BP 4025 Philosophy and Criteria for Associate Degree and General Education

Reference:
Title 5, Section 55061; Accreditation Standard 2

The awarding of an Associate degree is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. Students awarded an Associate degree, or students certified as meeting general education requirements for either the University of California system or the California State University system, should be educated in a broad sense. It is to symbolize a successful attempt on the part of the college to lead students through patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities and insights. Among these are the ability to think and to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing; to use mathematics, to understand the modes of inquiry of the major disciplines; to be aware of other cultures and times; to achieve insights gained through experience in thinking about ethical problems, and to develop the capacity for self-understanding.
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General education is not the same for everyone, thus, some range of choice shall be incorporated into any general education pattern. The general education pattern may include applied as well as theoretical courses. In addition to general education accomplishments, the student receiving an Associate degree shall possess sufficient depth in some field of knowledge to contribute to lifetime interest.

Central to an Associate degree, general education is designed to introduce students to the variety of means through which people comprehend the modern world. It reflects the conviction of colleges that those who receive their degrees must possess in common certain basic principles, concepts and methodologies both unique to and shared by the various disciplines. College educated persons must be able to use this knowledge when evaluating and appreciating the physical environment, the culture, and the society in which they live. Most important, general education should lead to better understanding.

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In establishing or modifying a general education program, ways shall be sought to create coherence and integration among the separate requirements. It is also desirable that general education programs involve students actively in examining values inherent in proposed solutions to major society problems. To assure student success, basic education courses, courses in the arts and sciences, courses in history and government, courses in humanities and physical education, which are appropriate to serving general educational purposes, must be constantly reviewed and updated to maintain their relevance to current student needs. As the total college environment contributes to the overall education of our students, care must be taken to make all college experiences constructive and meaningful.
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The Superintendent/President shall establish procedures to assure that courses used to meet general education and Associate degree requirements meet the standards in this policy. The procedures shall provide for appropriate Academic Senate involvement.