

GRADUATION, CERTIFICATES, AND DEGREES REQUIREMENTS

Graduation Certification

Students must complete a "Petition for Graduation" in order to be evaluated and certified for graduation. They must meet the requirements to complete an associate degree to receive a Southwestern Community College District diploma. Students may opt-in to automatically be evaluated and certified for graduation in programs that offer auto-awarding of degrees and certificates.

Posted Degrees

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of Achievement to a student's record is considered a permanent part of the student's academic record and cannot be rescinded, removed or modified.

Official Transcripts

In order to apply units completed at another institution towards a degree, official transcripts may be mailed or submitted electronically to Southwestern College by the issuing institution. Transcripts from colleges accredited by one of the regional associations of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges will be evaluated upon receipt for enrolled students at Southwestern College or upon requests by the counselor. Transcripts from nonaccredited colleges may be evaluated for prerequisite and course placement only. Military service credits based on DD-214 are posted after a veteran's first semester of attendance. The student's academic transcript shall be clearly annotated to reflect that credit was earned by assessment of prior learning according to standards established in Administrative Procedure 4235. Official college transcripts from all colleges attended must be on file before submitting a petition for any Associates Degree, Certificate of Achievement, or GE certification. Transcripts containing only upper division coursework are not required. Hand-carried copies of transcripts will not be accepted.

Upper Division Coursework: Southwestern College may accept upper-division coursework if a student files a Substitution of Major Requirement petition with the appropriate school requesting that an upper division course be substituted to satisfy a graduation competency and/or a course in the required courses that constitute the major or area of emphasis. This request must be approved by faculty in the discipline or the appropriate designee.

Continuous Enrollment:

Continuous enrollment is defined as completion of a course during at least one semester or two quarters in a calendar year excluding summer session in either the CSU, UC, or California Community College System after time of entrance to Southwestern College (effective enrollment fall 2023). 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.

Catalog Rights:

A student's catalog rights are established at the time of entrance and completion of a course at Southwestern College. When continuous enrollment is maintained, students may choose their catalog rights for

general education and graduation requirements in effect at the time of entrance to Southwestern College, or any catalog year thereafter. A student who petitions for an Associate's Degree for Transfer who lacks catalog rights will be placed under the catalog in effect at the time the graduation petition is submitted.

When a student enrolls in and successfully completes at least one primary semester (fall or spring) in the academic year, they will earn their catalog rights. Catalog rights ensure that regardless of the semester a student began their studies, when that student petitions for graduation the same criteria is used for determining the student's graduation requirements even if programs and courses change over time.

Students who change their major will be held to the requirements in effect at the time of the change or subsequent catalogs. They will be allowed to continue with previously established general education and proficiencies requirements, provided continuous enrollment is maintained.

Southwestern College Graduation Requirements

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. The SWC Curriculum Committee determines individual courses that fulfill a competency or general education requirement for the local Southwestern College associate's degree upon proposal from discipline faculty.

Competency Requirements

Mathematics Competency – The Southwestern College mathematics competency requirement can be satisfied in any one of the following ways:

- Satisfactory completion (grade of "C" or better or "Pass") of an intermediate algebra course or any transferable mathematics course (minimum of 3 semester units).
- Satisfactory completion (documented grade of "C" or better or "Pass" for both semesters) of a high school or adult school course in intermediate algebra, such as Algebra II or Integrated Math 3, or a high school or adult school course with similar or more advanced content and rigor. Qualifying high school or adult school courses completed outside of the United States may be accepted for establishing competency. Appropriate consultation will occur with Southwestern College discipline faculty.
- Satisfactory completion (minimum of 3 semester units with a grade of "C" or better) of a transferable statistics or quantitative reasoning course in any discipline at or above the level of the course typically known as Intermediate Algebra (either Intermediate Algebra or another mathematics, statistics, or quantitative reasoning course

at or above the same level, with the same rigor and with Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite, approved locally). Appropriate consultation will occur with Southwestern College discipline faculty.

Reading Competency—The Southwestern College reading competency requirement is met by satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) of one of the following:

Code	Title	Units
RDG 158	COLLEGE READING AND CRITICAL THINKING	
ENGL 115	COLLEGE COMPOSITION: READING AND WRITING ANALYTICALLY	
ENGL 115H	HONORS COLLEGE COMPOSITION: READING AND WRITING ANALYTICALLY	
ESL 115A	COLLEGE COMPOSITION FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS	

Writing Competency—The Southwestern College English Writing competency requirement is met by satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) in the following:

Code	Title	Units
ENGL 115	COLLEGE COMPOSITION: READING AND WRITING ANALYTICALLY	
ENGL 115H	HONORS COLLEGE COMPOSITION: READING AND WRITING ANALYTICALLY	
ESL 115A	COLLEGE COMPOSITION FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS	

NOTE: Competency requirements may also be met by satisfactory scores on specified Advanced Placement (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), or International Baccalaureate (IB) Exams. or by receiving credit for prior learning experiences as deemed equivalent by discipline faculty per Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 4235 Credit for Prior Learning.

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

Additional Graduation Requirements

Ethnic Studies – Effective Fall 2023, the Southwestern College Ethnic Studies requirement is met by satisfactory completion (grade of “C” or better or “Pass”) of a transferable course in ethnic studies taught in or on behalf of other departments and disciplines.

If a Southwestern College course is approved to meet the California State University General Education (CSUGE), Area F or Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), Area 7 requirement respectively, then the course is automatically approved to meet the Southwestern College Ethnic Studies requirement.

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 program. 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 at their respective institutions.

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. The minimum requirement of 60 total units shall include general education courses, degree/program course requirements and elective courses for a student to earn an associate degree.

The **California State University (CSU) General Education Breadth Requirements** is a 39 to 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 34 to 46 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.

Multiple Degrees

Students who qualify may receive additional associate degrees provided the designated degree to be earned will represent a significant change in program 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 program and complete coursework are different from the bachelor's or higher degree.

For each additional degree, the student must earn a minimum of six units in the new program. In addition, the student must meet all graduation requirements enforced at the time of declaration of a new program.

NOTE: For each additional degree, a student must earn 6 units (meaning a minimum of 60-degree applicable units for the initial degree, 66 units for

a second degree, 72 units for a third degree, etc.) with a minimum of six units different within program courses.

Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT)

Students who have previously been awarded an Associate Degree and wish to receive an ADT will be exempt from the additional unit requirement of six new units in the program. Students who wish to pursue a second ADT in a new program will also be exempt from the additional unit requirement. 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. A student who has earned an ADT and petitions to earn an additional AA/AS (non-ADT degree) must have earned a six unit difference in the program.