

Crossing the Finish Line: Graduation requirements An Informed Discussion

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Regulations

- §55063(b) defines the minimum requirements for the general education component of the associate degree
- “Students receiving an associate degree shall complete a minimum of 18 semester or 27 quarter units of general education coursework which includes a minimum of three semester or four quarter units in each of the areas specified “
 - Natural Sciences
 - Social and Behavioral Sciences
 - Humanities
 - Language and Rationality
 - English Composition
 - Communication and Analytical Thinking
- Ethnic Studies **MUST** be offered in at least one of the areas listed above.

Sample AA pattern

- A. Natural Sciences (3 Units)
- B. Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 Units)
- C. Humanities (3 Units)
- D. Cultural Breadth (3 Units)
- E. Language and Rationality (6 Units)
 - E1. English Composition
 - E2. Communication and Analytical Thinking
- F. Lifelong Understanding and Self-Development (3 Units)
 - 18 units in a “Concentration” or “Major”
 - Local Degree Requirements

Local Degree Requirements

- Beyond what is required, college may adopt local requirements for the AA Degree
 - Global Diversity
 - Global Citizenship
 - Computer Competency
 - Information Literacy
 - Ethnic Studies
 - American Institutions
 - Health/ Physical Education

Who decides what is required?

- Faculty?
- Administration?
- Local Academic Senate?
- Curriculum Committees?
- Local Community / CTE Partners?

Benefits of Local Degree Requirements

- Meet needs of local community and CTE partners
- Graduating students with “real world” or transferable skills
 - Computer Competency
 - Information Literacy
- Increasing social and civic engagement
 - Diversity
 - Global Citizenship
- Align with Local UC or CSU baccalaureate degree requirements
 - American Institutions
 - Global Diversity / American Cultures

Drawbacks

- Faculty / Departments adding requirements to boost enrollment
- Barrier to posting degree
 - Students not aware of local requirements
- Over-enrollment in some coursework
- Under-Enrollment in other coursework

Local Degree VS ADT

- Associate Degree for Transfer programs “waive” local degree requirements
 - Dual standard for students?
- When students don’t meet all ADT requirements, no option to post “local” AA degree
- Do you adopt ADT requirements only?
 - Higher level general education content?
 - Does not currently include CTE Programs!
 - Not all students are transfer students!

Getting the correct information

- Communicate changes and reasoning for degree requirements to faculty, counseling faculty, and students
- Make information easy and accessible for students
 - Do your students know the differences in:
 - AA vs ADT
 - GE, CSU-GE Breadth, IGETC
 - Concentration or Major vs Major Preparation

Sample Handout....

- Santa Monica College AA Degree.....8 pages long!

Best Practices

- Need to adhere to mandates for ADT programs
- Work with faculty to address concerns
- Periodic review of degree requirements
- Focus on local community needs as well as university requirements
- Outcome based evaluations
 - Numbers matter!