

ASSOCIATE DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

Associate in Arts for Transfer/Associate in Science for Transfer Degrees

California community colleges offer associate degrees for transfer to the California State University system. These degrees are designed to provide clear pathways to CSU majors and baccalaureate degrees. Students awarded associate degrees for transfer and meeting the CSU minimum transfer admission requirements are guaranteed admission with junior standing within the CSU system. Students are also given priority admission consideration to their local CSU campus, or to a program that is deemed similar to the community college major. This priority does not guarantee admission to a specific major or campus.

Students awarded associate degrees for transfer are able to complete their remaining requirements for the 120-unit baccalaureate degree within 60 semester or 90 quarter units.

For more information about associate degrees for transfer, go to <https://icangotocollege.com/associate-degree-for-transfer> (<https://icangotocollege.com/associate-degree-for-transfer/>).

Students should consult with a counselor for information on university admission and transfer requirements and to develop an educational plan that best meets their goals and needs. The following requirements apply for AA-T or AS-T degrees:

1. Completion of major requirements with grades of "C" or better.
2. Completion of 60 CSU-transferable semester units, 12 of which must be completed at Sierra College. (Units received through credit by examination do not count toward the 12-unit residency requirement.)
3. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in all CSU-transferable coursework. While a minimum of 2.0 is required for admission, some majors may require a higher GPA.
4. Certified completion of either the [California General Education Transfer Curriculum \(Cal-GETC\)](https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/) (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/>).

RESTRICTION: International coursework from non-United States regionally accredited institutions cannot be applied to associate degrees for transfer.

Associate of Arts/Associate of Science Degrees

Students planning to graduate with an associate degree must:

1. Complete major requirements with grades of "C" or better.
2. Complete a minimum of 60 degree-applicable semester units, 12 of which must be completed at Sierra College. (Units received through credit by examination do not count toward this requirement.)
3. Earn a minimum grade point average of at least 2.0 in all degree-applicable coursework.
4. Complete one of the following three general education patterns:

- a. Sierra College Associate Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/associate-degree-requirements/>);
- b. [California General Education Transfer Curriculum \(Cal-GETC\)](https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/) (<https://catalog.sierracollege.edu/archive/2025-2026/student-resources/general-education/california-general-education-transfer-curriculum-cal-getc/>)

Note: Students who possess a baccalaureate or higher degree completed at a college or university accredited through a CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) recognized Regional Accrediting Agency will have satisfied Sierra College general education and competency requirements for the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree.

Certificates of Achievement

A certificate of achievement is designed to demonstrate that a student has completed coursework and developed capabilities relating to career or general education. Certificates of achievement require a minimum of 16 units. Students must:

1. Earn grades of "C" or better in all required courses.
2. Complete at least one (1) required course at Sierra College. (Units received through Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) do not count toward this requirement.)

Certificates of achievement are recorded on student transcripts.

Gainful Employment Disclosure Information

The U.S. Department of Education requires colleges to disclose certain information about Title IV eligible certificate of achievement programs that "prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation." The information is intended to assist current and prospective students as they make career and educational choices. Specific information for each certificate program is located at www.sierracollege.edu/gainfulemployment (<https://www.sierracollege.edu/student-services/career-transfer-internship/prepare-for-a-career/gainful-employment-data/>).

Skills Certificates

A skills certificate is an acknowledgement that a student has attained a specified set of competencies within a career and technical education program, either in preparation to enter the field or upgrade of skills required for continued employment. Skills certificates require a minimum of 6 units and a maximum of 15.5 units.

1. Students must earn grades of "C" or better in all required courses.
2. Skills certificates are not recorded on student transcripts.

Noncredit Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) Certificates

Noncredit Career Development or College Preparation certificates prepare students for employment or to be successful in college-level credit coursework. No units are awarded for noncredit courses or certificates. Noncredit courses and certificates are recorded on separate transcripts from credit coursework.

Catalog Rights

Sierra College issues a new catalog every academic year. New programs may be introduced and course requirements for specific majors may

change from one catalog to the next. For purposes of meeting Sierra College degree and/or certificate requirements, students may choose from the following Sierra College catalog options:

1. The catalog in effect at the time the student first enrolled at Sierra College or any year thereafter, as long as continuous enrollment has been maintained;
2. The catalog in effect at the intended semester/session of graduation; or
3. The catalog in effect at the time the student first enrolled at a California community college, a California State University, a University of California campus, and/or a regionally accredited institution of higher education, as long as continuous enrollment has been maintained.

Continuous enrollment is defined as enrollment in at least one course per calendar year (spring, summer, fall), with at least one of the following academic record symbols recorded on an official transcript: A, B, C, D, F, W, EW, MW, P, NP, or I. Students beginning enrollment during the summer have the option of choosing the prior academic year's catalog.

If continuous enrollment is interrupted, students may reestablish catalog rights based on the date of reenrollment at Sierra College or any other California community college, CSU, UC campus, or regionally accredited institution of higher education.

Regardless of catalog rights, a course may be used to satisfy a general education requirement if it was approved for the general education area at the time the course was successfully completed and the course complies with Title 5 regulations.

Catalog rights do not apply to entrance requirements for programs (e.g., Nursing).

General Education Reciprocity

Title 5 outlines and defines general education subject areas that each California Community College must include. As many students attend more than one college, and the courses that are locally approved for a particular GE area vary among colleges, Sierra College grants reciprocity for all lower-division general education designated courses completed at California Community Colleges, California State Universities, and University of California campuses, provided the courses comply with Title 5 regulations.

Associate Degree for Transfer Reciprocity

For AA-T and AS-T degrees, reciprocity will be granted for those courses taken at other California community colleges in Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) aligned degrees, provided that the transfer courses appear in the same specific area in the major pattern. The flexibility to move courses between areas is dependent upon the parameters defined in the individual TMC. TMC templates are maintained on the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office website. If there are any questions about course applicability, the discipline faculty must make the determination.

Double-Counting

Sierra College encourages double-counting, which is the practice of allowing students to use a course to satisfy both a general education requirement and a major requirement. While a course may be listed in multiple general education areas, it may only be used to satisfy one general education requirement.

Honor Graduates

Upon graduation, students are recognized with honors when they have completed all degree-applicable credit courses with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or better. Other college lower-division coursework posted to the Sierra College transcript is included in this GPA calculation.

Degree and Certificate Request

Students desiring an associate degree or certificate must submit an online request via mySierra by the following semester deadlines:

Fall 2025	October 1, 2025
Spring and Summer 2026	March 1, 2026

Students requesting a duplicate diploma must submit a \$10.00 fee per diploma. Students requesting a duplicate certificate must submit a \$5.00 fee per certificate.

Degree Works

Degree Works is the official, web-based degree audit tool used to review progress toward graduation. The program uses courses from the student's transcript and places them in general education and major areas so counselors and students can see the completed and remaining degree requirements. A 'What-If' option allows exploration of other majors. Degree Works is located in mySierra through the Academic Tools tab. Degree Works is also used to determine if a course is considered Financial Aid eligible.

Auto-Awarding of Degrees and Certificates

Sierra College may discover and notify students that they are eligible for a degree and/or certificate based on satisfactory completion of course work and in progress classes. These awards may be in addition to other degrees and certificates that have been requested. Students will have two weeks to opt-out from the date they were notified of the pending award. Notifications will be sent to students' Sierra College email account. Once a degree or certificate has been awarded it may not be removed from the students' academic record.

Not all students will have awards discovered by auto-awarding. It is important that students meet with their counselor on a regular basis to ensure they are on track. All students should submit a request for their degree and/or certificates in advance of the March 1st and October 1st deadline. Students can view their degree/certificate status in Degree Works.

Students who will be taking classes at Sierra College in the next semester to meet additional educational goals/requirements and plan to receive financial aid, need to schedule an appointment with their counselor to ensure these classes are listed on their student educational plan.

Reference: Sierra College Board Policies/Administrative Procedures Chapter 4.