

HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

AP 4025 Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education

References: Title 5 Section 55061; ACCJC Accreditation Standards II.A.5 and II.A.12; Eligibility Requirement 12

District procedures regarding associate degrees and general education follow the philosophy and criteria expressed in BP 4025 and from the requirements described in pertinent sections of Education Code, Title 5, and Accreditation Standards. Central to the associate degree and general education requirements is Hartnell's mission to provide educational opportunities for students to reach academic goals in an environment committed to student learning, achievement and success. We commit to excellence in teaching and student services that develop the intellectual, personal, and social competence of every student. We aspire to develop leaders who will contribute to the social, cultural, and economic vitality of our region and the global community.

The philosophy and criteria for the associate degree symbolize a student's successful journey through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain competences and insights as identified within Hartnell's Core Competencies:

- Communication Skills
 - Students will demonstrate reading comprehension and expository writing skills at a college level.
- Information Skills
 - Students will define information needs, access information efficiently and effectively, evaluate information critically, and use information ethically.
- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
 - Students will use quantitative and logical reasoning to analyze information, evaluate ideas, and solve problems.
- Global Awareness
 - Students will demonstrate knowledge of global interdependence including knowledge of others' values, cultures and beliefs and an ability to describe one's own cultural heritage.
- Aesthetic Appreciation
 - Students will critically reflect upon works of visual and performing arts in a diverse cultural context.
- Personal Growth and Responsibility
 - Students will select lifestyle choices that promote physical and mental well-being.
 - Students will demonstrate the importance of being an informed, ethical, and active citizen in their community and the world.

Graduation requirements for associate degrees are set forth in BP 4100 – *Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates*. The District’s general education requirements are as follows:

- A minimum of 21 units which shall include courses in each of the following areas:
 - Natural Sciences (3 units)
 - Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 units)
 - Humanities (3 units)
 - Ethnic Groups in the United States (3 units)
 - Language and Rationality
 - Written Expression (3 units)
 - Communication and Analytical Thinking (6 units)
- All degree requirements including general education must be completed with an ~~overall~~ grade-of “C” or better.

Courses selected to meet Hartnell’s general education requirements must meet the following standards:

- Rigor: each course treats subject matter with a level of intellectual intensity that requires independent study.
- Scope: each course introduces the student to a wide range of principles, perspectives, and knowledge within the discipline.
- Autonomy: each course is a whole unto itself and not primarily part of a sequence of courses (each course provides exposure to foundations and fundamental tenets of the discipline).
- Breadth: each course provides a generalizing rather than specializing experience within the subject matter of the discipline. It relates knowledge within the discipline to other fields and disciplines, as well as to contemporary society.
- Critical thinking: each course develops the student’s aptitude for conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information.
- Communication and literacy: each course provides opportunities for the student to develop and demonstrate both orally and in writing the ability to read, comprehend, and evaluate college-level material.
- Relevancy: each course relies upon current knowledge, technology, and instructional materials to achieve its objectives, as appropriate.

Specific courses within the general education pattern at Hartnell fulfill the following criteria as related to their area of specialty:

- Natural Sciences: these courses examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena. They should also help the student develop an appreciation and understanding of the scientific method and encourage an understanding of the relationships between science and other human activities.
- Social and Behavioral Sciences: these courses focus on people as members of society. They should help students develop an awareness of the method of inquiry used by the disciplines within social and behavioral sciences, stimulate critical thinking about the

ways people act and have acted in response to their societies, and promote an appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate.

- Humanities: these courses study human cultural activities and artistic expressions and should help the student develop an awareness of the ways in which people throughout the ages and in different cultures have responded to themselves and the world around them in artistic and cultural creation. These courses also promote an aesthetic understanding and an ability to make value judgments.
- Ethnic Groups in the United States: courses in this category demonstrate sensitivity to and promote a climate of cultural diversity. They focus specifically on a multicultural and global perspective and foster an understanding of the student's role in a global community. Courses that fulfill this requirement introduce and examine the intersection of ethnicity, language, or culture with gender, sexuality, class, or other important social categories such as religion. The emphasis for any course meeting this requirement must be substantial and thematic rather than incidental or supplemental. In addition, courses approved for this category must:
 1. focus on important themes and issues in United States history, society and culture;
 2. address the theoretical and analytical issues relevant to understanding race, culture, and ethnicity in our society;
 3. provide a framework for better understanding of one's particular cultural/historical identity in our society;
 4. include one or more of the following cultural/ethnic minority groups: Asian-Americans; Black/African Americans; Chicano/Mexican Americans; Hispanic/Latinos; Native Americans; Pacific Islanders;
 5. be regarded as a curriculum establishing a broad knowledge of the institutions, history and science of United States culture rather than providing training for a specific area.
- Language and Rationality: courses in this category develop the principles and applications of language and logical thought. They should help students to develop patterns of clear and precise expression, as well as the critical evaluation of communication. These courses include oral communication, mathematics, logic, statistics, computer languages and programming, and related disciplines. Mathematics and English composition courses have an appropriate prerequisite that distinguishes them from remedial courses.

See Board Policy 4025

Approved by Superintendent/President: May 26, 2015