropriate program goal of either: CTE, for short-term vocational or local, for all other certificates. Note: If the certificate program goal selected is "Career Technical Education (CTE)," then the statement must include the main competencies students will have achieved that are required for a specific occupation. The statement must, at a minimum, clearly indicate the specific occupation(s) or field(s) the program will prepare students to enter and the basic occupational competencies students will acquire
- Catalog Description – includes program requirements, prerequisite skills or enrollment limitations, student learning outcomes, and information relevant to program goal
- Program Requirements – includes course requirements and grouping of courses that reflect program goals. The courses specified must coincide with the courses associated with the certificate proposal record. Within the program requirements table, specify the total student contact hours of each course

- Master Planning – describe how the certificate program fits into the mission, curriculum, and master planning of the college and higher education in California

Labor Market Information (LMI)

All new and modified noncredit CDCP certificates in the short-term vocational instructional domain must provide Labor Market Information that is less than two years old.

Adult High School Diploma

Pursuant to Title 5, § 55154 colleges may offer a grouping of noncredit courses that culminate in an Adult High School Diploma (AHSD). An AHSD is composed of a grouping of noncredit courses leading to a high school diploma that is awarded by the community college district or jointly by the district and a high school in accordance with Title 5, § 55154. The course content standards should meet or exceed the standards for high school curriculum established by the California State Board of Education. A high school diploma is granted when the student has completed the equivalent of at least 160 high school credits, including the specified minimum number of credits in the five general subject areas of English, mathematics, natural sciences, social and behavioral science, and humanities. In addition, at least 20 of the total 160 required high school credits must be completed in residence at the community college granting the diploma. This specialized program requires additional justification not required for other noncredit programs. Note: A noncredit course in any college awarding 10 high school credits must be designed to require a minimum of 144 hours of lecture, study or laboratory work (CCR, Title 5, § 55154). Each course shall be of sufficient duration to permit a student to master the content of the course as specified in the California State Board of Education's Course Content Standards (CCR, Title 5, § 55154).

Criteria for Approval

The background and criteria of some of the required elements are briefly discussed below.

The submission must include all required documentation, including:

- Narrative - describing the development of the AHSD program (see narrative sub-components below; the narrative subcomponents are pursuant to Title 5, § 55154)
- Course Outlines of Record (COR)

Narrative Components

- Demonstration of Need: Provide quantitative and qualitative data demonstrating the need for the proposed Adult High School Diploma program in the college. For example, discuss the number of students that have not completed high school in the service area (dropout rate) and/or demonstrate the requirement of a high school diploma for employment in the industries in the service areas. Describe how the college has verified that this program will not have an adverse impact on similar programs and options at neighboring colleges.
- Catalog Description: Provide a description of the program that will be placed in the

- **Catalog Description:** Provide a description of the program that will be placed in the college's catalog and schedule of classes. This description should cover the program's goals, objectives, and expected outcomes.
- **Program Organization:** Describe how the program will be consistent with the mission of the college and the relationship to other programs that complement or link to the AHSD program. Additionally, provide an organizational chart consisting of the AHSD program faculty and staff.
- **Ongoing Faculty/Staff Efforts:** Describe in detail how the college will fund ongoing faculty/staff needed in order to sustain the program.
- **Professional Development for Faculty and Staff:** Describe the professional development activities that will be available for faculty teaching in the program to ensure that faculty has the necessary knowledge and skills to facilitate student success and completion of the AHSD program.
- **Student Services:** Describe the support services provided to students to assist them in completing the program (e.g., counseling, orientation, student follow-up, and monitoring).
- **Student Assessment:** Provide a description of student assessment procedures for academic placement in the program. Describe the method the college will use in evaluating student progress and the tools the college will utilize to determine student progress towards the program's objectives
- **Instructional Support Services for Students:** Identify and describe the instructional support services for students, such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and other instructional support services such as those provided in the learning resource center.
- **Facilities:** Describe the facilities where the program will be implemented. If facilities are not currently available, describe the district's master plan for providing appropriate facilities for this program.
- **Curriculum Alternatives:** Provide a description of requirements or conditions by which a student can obtain high school credit by examination or by successfully completing college degree-applicable or non-degree-applicable credit course work and any alternative means for students to complete the prescribed course of study. All alternative means must meet or exceed the content standards for the high school curriculum established by the California State Board of Education. These can be found on the [California State Board of Education](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/) website (www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/).

Noncredit Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship noncredit offerings have some unique elements regarding curriculum approval and funding approval. All apprenticeship noncredit programs and courses must

obtain Chancellor's Office approval for each college responsible for the offerings. The approval requirement is specifically required by the annual Budget Act. See the information above, for noncredit course requirements for apprenticeship courses. For purposes of submission into the Chancellor's office curriculum inventory system, an apprenticeship program is considered short-term vocational and will use the data elements associated with this type of program in the DED.

The apprenticeship curriculum offered by community colleges, adult schools, and regional occupational program centers is referred to as related and supplemental instruction (RSI) in the apprenticeship law and in the Budget Act. Apprenticeship RSI described in Education Code § 79144. If a district intends to receive apprenticeship RSI funding, the Budget Act states that the program or courses must have the approval of the Chancellor's Office. Thus, a district must receive from the Chancellor's Office both curriculum approval and RSI funding approval. For both of these approvals, the application must contain documentation that the [Division of Apprenticeship Standards](#) (DAS) within the Department of Industrial Relations has approved the apprenticeship. The approval documentation must list the specific campus approved for the RSI and must be signed by the chief of the DAS or designee. An employer who has an apprenticeship RSI program at an adult school or regional occupational program center can apply to move the program to a community college.

Apprenticeship programs involve long-range planning to provide adequate funding; therefore, it is important for the community college district to notify the Chancellor's Office apprenticeship coordinator as soon as the district decides to give the employer or program sponsor a letter of intent to be the Local Educational Agency (LEA). This notification is to be used when working with a new apprenticeship program or applying for the transfer of an existing program from another community college, adult school, or regional occupational program center

Locally Approved Programs

Per title 5 section 55155, the district may develop locally approved noncredit programs, but they may not designate or refer to them as a certificate of completion, certificate of competency, or, by extension, an adult high school diploma. No CDCP enhanced noncredit funding nor credit apportionment may be collected.

Noncredit certificates of completion and certificates of competency that are not chaptered by the Chancellor's Office will not receive CDCP enhanced funding.

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