

V. PROGRAM STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Overview

The following section contains standards and policies, established in Title 5 regulations and local policies, that are important in program development.

Credit Programs

As defined in Title 5, § 55000, a program is “an organized sequence of courses leading to a defined objective, a degree, a certificate, a diploma, a license, or transfer to another institution of higher education.” The primary goal of the program may be transfer, workforce preparation, basic skills, civic education, or lifelong learning purposes.

RCCD offers credit programs that fall into 3 basic categories:

- Locally approved certificates
- State approved certificates (known as certificates of achievement)
- Associate degrees
 - Local degrees (AA, AS)
 - Associate degrees for transfer (AA-T, AS-T)

Certificate programs are primarily business and technical programs for students desiring education beyond high school, where transfer is not the primary goal. Credit certificates are locally approved or state approved depending on the total number of units in their pattern:

- Up to 7.5 units requires local approval only.
- 8 to 15.5 units requires local approval with the option for state approval.
- 16 units and above requires state approval.

The associate degree requirements are the following:

- 18 semester units or more in a certificate pattern, major, or area of emphasis.
- Completion one of the three General Education patterns (RCCD GE, CSU breadth, or IGETC).
- Possible elective courses and basic skills competency requirements for a minimum of 60 units of college coursework.

Programs that are state approved will appear by name on a student transcript, whereas locally approved programs do not appear on a student transcript.

**For detailed guidance on how to create or modify a program, see the [RCCDCH Part 2](#).*

References

- [Title 5 §55000](#) (<https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California>)
- [Title 5 §55063](#)
- [Title 5 §55070](#)
- BP 4025 <https://www.rccd.edu/administration/board/New Board Policies/4025BPAP.pdf>

Area of Emphasis (AOE)

Areas of Emphasis (AOEs) are associate degrees (Title 5, § 55063) consisting of 18 or more units of coursework in a major or an “area of emphasis” – a broad group of courses in related fields. AOE offer students a wide selection of courses for completion of an associate degree, while also providing lower division preparation for majors which might be pursued at four-year colleges.

Currently, RCCD has eight “Area of Emphasis” associate degrees shared across the three colleges:

- Administration & Information Systems
- American Studies (MOV and RIV only)
- Communications, Media & Languages
- Fine and Applied Arts
- Humanities, Philosophy, and Arts
- Kinesiology, Health and Wellness
- Social and Behavioral Studies
- Math and Science

Though AOE are district-wide programs, not all courses included in an AOE are required to be available at every college in the district. The following are general guidelines for courses under consideration for inclusion in an existing AOE:

- The course is available at two or more colleges.
- The course is not related directly to a college-specific program (e.g., automotive, logistics, dental hygiene).
- The course aligns to program level SLOs.
- The course is transferable.

References

- [Title 5 §55063 \(https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California)

Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT)

Associate Degree for Transfer degrees (ADTs) are associate degrees (AA-T or AS-T) that fulfill the lower division coursework of a baccalaureate major at a California State University. Required by SB 1440, the main goal of the ADT is to provide a smooth transition from California Community Colleges to CSUs by guaranteeing that students who completed the ADT will be able to transfer to a CSU campus.

The following standards apply to ADTs:

- 60 semester units.
- Minimum 18 units in major or area of emphasis.
- Must use CSU GE breadth or IGETC as general education.
- Must align to the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC).
- Courses must be Course Identification Numbering System (C-ID) approved.
- No local graduation requirements.