

## ASSOCIATE DEGREE

### PHILOSOPHY FOR THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE

The awarding of an associate degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. It symbolizes the successful attempt on the part of the District to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing; to use mathematics; 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.

### GENERAL EDUCATION

**Goal:** General education is available at all three colleges (Norco, Riverside City and Moreno Valley) of the Riverside Community College District. A person informed through general education about the conceptual schemes of the arts, humanities and sciences, who comprehends the structure of society and who thinks clearly about the individual and society, will have the tools by which he or she may function efficiently. Such an individual is encouraged to utilize these tools in developing a conception of a commitment to a good life involving able and responsible citizenship, moral and humane relationships, and appreciation of the democratic processes and the culture which sustains our society.

**Objective:** Specifically, the colleges offer to all of their students a pattern of courses designed to produce an awareness of self and to provide (1) a basic competence with the English language in its written and spoken form; (2) at least a minimum competence in mathematics; (3) a knowledge of American history and governmental institutions; (4) regard for health, mental and physical, of oneself and of the community at large; (5) a grasp of the principles of the major divisions of human studies, humanities and science with some understanding of basic disciplines and methodologies; and (6) knowledge in some depth of one subject area.

### GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The RCCD General Education program prepares students to be able to demonstrate an understanding of how knowledge is discovered and constructed in the natural sciences, the social and behavioral sciences, the humanities, and language and rationality. Students will understand the methods of inquiry that underlie the search for knowledge in these fields. In addition, they will gain demonstrable skills in four broad interdisciplinary areas:

#### Critical Thinking

Students will be able to demonstrate higher order thinking skills about issues, problems, and explanations for which multiple solutions are possible. Students will be able to explore problems and, where possible, solve them. Students will be able to develop, test, and evaluate rival hypotheses. Students will be able to construct sound arguments and evaluate the arguments of others.

#### Information Competency & Technology Literacy

Students will be able to use technology to locate, organize, and evaluate information. They will be able to locate relevant information, judge the reliability of sources, and evaluate the evidence contained in those sources as they construct arguments, make decisions, and solve problems.

#### Communication

Students will be able to communicate effectively in diverse situations. They will be able to create, express, and interpret meaning in oral, visual, and written forms. They will also be able to demonstrate quantitative literacy and the ability to use graphical, symbolic, and numerical methods to analyze, organize, and interpret data.

#### Self-Development & Global Awareness

Students will be able to develop goals and devise strategies for personal development and well-being. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be an ethical human being and effective citizen in their awareness of diversity and various cultural viewpoints.

The General Education Student Learning Outcomes were approved by the Board of Trustees on September 18, 2012.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE

All programs of study leading to completion of a certificate, A.S. degree, or A.A. degree require careful planning with the assistance of a counselor from the beginning. Students interested in career and technical education (formerly occupational education) will want to follow the requirements of a specific certificate or A.S. degree leading directly to a career. Students who plan to transfer to a bachelor's degree granting institution may also be interested in pursuing an associate degree for transfer; an Associate in Arts (AA-T) or Associate in Science (AS-T) degree. These degrees are designed to provide a clear pathway to a CSU major and baccalaureate degree. For more information on the AA-T and AS-T degrees available at Norco College, please see Section IV of this catalog. Students are encouraged to meet with a Norco College counselor to review their options for transfer and to develop an educational plan that best meets their goals and needs.

Students not interested in earning an available AA-T or AS-T degree may earn an A.A./A.S. degree with an emphasis in one of the eight areas of emphasis and enter the workplace or transfer to a four-year institution with enhanced skills in critical thinking and written and oral communication. Students intending to transfer to a bachelor's degree granting institution can use one of these eight areas to fulfill many lower division major requirements while taking additional transferable courses in closely related areas of study.

The governing board of Riverside Community College District shall confer the degree of associate in one of the eight areas of emphasis upon the student who has demonstrated competence and who has completed the following requirements:

### I. RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

In order to receive an A.A./A.S. degree from Riverside Community College District, a student must complete 12 units in residence at one of the colleges within the Riverside Community College District.

### II. ACADEMIC COURSEWORK TAKEN AT OTHER COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Official transcripts from all schools and colleges attended must be dated within the preceding 90 days/three months, be in their original sealed envelope, and be submitted to the Admissions & Records office at the student's home college. Course credit is accepted from all regionally accredited institutions as listed at