

**Palomar College**  
**Guidelines for Certificates of Achievement and Certificates of Proficiency**

**Certificates of Achievement:**

***12-17 college credit units***

- Approved by the System Office; therefore, transcribed (appears on a student's transcript) and is in the System Office inventory

Courses:

- **Focus on a skill, and are part of a programmed pattern leading to a career path**
- **Serve as a building block and/or foundation that lead to a Certificate of Achievement (CA) 18-30 units, major field of study.**
- **Are “program applicable” and not viewed as stand-alone courses**

Certificate(s) are:

- included in the System Office official curriculum inventory
- counted and reported in the Management Information System (MIS) and qualify for Perkins funding
- reported in Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC, AB1417)

***\*18-30 college credit units***

- Approved by the System Office; therefore, transcribed (appears on a student's transcript) and is in the System Office inventory

Courses:

- **Serve as core curriculum/foundation for a major field of study for the Associate Degree**
- **Are “program applicable” and not viewed as stand-alone courses**

Certificate(s) are:

- included in the System Office official curriculum inventory
- counted and reported in the Management Information System (MIS) and qualify for Perkins funding
- reported in Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC, AB1417)

\*Unit ranges align with Title §55070 and §55061.5 language that defines an Associate Degree of 60 credit units, with the major field of study typically being 30 units, and the General Education requirements being 30 units. Exceptions may be made for programs with external accreditation and licensing mandates where curriculum requirements are specifically defined.

Approval process for Certificate of Achievement:

- Approved by Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, Governing Board, Regional Occupational Deans (CTE only), and System Office
- The approval process requires planning information such as employment outlook, impact on budget, staffing and facilities, equipment needed, and estimated number of completers.
- Online submission to the System Office of all Certificates of Achievement and Associate Degrees

## **Certificate of Proficiency (CP):**

### ***Less than 12 college credit units***

- Local recognition only and not approved by System Office; therefore, not transcribed and not in the System Office inventory

#### Courses:

- Focus on a skill, and are part of a programmed pattern leading to a career path
- **May** serve as a building block and/or foundation that lead to a Certificate of Achievement (CA) major field of study
- **Courses provide specialized training for specific employment in workforce**

### Approval process for Certificate of Proficiency:

- Approved by Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, Governing Board
- The local approval process requires the same planning information (e.g. employment outlook, impact on budget, staffing and facilities, equipment needed, and estimated number of completers) for a Certificate of Proficiency that is required for a Certificate of Achievement
- Not submitted to the System Office

## **Timeline**

Recommended that departments review their Certificates of Proficiency and, where appropriate, convert to Certificate of Achievement no later than effective Fall 2013.

## **Planning**

In keeping with the mission of California Community Colleges, departments are encouraged to create an opportunity for students to earn both a Certificate of Achievement and an Associate's Degree where appropriate with the discipline. In the planning process for converting a Certificate of Proficiency (12-17 units) to a Certificate of Achievement (12-17 units or more), it is important to consider whether or not the CA units may lead to a major field of study of 18-30 units and will provide the student with the opportunity to complete an Associate Degree when the General Education requirements are satisfied. If the Certificate of Achievement will lead to an Associate Degree with the appropriate general education requirements, the designation of either an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science must follow Title 5, Section 55061.5 guidelines.

## **References**

Title 5, Section 55070

Title 5, Section 55061.5

ACCJC Standards II.A.

AB 1417 (Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges)

Program and Course Approval Handbook, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Rev. March 2009

*What is the Meaning of a California Community College Degree?* Published by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges; Adopted Fall 2008

## **DEFINING THE ASSOCIATE IN ARTS AND THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCES**

### **Action Required**

Associate in Arts Degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Career Technical Education must be converted to Associate in Science Degrees. General Education requirements for an Associate of Science degree are the same as GE requirements for the Associate of Arts degree.

### **Timeline**

Title 5, Section 55061.5, states that the distinction between the Associate in Arts Degree title and the Associate in Science Degree title is effective with students admitted to the community college Fall 2013 or later.

### **Reference**

Title 5 Section 55061.5

### **Planning**

In keeping with the mission of California Community Colleges, departments are encouraged to create an opportunity for students to earn both a Certificate of Achievement and an Associate's Degree where appropriate with the discipline. In the planning process for converting a Certificate of Proficiency (12-17 units) to a Certificate of Achievement (12-17 units or more), it is important to consider whether or not the CA units may lead to a major field of study of 18-30 units and will provide the student with the opportunity to complete an Associate Degree when the General Education requirements are satisfied. If the Certificate of Achievement will lead to an Associate Degree with the appropriate general education requirements, the designation of either an Associate in Arts or Associate in Science must follow Title 5, Section 55061.5 guidelines.

## Curriculum Cycle Timeline

Proposed for implementation 2011-12.

Spring – Develop plan at department level

Fall (by October) - Proposals launched/pre-launched in Curricunet

Fall (by December) - Proposals approved by Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate

February - Governing Board Approval

February - Submit to System Office for Approval (response should be received within 30 – 45 days)

May – Finalize college catalog

June – Catalog arrives on campus for the upcoming year

Note: We are advised by the System Office not to publishing certificates/degrees in our college catalog until they have been approved by the System Office.