

CCS Administrative Procedure

4.10.01-A Degrees and Certificates

Implementing Board Policy [4.10.01](#)

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1.0 Purpose

Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) provides a wide variety of education programs giving students the choice to complete the first two years of a four-year degree program, an applied baccalaureate (four-year) degree program, select career and technical program offerings, or the opportunity to upgrade skills in preparation for work or college.

2.0 Limitations and Requirements

- 2.1 All professional-technical degree and certificate programs are approved by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) prior to program implementation.
- 2.2 The SBCTC sets rules/procedures/guidelines, developed in cooperation with the college system, that provide for the approval of all proposed new professional-technical programs, curriculum modifications, and program title changes.
- 2.3 CCS follows the statewide policy for transfer of credits as endorsed by the SBCTC. Credits from other accredited institutions in degree, diploma and certificate programs may be transferred upon approval.
- 2.4 Applied Baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees and major related programs (MRPs), must be endorsed by District Education Council (DEC) and then approved by the college curriculum committee. Any new degree must also be approved by the Board of Trustees.

3.0 Degrees and Certificates

- 3.1 Transfer degrees include Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science-Transfer (AS-T), Associate of Fine Arts (AFA).
- 3.2 Career and technical degrees include the Associate of Applied Science-Transfer (AAS-T) and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in a particular state-approved career and technical program.
- 3.3 An associate degree program conventionally entails approximately two academic years of study; i.e., 90 credits (or contact hour equivalent), or two years of 45 credits (or contact hour equivalent) each.
 - 3.3.1 The Washington Administrative Code, WAC 250-61-050 (10a), defines “associate degree” as a lower division undergraduate degree that requires no fewer than 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours. No transfer degree should require over 90 credits unless required by a statewide MRP or an articulation agreement for admission into a specific major program at a baccalaureate institution.
 - 3.3.2 Some highly technical programs and applied associate’s degrees may require more than this to ensure that students have the necessary preparation to succeed and/or are required by their professional accreditation agency to offer greater than 90 credits. Such exceptions will be approved by the vice president of instruction/learning at the appropriate college.
- 3.4 The Washington Administrative Code, WAC 250-61-050 (10b), defines “bachelor’s degree” or “baccalaureate degree” as an undergraduate degree that requires no fewer

than 120 semester hours or 180 quarter hours. While discussed but not defined in RCW 28B.50.810, an “applied baccalaureate degree” is as a bachelor’s degree designed to incorporate applied associate courses and degrees.

3.4.1 Accepted rationale for exceeding 90 credits:

- a) Regulatory (e.g. licensing, accreditation) requirements for specific hours of study/practice and therefore credits in excess of 90 for the proposed program
- b) Industry certification or recognized skill standards which require specific hours/practice and therefore credits in excess of 90 for the proposed program
- c) The absence of similar programs offered by other accredited institutions, private or public, at fewer credits than the proposed program at the applicant college
- d) In the absence of rationale from the above list, the appropriate Vice President of Instruction/Learning must approve explanations in the application specifying what actions will be taken to minimize negative impact on completion and equity gaps.

3.5 Career and technical certificates are offered in state-approved programs. One-year certificates are set at 45 credits.

4.0 Reciprocity Agreement

Washington community and technical colleges (CTCs) offer reciprocity to students transferring within the CTC system who are pursuing the Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) Associate degree or the Associate in Science (AS-T) degree.

- 4.1 Students who completed an individual course that met distribution degree requirements or fulfilled entire areas of their degree requirements at one college will be considered to have met those same requirements if they plan to complete the same degree when transferring to another community or technical college in Washington.
- 4.2 Students must initiate the review process and must be prepared to provide necessary documentation.

5.0 Degree or Certificate Requirements

- 5.1 Students are eligible to earn a degree or certificate by either:
 - 5.1.1 completing the degree requirements in effect at the time of initial enrollment within four academic calendar years, or
 - 5.1.2 completing the requirements in effect at the beginning of the last continuous enrollment (summer quarter excepted), or
 - 5.1.3 completing the most recent requirements in effect during the quarter of graduation.
- 5.2 A candidate for a degree may include courses newly approved to meet degree requirements even though the course approval comes after the credit has been earned.
- 5.3 Where changes in professional degrees and certificates make the above guidelines inappropriate, the respective division administrator, working with the individual students, shall determine which degree requirements to follow.
- 5.4 Course substitutions for required courses are permissible if approved by the appropriate instructional dean.

6.0 Related Information

- 6.1 WAC Section [250-61-050\(10a, 10b\)](#), Definitions.
- 6.2 [SBCTC Policy Manual](#), Chapter 4 – Instructional Program and Course Development
- 6.3 [RCW 28B.50.810](#), Applied baccalaureate degree programs.
- 6.4 [RCW 28B.50.090](#), College Board – Powers and Duties.
- 6.5 CCS Administrative Procedure, [4.10.01-B, Graduation](#).

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