

Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates

Date Adopted:	6/12/1989
Date Revised:	5/17/2013
Date Reviewed:	5/12/2017
References:	California Code of Regulations, Title 5 Section 55060 et seq., 55070, 55072

DEGREES:

Overall Requirements:

- For the associate degree, a student must demonstrate competence in reading, in written expression, and in mathematics.
- Nondegree-applicable credit courses shall not be included in calculating student degree-applicable grade point averages.
- At least 12 semester units must be completed in residence at Sierra College. Units received through Credit by Examination do not count toward this requirement. Exceptions to the residence requirement may be made by the Board of Trustees when it determines that an injustice or undue hardship would be placed on a student.
- Courses acceptable toward the associate degree include those that have been properly approved pursuant to Title 5, Section 55002 (a), or, if completed at other than a California community college, would reasonably be expected to meet the standards of that section. Transfer credit is granted for all lower-division degree-applicable credit courses completed at regionally accredited institutions.
- For the Associate in Arts (AA) or the Associate in Science (AS) degree, a student must satisfactorily complete at least 60 degree-applicable semester units with at least a 2.0 grade point average.
- For the Associate in Arts for Transfer (AA-T) or the Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) degree, a student must satisfactorily complete at least 60

semester units of California State University (CSU) transferable coursework with at least a 2.0 grade point average.

- District policies and procedures regarding general education and degree requirements are published in the college catalog and filed with the State Chancellor's Office.

Major Requirements:

- The major or area of emphasis requires at least 18 semester units taken in a single discipline or related disciplines, as listed in the community colleges "Taxonomy of Programs," or in an area of emphasis involving lower division coursework which prepares students for a field of study or for a specific major at the University of California (UC) or the California State University (CSU).
- For AA-T and AS-T degrees, reciprocity will be granted for those courses taken at other California community colleges in Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) aligned degrees, provided that the transfer courses appear in the same specific area in the major pattern. The flexibility to move courses between areas is dependent upon the parameters defined in the individual TMC. TMC templates that identify the specific areas in the major pattern are maintained on the Chancellor's Office website. If there is any question about course applicability, the discipline faculty must make the determination.
- Effective for all students admitted for the Fall 2009 term or any term thereafter, each course must be completed with a grade of "C" or better.

General Education Requirements:

- The general education requirements must include a minimum of 18 semester units with a minimum of three semester units each in Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, English Composition, and Communication and Analytical Thinking. Ethnic Studies courses must be offered within at least one of these areas.
- To satisfy the AA or AS degree general education requirements, a student must complete one of the following three patterns: the Associate Degree General Education Breadth and Learning Skills; the California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE); or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).
- To satisfy the AA-T or AS-T degree general education requirements, a student must complete either the California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE) or the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).
- Reciprocity is granted for all lower-division general education designated courses completed at California Community Colleges, California State Universities,

and/or University of California campuses, provided the courses comply with Title 5 regulations. When using CSU GE or IGETC general education, courses must be on the approved list at the time the courses were taken. Up-to-date as well as historical course approval information is located at ASSIST. org.

- Regardless of catalog rights, a course may be used to satisfy a general education requirement if it was approved for the general education area at the time the course was successfully completed, provided the course complies with Title 5 regulations.
- While a course might satisfy more than one general education requirement, it may not be counted more than once for these purposes. A course may be used to satisfy both a general education requirement and a major or area of emphasis requirement.

CERTIFICATES:

Certificates of Achievement:

- For the Certificate of Achievement, a student must successfully complete a course of study or curriculum that consists of 18 or more semester units of degree-applicable credit coursework. The Certificate of Achievement is designed to demonstrate that the student has completed coursework and developed capabilities relating to career or general education.
- At least 50% of the required coursework must be completed at Sierra College.
- Grades of “C” or better in all courses used to satisfy a Certificate of Achievement are required.
- The Certificate of Achievement is posted to a student’s transcript.
- Specific Certificate of Achievement requirements are published in the college catalog. Changes initiated through the governance process become effective upon publication in the college catalog for the year indicated.
- Content and assessment standards for certificates shall ensure that Certificate of Achievement programs are consistent with the mission of Sierra College, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic integrity.
- Sierra College may submit any sequence of courses consisting of 12 or more semester units of degree-applicable credit coursework to the Chancellor and request that it be approved as a program leading to a Certificate of Achievement. If approved by the Chancellor, the less than 18 unit certificate will be called a Certificate of Achievement and will be posted to a student’s transcript.

Skills Certificates:

- A Skills Certificate is an acknowledgement by Sierra College that a student has attained a specified set of competencies within a career technical education program, either for preparation to enter the field or upgrade skills required for continued employment.
- Skills Certificates require a minimum of 6 units and a maximum of 17.5 units.
- At least 50% of the required coursework must be completed at Sierra College.
- Grades of “C” or better in all courses used to satisfy a Skills Certificate are required.
- The Skills Certificate is not posted to a student’s transcript.
- Specific Skills Certificate requirements are published in the college catalog. Changes initiated through the governance process become effective upon publication in the college catalog for the year indicated.
- Content and assessment standards for certificates shall ensure that Skills Certificate programs are consistent with the mission of Sierra College, meet a demonstrated need, are feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic integrity.

See Board Policy 4100.