

**STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

**Annual Report to the General Assembly  
on the  
Compliance of North Carolina Community Colleges  
with  
Criteria and Standards to Regulate the Operation of College Transfer Programs  
due  
December 31, 2010**

This report is respectfully submitted by the State Board of Community Colleges in adherence with GS 115D-4.1(e), which requires that

*The State Board of Community Colleges shall develop appropriate criteria and standards to regulate the operation of college transfer programs. The criteria and standards shall require all college transfer programs to continue to meet the accreditation standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The State Board of Community Colleges shall report annually to the General Assembly on compliance of the community colleges with these criteria and standards.*

**I. Criteria and Standards to Regulate the Operation of College Transfer Programs**

The State Board of Community College established curriculum standards for the awarding of degrees, diplomas, and certificates in 1998 (See Attachment A: 23 NCAC 2E.0204 (3)). The criteria, which were updated in 2004, 2006, 2007 and 2009, include course and credit hour requirements for the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Fine Arts college transfer degree programs.

Each college transfer degree includes multiple pre-major programs. Curriculum standards for the pre-major programs are approved by the State Board of Community Colleges. Each pre-major curriculum standard serves as a guide for community colleges in the development of programs of study for students who intend to major in a specific field.

The State Board also established a compliance process which colleges must follow to receive approval to offer a program of study:

*Each college shall select curriculum courses from the Combined Course Library in order to comply with the standards for each curriculum program title the college is approved to offer. The selected courses shall comprise the college's program of study for that curriculum program. The initial and revised program shall be filed with and approved by the System Office prior to implementation. (23 NCAC 02E.0204(4))*

Each college must file a proposed program of study for review by the NC Community College System Office staff to ensure that the program of study meets the established criteria. Program of study approval is required before the college may begin the program.

**II. Criteria and Standards to Meet the Accreditation Standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.**

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has established the following accreditation standards for undergraduate degree programs:

*Core Requirement 2.7.3 requires in each undergraduate degree program the successful completion of a general education component at the collegiate level that (1) is a substantial component of each undergraduate degree, (2) ensures breadth of knowledge, and (3) is based on a coherent rationale. For degree completion in associate programs, the component constitutes a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent; for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent. These credit hours are to be drawn from and include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts; social/behavioral sciences; and natural science/mathematics. The courses do not narrowly focus on those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession. The institution provides a written justification and rationale for course equivalency.*

The State Board's "Criteria for Programs" (NCAC 02E. 0204) includes requirements to ensure compliance with these accreditation standards. Colleges must receive approval for their programs of study prior to offering through the compliance process described in Section I.

As further evidence of compliance with SACS accreditation standards, all fifty-eight community colleges are fully SACS accredited and must undergo a rigorous periodic reaffirmation review process conducted by the Commission on Colleges.

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Attachment A

(23 NCAC 02E .0204)

(3) Criteria for Programs. Each curriculum program shall be based on the following criteria established by the State Board of Community Colleges for the awarding of degrees, diplomas, and certificates.

(b) Associate in Arts Degree. The associate in arts program of study must consist of a minimum of 64 and a maximum of 65 semester hours of credit from approved college transfer courses at the 110-199 and 210-299 levels. Within the degree program, the college shall include opportunities for the achievement of competence in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic use of computers. Certificates are not allowed under this degree program. The requirements for the Associate in Arts Degree are as follows:

- (i) The associate in arts curriculum program shall include a minimum of 44 semester hours of general education curriculum core courses selected from the Combined Course Library and approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. The general education core shall include:
  - (A) Six semester hours of English composition;
  - (B) 12 semester hours of humanities/fine arts;
  - (C) 12 semester hours of social/behavioral sciences;
  - (D) Six semester hours of mathematics; and
  - (E) Eight semester hours of natural sciences.
- (ii) The associate in arts program shall include a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 21 additional semester hours of credit selected from curriculum courses in the Combined Course Library which have been approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. A non-college transfer curriculum course of one semester hour of credit may be included in a 65 semester hour credit associate in arts program. This course may receive transfer evaluation by the receiving institution.
- (iii) A college may award a diploma under an approved associate in arts degree program for a series of curriculum courses taken from the approved associate in arts degree program of study. This diploma shall include a minimum of 44 and a maximum of 47 semester hours of general education curriculum core courses selected from the Combined Course Library and approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. The diploma shall include a minimum of:
  - (A) Six semester hours of English composition;
  - (B) 12 semester hours of humanities/fine arts;
  - (C) 12 semester hours of social/behavioral sciences;
  - (D) Six semester hours of mathematics; and
  - (E) Eight semester hours of natural sciences.

A non-college transfer course of one semester hour of credit may be included in a 47 semester hour credit diploma program. This curriculum course may receive transfer evaluation by the receiving institution.

(c) Associate in Science Degree. The associate in science program of study must consist of a minimum of 64 and a maximum of 65 semester hours of credit from approved college transfer courses at the 110-199 and 210-299 levels. Within the degree program, the college shall include opportunities for the achievement of competence in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic use of computers. Certificates are not allowed under this degree program. The requirements for Associate in Science Degree are as follows:

- (i) The associate in science curriculum program shall include a minimum of 44 semester hours of general education curriculum core courses selected from the Combined Course Library and approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions.

The general education core shall include:

- (A) Six semester hours of English composition;

- (B) Nine semester hours of humanities/fine arts;
  - (C) Nine semester hours of social/behavioral sciences; and
  - (D) 20 semester hours of mathematics and natural sciences that shall include a minimum of six semester hours in mathematics and a minimum of eight semester hours in natural sciences.
- (ii) The associate in science curriculum program may include a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 21 additional semester hours of credit selected from curriculum courses in the Combined Course Library which have been approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. A non-college transfer curriculum course of one semester hour of credit may be included in a 65 semester hour credit associate in science program. This curriculum course shall receive transfer evaluation by the receiving institution.
- (iii) A college may award a diploma under an approved associate in science degree program for a series of curriculum courses taken from the approved associate in science degree program of study. This diploma shall include a minimum of 44 and a maximum of 47 semester hours of general education curriculum core courses selected from the Combined Course Library and approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. The diploma shall include a minimum of:
- (A) Six semester hours of English composition;
  - (B) Nine semester hours of humanities/fine arts;
  - (C) Nine semester hours of social/behavioral sciences; and
  - (D) 20 semester hours of natural sciences and mathematics that shall include a minimum of six hours in mathematics and a minimum of eight hours in natural sciences.
- A non-college transfer curriculum course of one semester hour of credit may be included in a 47 semester hour credit program. This curriculum course may receive transfer evaluation by the receiving institution.
- (d) Associate in Fine Arts Degree. The associate in fine arts program of study must consist of a minimum of 64 and a maximum of 65 semester hours of credit from approved college transfer curriculum courses at the 110-199 and 210-299 levels. Within the degree program, the college shall include opportunities for achievement of competence in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills, and basic use of computers. Diplomas and certificates are not allowed under this degree program. The requirements for the Associate in Fine Arts Degree are as follows:
- (i) The associate in fine arts curriculum program shall include a minimum of 28 semester hours of general education curriculum core courses selected from the Combined Course Library and approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. The general education core shall include:
- (A) Six semester hours of English composition;
  - (B) Six semester hours of humanities/fine arts;
  - (C) Nine semester hours of social/behavioral sciences;
  - (D) Three semester hours of mathematics; and
  - (E) Four semester hours from the natural sciences.
- (ii) The associate in fine arts curriculum program shall include a minimum of 36 and a maximum of 37 additional semester hours of credit from curriculum courses in the Combined Course Library which have been approved for transfer to the University of North Carolina constituent institutions. A non-college transfer course of one semester hour of credit may be included in a 65 semester hour credit associate in fine arts program. This curriculum course may receive transfer evaluation by the receiving institution.