

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

AP 4260 PRE-REQUISITES, CO-REQUISITES, AND ADVISORIES

References:

Title 5 Sections 55000 et seq.

The following provides for establishing, reviewing, and challenging pre-requisites, co-requisites, and advisories on recommended preparation (advisories), and certain limitations on enrollment in a manner consistent with law and good practice. If pre-requisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations are established unnecessarily or inappropriately, they constitute unjustifiable obstacles to student access and success. Therefore, this procedure calls for caution and careful scrutiny in establishing them. Nonetheless, it is as important to have pre-requisites in place where they are a vital factor in maintaining academic standards as it is to avoid establishing pre-requisites where they are not needed. For these reasons, the District has sought to foster the appropriate balance between these two concerns.

Information in the Catalog and Class Schedule

The District shall provide the following explanations both in the District Catalog and in the class schedule:

- Definitions of pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment including the differences among them and the specific pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment that have been established.
- Procedures for a student to challenge pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to make such a challenge. The information about challenges must include, at a minimum, the specific process including any deadlines, the various types of challenge that are established in law, and any additional types of challenge permitted by the District.
- Definitions of advisories, the right of a student to choose to take a course without meeting the advisory, and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to exercise that right.
- Definitions of contract course, co-requisite, noncredit basic skills course, non-degree-applicable basic skills courses, pre-requisite, and satisfactory grade.

Challenge Process

Any student who does not meet a pre-requisite or co-requisite or who is not permitted to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment but who provides satisfactory evidence may seek entry into the course as follows:

- If space is available in a course when a student files a challenge to the pre-requisite or co-requisite, the District shall reserve a seat for the student and resolve the challenge within five working days. If the challenge is upheld or the

39 District fails to resolve the challenge within the five working-day period, the
40 student shall be allowed to enroll in the course.

- 41 • If no space is available in the course when a challenge is filed, the challenge
42 shall be resolved prior to the beginning of registration for the next term and, if the
43 challenge is upheld, the student shall be permitted to enroll if space is available
44 when the students registers for that subsequent term.

45 Grounds for challenge shall include the following:

- 46 • Those grounds for challenge specified in Title 5 Section 55201(f).
- 47 • The student seeks to enroll and has not been allowed to enroll due to a limitation
48 on enrollment established for a course that involves intercollegiate competition or
49 public performance, or one or more of the courses for which enrollment has been
50 limited to a cohort of students. The student shall be allowed to enroll in such a
51 course if otherwise he/she would be delayed by a semester or more in attaining
52 the degree or certificate specified in his/her educational plan.
- 53 • The student seeks to enroll in a course that has a pre-requisite established to
54 protect health and safety, and the student demonstrates that he/she does not
55 pose a threat to himself/herself or others.

56 The student has the obligation to provide satisfactory evidence that the challenge
57 should be upheld. However, where facts essential to a determination of whether the
58 student's challenge should be upheld are or ought to be in the District's own records,
59 then the District has the obligation to produce that information.

60 **Curriculum Review Process**

61 The curriculum review process shall at a minimum be in accordance with all of the
62 following:

- 63 • Establish a curriculum committee and its membership in a manner that is
64 mutually agreeable to the District administration and the Faculty Senate.
- 65 • Establish pre-requisites, co-requisites, and advisories only upon the
66 recommendation of the Faculty Senate except that the Faculty Senate may
67 delegate this task to the curriculum committee without forfeiting its rights or
68 responsibilities under Title 5 Sections 53200-53204. Certain limitations on
69 enrollment must be established in the same manner.
- 70 • Establish pre-requisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations on enrollment
71 only if:
 - 72 ○ The faculty in the discipline or, if the District has no faculty member in the
73 discipline, the faculty in the department do all of the following:
 - 74 a) Approve the course; and,
 - 75 b) As a separate action, approve any pre-requisite or co-requisite, only if:

76 1) The pre-requisite or co-requisite is an appropriate and rational
77 measure of a student's readiness to enter the course or program as
78 demonstrated by a content review including, at a minimum, all of
79 the following:

- 80 i. involvement of faculty with appropriate expertise;
- 81 ii. consideration of course objectives set by relevant
82 department(s). The curriculum review process should be
83 done in a manner that is in accordance with accreditation
84 standards.
- 85 iii. be based on a detailed course syllabus and outline of record,
86 tests, related instructional materials, course format, type and
87 number of examinations, and grading criteria;
- 88 iv. specification of the body of knowledge and/or skills which
89 are deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with
90 enrollment;
- 91 v. identification and review of the pre-requisite or co-requisite
92 which develops the body of knowledge and/or measures
93 skills identified under iv.
- 94 vi. matching of the knowledge and skills in the targeted course
95 (identified under iv.) and those developed or measured by
96 the pre-requisite or co-requisite (i.e., the course or
97 assessment identified under v.); and
- 98 vii. maintain documentation that the above steps were taken.

99 2) The pre-requisite or co-requisite meets the scrutiny specified in one
100 of the procedures for review of individual courses (see below), and
101 specify which.

- 102 c) Approve any limitation on enrollment that is being established for an
103 honors course or section, for a course that includes intercollegiate
104 competition or public performance, or so that a cohort of students will be
105 enrolled in two or more courses, and, in a separate action, specify which.
- 106 d) Approve that the course meets the academic standards required for
107 degree applicable courses, non-degree applicable courses, non-credit
108 courses, or community service respectively.
- 109 e) Review the course outline to determine if a student would be highly
110 unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student had knowledge
111 or skills not taught in the course. If the student would need knowledge or
112 skills not taught in the course itself, then the course may be approved for
113 degree applicable credit only if all requirements for establishing the
114 appropriate pre-requisite have been met excepting only approval by the
115 curriculum committee.

- 116 f) Review the course outline to determine whether receiving a satisfactory
117 grade is dependent on skills in communication or computation. If
118 receiving a satisfactory grade is sufficiently dependent on such skills, then
119 the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all
120 requirements have been met for establishing a pre-requisite or co-
121 requisite of not less than eligibility for enrollment to a degree-applicable
122 course in English or mathematics, respectively.
- 123 o A course which should have a pre-requisite or co-requisite as provided in (5)
124 or (6) but for which one or more of the requirements for establishing a pre-
125 requisite have not been met may only:
- 126 a) Be reviewed and approved pursuant to the standards for non-
127 degree applicable credit, non-credit, or community service; or
- 128 b) Be revised and reviewed as required to meet the criteria for
129 establishing the necessary pre-requisites or co-requisites.
- 130 o The curriculum committee also reviews the course and pre-requisite in a
131 manner that meets each of the requirements specified above.

132 **Program Review**

133 As a regular part of the program review process or at least every six years, the District
134 shall review each pre-requisite, co-requisite, or advisory to establish that each is still
135 supported by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee
136 and is still in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law. Any
137 pre-requisite or co-requisite that is still supported shall be reviewed promptly thereafter
138 to assure that it is in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law.

139 **Implementing Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and Limitations on Enrollment:**

140 Implementation of pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment must be
141 done in a consistent manner and not left exclusively to the classroom instructor. Every
142 attempt shall be made to enforce all conditions a student must meet to be enrolled in
143 the course through the registration process so that a student is not permitted to enroll
144 unless he/she has met all the conditions or has met all except those for which he/she
145 has a pending challenge or for which further information is needed before final
146 determination is possible of whether the student has met the condition.

147 **Instructor's Formal Agreement to Teach the Course as Described**

148 The District shall establish a procedure so that courses for which pre-requisites or co-
149 requisites are established will be taught in accordance with the course outline,
150 particularly those aspects of the course outline that are the basis for justifying the
151 establishment of the pre-requisite or co-requisite. The process shall be established by
152 consulting collegially with the local Faculty Senate and, if appropriate, the local
153 bargaining unit.

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Review of Individual Courses

If the student's enrollment in a course or program is to be contingent on his/her having met the proposed pre-requisite(s) or co-requisite(s), then such a pre-requisite or co-requisite must be established as follows. If enrollment is not blocked, then what is being established is not a pre-requisite or co-requisite but, rather, an advisory and must be identified as such in the schedule and catalog. Establishing advisories does not require all the following steps:

- **Pre-requisites and Co-requisites**

- **Levels of Scrutiny:** Pre-requisites and co-requisites must meet the requirements of at least one of the following subsections:

- a) **The Standard Pre-requisites or Co-requisites:** The District may establish satisfactory completion of a course as pre-requisite or co-requisite for another course provided that, in addition to obtaining the review of the faculty in the discipline or department and the curriculum committee as provided above, the District specifies as part of the course outline of record at least three of the campuses of the University of California and the California State University which reflect in their catalogs that they offer the equivalent course with the equivalent pre-requisite(s) or co-requisite(s). Any combination of University of California campuses and California State University campuses is acceptable in satisfaction of this requirement.

- b) **Sequential Courses Within and Across Disciplines:** A course may be established as a pre-requisite or co-requisite for another course provided that, in addition to the review by faculty in the department or discipline and by the curriculum committee as described above, skills, concepts, and/or information taught in the first course are presupposed in the second course, and a list of the specific skills and/or knowledge a student must possess in order to be ready to take the second course is included in its outline of record.

- c) **Courses in Communication or Computation Skills:** Pre-requisites establishing communication or computational skill requirements may not be established across the entire curriculum unless established on a course by course basis. A course in communication or computation skills, or eligibility for enrollment in such a course, may be established as a pre-requisite or co-requisite for any course other than another course in communication or computation skills if, in addition to the review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, the following is also done:

1. A list of the specific skills a student must possess in order to be ready to take the course is included in the course outline of record; and

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2. Research is conducted as provided above.

The pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established for a period of not more than two years while the research is being conducted provided that a determination is made that a student who lacks the particular skills is highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade because a sufficient percentage of the grade is directly dependent on these skills. This determination must be approved both by the faculty in the discipline and by the curriculum committee as provided above and must be based on a review of the syllabus as well as samples of tests and other assignments on which the grade is based.

- d) **Cut Scores and Pre-requisites:** Whether or not research is required to establish a pre-requisite, data collected to validate assessment instruments and cut scores is always relevant to reviewing the pre-requisites for the associated courses. If such data are insufficient to establish the cut scores, any course pre-requisites established for the same course or courses may not be printed in subsequent catalogs and schedules nor enforced in subsequent semesters until the problems are resolved, and sufficient data exist to establish the cut scores. In such a case, the collection of these data shall be done in the manner prescribed above in addition to other requirements of law. Such a pre-requisite may be changed to an advisory while the problems are being resolved.
- e) **Programs:** In order to establish a pre-requisite for a program, the proposed pre-requisite must be approved as provided for a course pre-requisite in regard to at least one course that is required as part of the program.
- f) **Health and Safety:** A pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established provided that, in addition to the review by faculty in the department or division and by the curriculum committee as provided above:
1. The course for which the pre-requisite is proposed is one in which the student might endanger his/her own health and safety or the health and safety of others; and
 2. The pre-requisite is that the student possesses what is necessary to protect his/her health and safety and the health and safety of others before entering the course.
- g) **Recency and Other Measures of Readiness:** Recency and other measures of readiness may be established as a pre-requisite or co-requisite only if, in addition to the review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, the following is also done:
1. A list of the specific skills a student must possess in order to be ready to take the course is included in the course outline of record.

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2. Data are gathered according to sound research practices in at least one of the following areas:
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- i. The extent to which students, those currently enrolled in the course or those who have completed it, believe the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite is necessary.
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- ii. Comparison of the faculty members' appraisal of students' readiness for the course to whether students met the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite. The faculty appraisal could be done at any time in the semester that the District determined was appropriate and based on independent assignments, quizzes and exams, participation in courses or other indicators that the student was or was not ready to take the course.
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- iii. Comparison of students' performance at any point in the course with completion of the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite.
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- iv. Comparison of student performance in the course to their scores on assessment instruments in the manner required to validate an assessment instrument and cut scores for the course in question as described above.
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3. The standard for any comparison done shall be that a student is highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade in the course unless the student has met the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite. The research design, operational definitions, and numerical standards, if appropriate, shall be developed by research personnel, discipline faculty, and representatives of the Faculty Senate. If the evidence fails to meet the standard established, the District may establish the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite as a recommended preparation and may seek to establish it as a pre-requisite or co-requisite only by following the process described in this policy and any applicable District policies.
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4. If the curriculum committee has determined as provided in these procedures that a new course needs to have a pre-requisite or co-requisite, then the pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established for a single period of not more than two years while research is being conducted and a determination is being made, provided that:
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- i. All other requirements for establishing the pre-requisite or co-requisite have already been met; and
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- ii. Students are informed that they may enroll in the course although they do not meet the pre-requisite. However, students who lack the pre-requisite may not constitute

283 more than 20% of those enrolled in any section of the
284 course.

285 Pre-requisites and co-requisites that are exempt from review at the
286 time they are, or were, established are not eligible for this
287 exception, and the research must be conducted during the six
288 years before they must be reviewed.

289 ○ **Additional Rules:** Title 5 Section 55202 specifies additional rules, which are
290 to be considered part of this document as though reproduced here.

291 ● **Advisories:**

292 The District may recommend that a student meet a standard of readiness at entry
293 only if recommended by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the
294 curriculum committee as provided in above. This process is required whether the
295 District used to describe such recommendations in its catalog or schedule as
296 "pre-requisites," or "recommended," or by any other term.

297 **Limitations on Enrollment:**

298 The types of limitation on enrollment specified below may only be established through
299 the curriculum review process by the discipline or department faculty and the curriculum
300 committee specified above including the requirement to review them again at least
301 every six years; for example, as part of program review. The following requirements
302 must also be met in order to establish these particular limitations on enrollment.

303 ● **Performance Courses:** The District may establish audition or try-out as a
304 limitation on enrollment for courses that include public performance or
305 intercollegiate competition such as but not limited to band, orchestra, theater,
306 competitive speech, chorus, journalism, dance, and intercollegiate athletics
307 provided that:

308 ○ For any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by
309 taking this course, there is another course or courses which satisfy the same
310 requirement; and

311 ○ The District includes in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or
312 associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course
313 or courses which meet the same requirement.

314 Limitations on enrollment established as provided for performance courses shall
315 be reviewed during program review or at least every six years to determine
316 whether the audition or try-out process is having a disproportionate impact on
317 any historically under-represented group and, if so, a plan shall be adopted to
318 seek to remedy the disproportionate impact. If disproportionate impact has been
319 found, the limitation on enrollment may not be printed in subsequent catalogs or
320 schedules nor enforced in any subsequent term until such a plan has been
321 endorsed by the department and the District administration and put into effect.

322 ● **Honors Courses:** A limitation on enrollment for an honors course or an honors
323 section of a course may be established if, in addition to the review by the faculty

324 in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided
325 above, there is another section or another course or courses in the District which
326 satisfy the same requirements. If the limitation is for an honors course and not
327 only for an honors section, the District must also include in the course outline of
328 record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course
329 meets and of the other course or courses which meet the same associate degree
330 or certificate requirement.

- 331 • **Blocks of Courses or Sections:** Blocks of courses or blocks of sections of
332 courses are two or more courses or sections for which enrollment is limited in
333 order to create a cohort of students. Such a limitation on enrollment may be
334 established if, in addition to review by the faculty in the discipline or department
335 and by the curriculum committee as provided above, there is another section or
336 another course or courses that satisfy the same requirement. If the cohort is
337 created through limitations on enrollment in the courses rather than limitations on
338 specific sections of courses, then the District must include in the course outline of
339 record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course
340 meets and of the other course or courses which satisfy the same associate
341 degree or certificate requirement.

342 Office of Primary Responsibility: Instructional Services