



AP 4025 Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education

References: Title 5 Section 55060 et. seq.
 ACCJC Accreditation Standard 2

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I. The Associate Degree

Under the authority of the Board of Trustees, the Butte-Glenn Community College District awards the Associate of Arts (AA) degree, Associate of Science (AS) degree, and Associate Degree for Transfer (AA-T or AS-T) consistent with the standards in Title 5 §§55060-55062 of the California Code of Regulations.

An associate degree from Butte College consists of two primary elements:

- General education, which gives students a broad base of knowledge.
- An academic program in which a student specializes in a particular field of study or area of emphasis.

At Butte College, an associate degree documents students' educational achievement and provides them with a foundation for future learning, including the ability to:

- Think critically,
- Communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing,
- Apply quantitative reasoning,
- Understand the methods of inquiry and production used in the major academic disciplines,
- Comprehend diverse cultures and historical periods,
- Gain perspective through critical assessment of ethical problems, and
- Develop the capacity for self-understanding.

At Butte College, the AS degree is typically earned in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) or Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. The AA degree is typically earned for all other academic areas. The AA-T or AS-T is earned in programs designed for transfer preparation to specific California State University system majors. AA-T and AS-T degrees are aligned with transfer model curricula developed jointly by the Academic Senates and discipline faculty in the California Community College and California State University systems.

II. Statement of General Education Philosophy

General education is an integrated program of learning designed to foster intellectual curiosity,

cultural understanding, critical thinking, creative reasoning and expression, facility with oral and written communication, and the capacity for ethical reasoning and judgment through exposure to integrative and introductory courses in the major areas of academic inquiry. Through completion of a general education curriculum, graduates acquire a common foundation of knowledge for understanding their physical environment, culture, and society, as well as the skills of inquiry, reflection, and expression essential for personal growth and lifelong learning.

At Butte College, General Education requirements represent a subset of the California General Education Transfer Curriculum ("Cal-GETC").

- **1A – English Composition:** Courses fulfilling this requirement are baccalaureate-level courses and include expository and argumentative writing.
- **1B – Oral Communication and Critical Thinking:** Courses fulfilling this requirement are baccalaureate level and include oral communication and/or critical thinking courses.
- **2 – Mathematical Concepts and Quantitative Reasoning:** Courses fulfilling this requirement must be at least college level and may include mathematics or quantitative reasoning courses.
- **3—Arts and Humanities:** Courses in the arts and humanities focus on human cultural activities and artistic expressions. They examine how people and cultures, throughout time, respond to themselves and the world around them through artistic and cultural creative production. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in the visual and performing arts, art history, foreign languages, literature, philosophy, religion, and related disciplines.
- **4 – Social and Behavioral Sciences:** Courses in the social and behavioral sciences focus on people as members of society and develop awareness of the methods of inquiry used by the social and behavioral sciences. They stimulate critical thinking about how people act and have acted in response to their societies and promote appreciation of how societies and social subgroups operate. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in cultural anthropology, cultural geography, economics, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and related disciplines.
- **5 – Physical and Biological Sciences:** Courses in the physical and biological sciences examine the physical universe, its life forms, and its natural phenomena, helping students appreciate and understand the scientific method and the relationships between science and other human activities. Courses fulfilling this requirement may include introductory or integrative baccalaureate-level courses in astronomy, biology, chemistry, general physical science, geology, meteorology, oceanography, physical geography, physical anthropology, physics, and other scientific disciplines.
- **6 – Ethnic Studies:** Courses fulfilling this requirement may include baccalaureate-level courses in the four autonomous disciplines within ethnic studies:
 - Black studies; African American studies; Africana studies;
 - Native American studies;
 - Chicano/a/x; Latino/a/x studies/La Raza studies; and
 - Asian American studies.

III. Standards and Criteria for General Education

The following standards and criteria will be used by the Curriculum Committee to determine which courses will be included in the Butte College general education curriculum. They are documented in the curriculum handbook to provide guidance to faculty authors and ensure consistent application by the committee. The standards and criteria include:

- **Local and Transfer GE Alignment:** Courses must be accepted to meet the California State University and University of California (Cal-GETC) general requirements to be included in the Butte College general education pattern.
- **Prerequisites:** Courses accepted for the Butte College GE pattern should not have prerequisites. Exceptions to this rule should be limited to those courses where prerequisites are required for articulation, accreditation, or transfer of credit.
- **Frequency and Modality of Offering:** Courses accepted for the Butte College GE pattern must demonstrate sufficient demand to be offered regularly, preferably at least once every term, and must be scheduled in multiple locations and modalities to ensure student access.
- **Courses will be listed only in a single general education category as determined by the Curriculum Committee, which may make exceptions to this rule based on criteria outlined in the Butte College Curriculum Handbook.**