

## **Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

*References: Title 5 Section 55063*

Southwestern Community College District provides lower-division educational programs of study that prepare students for transfer to senior institutions and /or career and technical programs that lead to employment or career advancement. Students identify a program of study in a Student Education Plan and upon completion of program requirements may petition to graduate with the certificate and/or degree.

The College District believes that a comprehensive education introduces the student to the fundamentals of human experience and knowledge in the context of a global society. Such experience provides a common base of learning for all students and seeks to meet the needs of a student body diverse in social, cultural, and educational backgrounds. It also serves to develop creativity and critical thinking skills essential to the attainment of personal goals and to the ability of the individual to make a positive contribution to society.

### **Proficiency Requirements**

Part of the calculation used in the Southwestern College Assessment process to determine satisfaction of the proficiency requirement is high school grade point average. A student, however, may petition to substitute the college grade point average for the high school grade point average. The student must have completed a minimum of 24 degree units at Southwestern College, have completed those units within the past seven years, and be in good standing with the College. The student must submit a student petition to the Assessment Center to be considered for this substitution.

**Mathematics Proficiency** – The Southwestern College mathematics proficiency requirement can be satisfied in any one of the following ways:

- Satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) of Math 60 or higher-numbered mathematics course.
- Satisfactory completion (minimum of 3 semester units with a grade of “C” or better) of a transferable statistics course in any discipline (e.g. Psych/Soc 270 at Southwestern College). As appropriate consultation will occur with Southwestern College discipline faculty.
- Satisfactory performance on the Southwestern College Math Assessment; i.e., results that indicate eligibility for MATH 70 (Intermediate Algebra II), or a higher numbered mathematics course.

**Reading Proficiency** – The Southwestern College reading proficiency requirement is met by satisfactory performance on the Southwestern College Reading Assessment. The requirement may also be met by satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) of RDG 158 or ADN 140 or ENGL 115 or ENGL 115H.

## **Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

Writing Proficiency – The Southwestern College English Writing proficiency requirement satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) in the following:

ADN 140     Reading and Composition for Nursing and Allied Health Occupations  
ENGL 115     College Composition: Reading and Writing Analytically  
ENGL 115H   Honors College Composition: Reading and Writing Analytically

**Note:** Proficiency requirements may also be met by satisfactory scores on specified Advanced Placement (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), or International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams.

A student who has received a college degree from an accredited U.S. institution will not be required to meet proficiency requirements for graduation.

### **General Education Requirements**

The purpose of general education is to enhance learning and to add breadth to the college experience in order to compliment the specialization in the major. The general education curriculum thus provides coherence to undergraduate education, affording the student the opportunity to develop an integrated overview of the diverse fields of human knowledge.

Per Title 5 55063, students must complete a minimum of 18 semester units of general education to satisfy the Associate Degree requirements.

Southwestern College is committed to providing general education encompassing Social and Behavioral Sciences, Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Language and Rationality which are consistent with the Title 5 areas for General Education.

General Educational Patterns – There are three General Education patterns available at Southwestern College. Each is based upon legal requirements and the educational philosophy of the college faculty.

A student may meet the general education requirements for an associate degree by completing one of the following general education patterns:

- Southwestern College Associate Degree General Education Requirements
- California State University (CSU) General Education Breadth Requirements
- Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)

The Southwestern College Associate Degree General Education Requirements meets the minimum 18 unit Title 5 General Education requirement for an associate degree awarded by Southwestern College. A minimum of 60 total units should include general education courses, degree/program course requirements and elective courses are required to earn an

## **Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

associate degree.

The California State University (CSU) General Education Breadth Requirements is a 41-42 unit pattern designed for the student planning to transfer to the California State University (CSU) system. Southwestern College will certify coursework completed at another California community college or any institution that participates in certifying general education coursework to the CSU, including a CSU campus other than the one to which the student is transferring, only if the courses are on the approved CSU general education list at the college where they were completed. Such a course will be certified in the general education breadth area that is shown on the official certification list for the institution at which it was taken.

The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) is a 38 to 41 unit general education pattern which meets all lower-division general education requirements at most California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) campuses. Completion of the IGETC is not a requirement for admission to a CSU or UC, nor will its completion guarantee admission to a CSU or UC campus. Each course for this pattern must be completed with a grade of "C" or better.

### **Associate Degree Requirements**

1. Unit and Scholarship Requirement - Students must satisfactorily complete 60 or more units of coursework which will satisfy all graduation requirements. This means either credit earned on a Pass/No Pass basis or cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better for credit earned on a grading scale basis for all college coursework attempted and for all Southwestern College course work attempted.
2. Coursework Requirements –All coursework required for the major requires minimum grade of 'C' or better or a "P" if the course is taken on a "pass-no pass" basis.
3. Residency Requirements – The student must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 12 degree-applicable units to satisfy degree requirements at Southwestern College.
4. Major Requirements – Students must declare a major in order for a degree to be conferred. Majors are programs of 18 or more units of coursework selected from courses transferable to the California State University System. A student may be enrolled for one or more semesters without declaring a specific major. He/she may also change majors. The requirements for the major will be determined by the catalog in effect during the semester in which the student declared or changed the major or any subsequent catalog within periods of continuous enrollment. All major requirements must be completed using the same catalog.

## **Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

5. Associate Degree - Completion of an Associate Degree is satisfied through successful completion of a minimum of 18 units of general education and at least 18 units in a major or area of emphasis. The overall units needed to satisfy an Associate Degree is 60 and all coursework must be approved through the college curriculum process and be printed in the college catalog.
6. Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) – The California Community Colleges ADT to the California State University (CSU) as per the Student Transfer Achievement Reform (STAR) Act (SB 1440-Padilla) are designed to provide a clear pathway to a CSU major and baccalaureate degree. These may include Associate in Arts (AA-T) or Associate in Science (AS-T) degrees. California Community College students who are awarded an AA-T or AS-T degree are guaranteed admission with junior standing somewhere in the CSU system and given priority admission consideration to their local CSU campus or to a program that is deemed similar to their community college major. This priority does not guarantee admission to specific majors or campuses.

Students who have been awarded an AA-T or AS-T are able to complete their remaining requirements for the 120-unit baccalaureate degree within 60 semester or 90 quarter units.

To view the most current list of Southwestern College Associate Degrees for Transfer and to find out which CSU campuses accept each degree, please go to [www.sd1440.org](http://www.sd1440.org). Current and prospective community college students are encouraged to meet with a counselor to review their options for transfer and to develop an educational plan that best meets their goals and needs.

### **Multiple Degrees**

Students who qualify may receive additional associate degrees provided the designated degree to be earned will represent a change in major from the degree or degrees previously earned. A student who has already earned a bachelor's or higher degree may qualify for an associate degree providing that the designated major is different from the bachelor's or higher degree.

For each additional degree, the student must complete all requirements for the new major with a minimum of 18 new units. The additional units must include a minimum of 12 units in the major. In addition, the student must meet all graduation requirements enforced at the time of declaration of a new major.

ADT Exemption: Students who have previously been awarded an Associate Degree and wish to receive an ADT will be exempt from the additional unit requirement of 18 new units and 12 units in the major. Students who wish to pursue a second ADT in a new major will

## **Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates**

also be exempt from the additional unit requirement of 18 units and 12 units in the major. Students must complete all required courses for the ADT and submit a graduation petition for the new degree. Upon approval, the additional ADT will be posted to the student's academic record.

### **Course Certificate**

A course certificate verifying the satisfactory completion of a course will be issued upon request to any student who completes a course with a grade of "C" or better. A student who desires such a certificate should submit an application to the instructor during the last four weeks of the semester.

### **Certificate of Achievement**

Certificates of Achievement require 18 or more units in an approved program. Certificates of Achievement are designed to convey evidence that defined levels of proficiency have been attained in career or technical areas. Certificates of Achievement are available in most of the majors for which the College offers the associate degree. Students select a certificate of achievement area with specified course requirements from the Program of Study section of the catalog.

To qualify for a Certificate of Achievement, a student must do all of the following:

- Complete all courses listed for a particular certificate;
- Achieve a grade of "C" or better in all courses required for that specific certificate;
- Achieve a grade point average of "C" (2.0) for all courses attempted at

Southwestern College that are required for that specific certificate;

- File a petition for Certificate of Achievement; and
- Satisfactorily complete at least one required course at Southwestern College during the semester in which the certificate is earned.

### **Certificate of Proficiency**

Certificates of Proficiency are designed for the student who needs to be prepared to enter an entry-level job. Approved Certificate of Proficiency programs have less than 18 units. Certificates of Proficiency are not awarded automatically and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure satisfactory completion of the certificate requirements. When all requirements are completed or in-progress, students should submit a petition for Certificate of Proficiency form to the Evaluations Office. Petitions are available on the Evaluations Office webpage. These certificates will not be listed on a student's transcript. Certificates of Proficiency are not awarded at the Southwestern College commencement ceremony.

## Graduation Requirements for Degrees and Certificates

### Certificate of Completion

Certificates of Completion are approved non-credit certificates.

### Graduation Certification

Students must complete a *"Petition for Graduation"* in order to be certified for graduation. They must meet the requirements to complete an associate degree in order to receive the certification and be eligible to receive a diploma.

### Posted Degrees

The posting of an associate degree to a student's record is considered a permanent part of the student's academic record and cannot be rescinded, removed or modified.

### Definitions

**Continuous Enrollment:** The completion of a course during at least one semester in a calendar year excluding summer session. Completing a course is defined as receiving a grade of A, B, C, D, F, I, Pass (P), or No Pass (NP). Receiving a grade of "W" will not satisfy the requirements for completing a course (Policy No. 6087).

**Catalog Rights:** When continuous enrollment is maintained, students may elect the general education and graduation requirements in effect at the time of entrance to Southwestern College, or any catalog year thereafter (Policy No. 6041).

**Major:** For a local degree the requirements for the major will be determined by either the catalog in effect during the semester in which the student declared or changed a major or any subsequent catalog provided the student maintains continuous enrollment. For an ADT the student must complete the courses identified for the ADT major.