

Definitions

Academic Associate Degree	An “academic associate degree” is an associate degree that will satisfy the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific discipline. <i>19 TAC 9.1(1)</i>
Academic Courses	“Academic courses” are semester credit courses included or allowed under the provisions of the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual designed for college transfer to institutions of higher education in completion of associate and baccalaureate degree programs. <i>19 TAC 9.1(2)</i>
Applied Associate Degree	An “applied associate degree” is an associate degree intended to lead directly to employment following graduation and may satisfy the lower-division requirements for a baccalaureate degree in a specific discipline. <i>19 TAC 9.1(3)</i>
Associate Degree Program	An “associate degree program” is a grouping of courses designed to lead the individual directly to employment in a specific career or to transfer to an upper-level baccalaureate program. This specifically refers to the associate of arts (AA), associate of science (AS), associate of applied arts (AAA), associate of applied science (AAS), and associate of occupational studies (AOS) degrees. The term “applied” in an associate degree name indicates a program designed to qualify students for immediate employment. <i>19 TAC 9.1(4)</i>
Career Technical / Workforce Program	“Career technical/workforce program” is an applied associate degree program or a certificate program for which semester credit hours, quarter credit hours, or continuing education units are awarded and which is intended to prepare students for immediate employment or a job upgrade in a specific occupation. <i>19 TAC 9.1(5)</i>
Certificate Program	“Certificate program” means workforce programs designed for entry-level employment or for upgrading skills and knowledge within an occupation. Certificate programs serve as building blocks and exit points for AAS degree programs. <i>19 TAC 9.1(7)</i>
Continuing Education Unit or CEU	A “continuing education unit or CEU” is defined as ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction, as outlined in the Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education. <i>19 TAC 9.1(11)</i>
Technical Courses or Programs	“Technical courses or programs” mean workforce education courses or programs for which semester/quarter credit hours are awarded. <i>19 TAC 9.1(28)</i>

DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES
ASSOCIATE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES

EFBA
(LEGAL)

Workforce Continuing Education Course	“Workforce continuing education course” means a course offered for CEUs with an occupationally specific objective and supported by state funding. A career technical/workforce continuing education course differs from a community service course offered for recreational or vocational purposes and is not supported by state funding. <i>19 TAC 9.1(31)</i>
Workforce Education	“Workforce education” means career technical/workforce courses and programs for which semester/quarter credit hours and/or CEUs are awarded and vocational courses and programs for which CEUs are awarded. Workforce career technical/workforce education courses and programs prepare students for immediate employment or a job upgrade within specific occupational categories. <i>19 TAC 9.1(32)</i>
Academic Associate Degree Programs	An academic associate degree may be called an associate of arts (AA), an associate of science (AS), or an associate of arts in teaching (AAT) degree. <i>19 TAC 9.183(a)</i>
AA Only	The AA is the default title for an academic associate degree program if the college district offers only one type of academic degree program. <i>19 TAC 9.183(a)(1)</i>
AA and AS	If a college district offers both AA and AS degrees, the degree programs may be differentiated in one of two ways, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The AA program may have additional requirements in the liberal arts and/or the AS program may have additional requirements in disciplines such as science, mathematics, or computer science; or2. The AA program may serve as a foundation for the bachelor of arts (BA) degree and the AS program for the bachelor of science (BS) degree. <p>Each academic associate degree must provide a clearly-articulated curriculum that can be associated with a discipline or field of study leading to a baccalaureate degree, and must be identified as such in the institution's program inventory.</p> <i>19 TAC 9.183(a)(2)</i>
AAT	The AAT is a specialized academic associate degree program designed to transfer in its entirety to a baccalaureate program that leads to initial Texas teacher certification. This title should only be used for an associate degree program that consists of a Coordinating Board-approved AAT curriculum. <i>19 TAC 9.183(a)(3)</i>
Semester Credit Hours	Academic associate degree programs must consist of 60 semester credit hours (SCH). If the number of SCH required to complete a

proposed academic associate's degree exceeds 60, the institution must provide detailed written documentation describing the compelling academic reason for the number of required hours, such as programmatic accreditation requirements, statutory requirements, or licensure/certification requirements that cannot be met without exceeding the 60-hour limit. The Coordinating Board will review the documentation provided and make a determination to approve or deny a request to exceed the 60-hour limit. Institutions of higher education must be in compliance with this subsection on or before the 2015 fall semester. *19 TAC 9.183(b)–(c)*

Curriculum

Except as provided below, academic associate degree programs must incorporate the institution's approved core curriculum as prescribed by 19 Administrative Code 4.28, relating to Core Curriculum, and 19 Administrative Code 4.29, relating to Core Curricula Larger than 42 SCH.

1. A college may offer a specialized academic associate degree that incorporates a Coordinating Board-approved field of study curriculum as prescribed by 19 Administrative Code 4.32, relating to Field of Study Curricula, and a portion of the college's approved core curriculum if the coursework for both would total more than 60 SCH; or
2. A college may offer a specialized academic associate degree that incorporates a voluntary statewide transfer compact and a portion of the college's approved core curriculum if the coursework for both would total more than 60 SCH.
3. A college that has a signed articulation agreement with a General Academic Teaching Institution to transfer a specified curriculum may offer a specialized AA or AS, but not AAT, degree program that incorporates that curriculum.

19 TAC 9.183(d)

New Academic
Associate Degree
Programs

New academic associate degree programs shall be approved if all of the conditions set out below are met.

The institution shall certify that the following criteria have been met:

1. The program has institution and governing board approval.
2. There is recent evidence of both short-term and long-term student demand for the program.
3. Enrollment projections reflect student demand estimates to ensure the financial self-sufficiency of the program.
4. The institution has an enrollment management plan for the program.

5. If the program does not follow a Coordinating Board-approved field of study curriculum or a Coordinating Board-approved statewide articulation transfer curriculum, the institution has or will initiate a process to establish transfer of credit articulation agreements for the program with senior-level institutions.
6. The program is designed to be consistent with the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), other applicable accrediting agencies, and is in compliance with applicable licensing authority requirements.
7. Adequate funding is available to cover all new costs to the institution over the first five years after the implementation of the program.
8. The program complies with all applicable provisions contained in divisions of 19 Administrative Code Chapter 9, Subchapter J and adheres to the Standards for Academic Associate Degree Programs approved by the Coordinating Board.

The institution proposing the program shall notify all public institutions within 50 miles of the teaching site of their intention to offer the program at least 30 days prior to submitting their request to the Coordinating Board. If no objections are received, the Coordinating Board staff shall update the institution's program inventory accordingly. If objections occur, the proposed program shall not be implemented until all objections are resolved. If the proposing institution cannot resolve the objection(s), the proposing institution may request the assistance of the assistant commissioner of workforce, academic affairs and research to mediate the objections and determine whether the proposing institution may implement the proposed program.

The Coordinating Board delegates to the commissioner final approval authority for all certificate programs, applied associate degree programs, and academic associate degrees that meet board policies for approval as outlined in the Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education and 19 Administrative Code Chapter 9, Subchapter J. The commissioner may delegate this final authority.

19 TAC 9.184(a)

Audits

The Coordinating Board reserves the right to audit a certificate or degree program at any time to ensure compliance with any of the requirements of 19 Administrative Code Chapter 9, Subchapter J.
19 TAC 9.184(b)

**Multidisciplinary
Studies Associate
Degree Program**

The governing board of each public junior college district shall establish a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program which meets the requirements of 19 Administrative Code Chapter 9, Subchapter L at each junior college in the district. A multidisciplinary studies associate degree program is a coordinating board-approved associate of arts or associate of science degree composed of the college's core curriculum and enough additional courses to equal 60 semester credit hours (SCH). The SCH beyond the core curriculum must be selected by the student, in consultation with an academic adviser, and transfer to a specific field of study or major at a university of the student's choice.

A multidisciplinary studies associate degree program established at a junior college under 19 Administrative Code 9.553 must require a student to successfully complete:

1. The junior college's core curriculum adopted under Education Code 61.822(b); and
2. After completion of the core curriculum described above, the courses selected by the student in the student's completed degree plan accounts for all remaining credit hours required for the completion of the degree program; and
3. Emphasizes the student's transition to a particular four-year college or university that the student chooses; and prepare for the student's intended field of study or major at the four-year college or university.

Education Code 130.0104(a)–(b); 19 TAC 9.552(5), .553.–554

Academic Certificate

Institutions of higher education, including college districts, are encouraged to develop undergraduate academic certificate programs of less than degree length. Undergraduate academic certificates may be awarded upon the completion of:

1. The Coordinating Board-approved core curriculum of the institution;
2. A Coordinating Board-approved field of study curriculum; or
3. Fifty percent of the courses specified in a voluntary statewide transfer compact.

Undergraduate academic certificates that meet one of the criteria above require Coordinating Board notification and are automatically approved.

19 TAC 4.36, 9.185

**Career Technical /
Workforce Degree
and Certificate
Programs**

Requests for new associate degree and certificate programs shall be made in accordance with the procedures stipulated in 19 Administrative Code 9.93(b), below.

Public two-year colleges shall request new associate degree and certificate programs using the appropriate degree program request form. Public two-year colleges must submit documentation sufficient to establish that the new program meets all of the criteria listed below. Coordinating Board staff will review all requests for new programs within five business days of receipt. If Coordinating Board staff determines that the request is incomplete and additional information or documentation is needed, the institution must respond with all of the requested information or documentation within ten working days or the request will be returned to the institution. An institution may resubmit a request that was incomplete as soon as it has obtained the requested information or documentation.

New associate degree and certificate programs shall be approved if all of the following conditions are met, provided that the number of SCH required to complete a proposed associate degree program does not exceed 60 SCH.

1. The institution shall certify that:
 - a. The program has institutional and governing board approval.
 - b. The institution has researched and documented current job market need for the program and/or that the program would lead to opportunities for further education.
 - c. There is recent evidence of both short-term and long-term student demand for the program.
 - d. Enrollment projections reflect student demand estimates to ensure the financial self-sufficiency of the program.
 - e. Basic and career technical/workforce skills have been integrated into the curriculum.
 - f. The institution has an enrollment management plan for the program.
 - g. The institution has or will initiate a process to establish articulation agreements for the program with secondary and/or senior-level institutions.
 - h. The program is designed to be consistent with the standards of the SACSCOC, and with the standards of other

- applicable accrediting agencies, and is in compliance with appropriate licensing authority requirements.
- i. The program would not unnecessarily duplicate existing programs at other institutions.
 - j. Representatives from private sector business and industry have been involved in the creation of the program through participation in an advisory committee.
 - k. Adequate funding is available to cover all new costs to the institution over the first five years after the implementation of the program.
 - l. New costs during the first five years of the program would not exceed \$2 million.
 - m. The institution has an improvement plan in place for all career technical/workforce programs that do not currently meet Coordinating Board standards for both graduation and placement.
 - n. The appropriate Higher Education Regional Council has been notified in writing of the proposal for a new program, and no unresolved objections to the program have been reported.
 - o. Skill standards recognized by the Texas Skill Standards Board, if they exist for the discipline, have been reviewed and considered for inclusion in the curriculum for the program.
2. If a proposed two-year career technical/workforce education program or certificate program meets the stipulated conditions, the institution shall submit a request to the assistant commissioner for workforce, academic affairs and research to add the program. If a proposed program does not meet the stipulated conditions, the institution must submit a proposal using the standard electronic new program application process.
 3. If the number of SCH required to complete a proposed associate's program exceeds 60, the institution must provide detailed written documentation describing the compelling academic reason for the number of required hours, such as programmatic accreditation requirements, statutory requirements, or licensure/certification requirements that cannot be met without exceeding the 60-hour limit. The Coordinating Board will review the documentation provided and make a determination to approve or deny a request to exceed the 60-

hour limit. Institutions of higher education must be in compliance with this paragraph on or before the 2015 fall semester.

4. The institution proposing the program shall notify all public institutions within 50 miles of the teaching site of their intention to offer the program at least 30 days prior to submitting their request to the Coordinating Board. If no objections are received, the Coordinating Board staff shall update the institution's program inventory accordingly. If objections occur, the proposed program shall not be implemented until all objections are resolved. If the proposing institution cannot resolve the objection(s), the proposing institution may request the assistance of the assistant commissioner of workforce, academic affairs and research to mediate the objections and determine whether the proposing institution may implement the proposed program.
5. If objections to the proposed program are received by the Coordinating Board staff, the proposed program shall not be implemented until all objections are resolved.

The commissioner shall forward a program to the Coordinating Board for consideration at an appropriate quarterly meeting if either of the following conditions is met: the proposed program is the subject of an unresolved grievance or dispute between institutions; or the commissioner has disapproved the proposed program and the institution has requested a Coordinating Board review.

19 TAC 9.93(a)–(b), (e)

Revisions

Revision of an existing associate degree or certificate program shall be approved if all of the requirements above at item 1 at Career Technical / Workforce Degree and Certificate Programs are met. To request a change of Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for an existing degree or certificate program, the institution shall notify the Coordinating Board staff and certify that the revised program meets the requirements listed above at item 1. If the revision of an existing degree or certificate program meets the conditions stipulated at item 1, the institution shall submit a request to the assistant commissioner for academic affairs and research to revise the program. The Coordinating Board staff shall update the institution's program inventory accordingly. If a program revision does not meet the conditions stipulated, the institution shall submit a revision request using the standard electronic program revision request process. *19 TAC 9.93(f)–(i)*

Audits

The Coordinating Board reserves the right to audit a certificate or degree program at any time to ensure compliance with any of the

requirements in 19 Administrative Code Chapter 9, Subchapter E.
19 TAC 9.93(m)

Administrative
Officials

All programs must be under the direction of an administrator having appropriate authority to ensure that quality is maintained and that programs are conducted in compliance with all applicable laws and rules. Administrative officers must possess credentials, work experience, and/or demonstrated competence appropriate to their areas of responsibility as specified by the SACSCOC. *19 TAC 9.93(j)*

Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff must be approved by the postsecondary institution. *19 TAC 9.93(k)*

**Limitation on SCH
Requirements**

To earn an associate degree, a student may not be required by an institution of higher education, including a college district, to complete more than the minimum number of SCH required for the degree by the SACSCOC or its successor unless the institution determines that there is a compelling academic reason for requiring completion of additional SCH for the degree. The Coordinating Board may review one or more of an institution's associate degree programs to ensure compliance with this section.

This section does not apply to an associate degree awarded by an institution to a student enrolled in the institution before the 2015 fall semester. This provision does not prohibit the institution from reducing the number of SCH the student must complete to receive the degree.

Education Code 61.05151

State Funding

No funds appropriated to any public two-year college or other institution providing certificate or associate degree programs shall be expended for any program that has not been approved by the commissioner or the assistant commissioner for workforce, academic affairs and research or, when applicable, by the Coordinating Board. *19 TAC 9.96*