

### **3.15 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **3.15.1 Purpose**

This policy establishes guidelines, criteria, and standards for use by State System institutions in developing degree programs for which degrees will be conferred upon students satisfactorily completing prescribed courses of study.

#### **3.15.2 Standards of Education for Completion of the Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) Degrees**

The minimum requirements for the AA or the AS degree at any institution in the State System shall include the following:

- A. Achieve a GPA of 2.0 as a minimum on all course work attempted (a minimum of 60 hours) excluding any courses repeated or reprieved as detailed in the State Regents' Grading policy and excluding physical education activity courses.
- B. The completion, as a portion of the overall 60 semester-credit-hours, of a basic general education core, or a minimum of 37 semester-credit-hours, which shall include the following:
  - 1. English Composition 6 hours
  - 2. U.S. History and U.S. Government 6 hours  
(Fulfilled by a U.S. History and a U.S. Government course. Each of these courses should be general in nature. Specialized courses do not satisfy the intent of the general education.)
  - 3. Science 6 hours  
(one course must be a laboratory science)
  - 4. Humanities 6 hours  
(Chosen from non-performance courses.)
  - 5. Mathematics 3 hours
  - 6. Guided elective 3 hours  
(Fulfilled by psychology, social sciences, foreign languages, fine arts (i.e., art music drama))
  - 7. Additional liberal arts and sciences courses as needed to meet the minimum total of 37 credit hours required in this policy.
- C. The remaining minimum of 23 semester-credit-hours of academic work shall be applicable to the student's major objective including any prerequisite courses necessary for the anticipated upper-division program.
- D. Demonstrate successful completion of a course in one of the following areas at the high school or college level: computing systems, networking, programming, computer applications, desktop publishing, web design or cybersecurity.
- E. A minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework applied toward the associate degree shall be taken from the awarding institution.

#### **3.15.3 Standards of Education for Completion of the Associate in Applied Science (AAS)**

## Degrees

- A. The minimum requirements for the AAS degree at any institution in the State System shall include the following:

The completion of 60 semester-credit-hours, excluding physical education activity courses, with an overall GPA of 2.0.

- B. The completion, as a portion of the overall 60 semester-credit-hours, of a basic general education core of a minimum of 18 semester-credit-hours listed as transferable on the State System Course Equivalency Project matrices, instructed by general education faculty and which shall include the following:

1. Communications 6 hours.

This must include two courses from one or more of the following three areas:

- f. a college-level communications course in general, applied technical writing or
- g. a course in English grammar and composition or
- h. a college-level oral communication course.

2. U.S. History and U.S. Government 6 hours.

(Fulfilled by a U.S. History and a U.S. Government course, each of which is general in nature. Specialized courses do not satisfy the intent of the general education.)

3. General Education Electives 6 hours

- E. The completion of a minimum of 27 hours in a technical-occupational specialty.

- F. The completion of support and related courses if needed to total a minimum of 60 hours.

- G. The completion of 15 credit hours in residence at the awarding institution.

### 3.15.4 Standards for Awarding Baccalaureate Degrees

- A. The baccalaureate degree includes three components: general education which consolidates learning from broad fields of study, a major which includes specialized knowledge and skills of particular fields of study, and elective elements which allow students to explore various fields and ideas. The portion each component contributes to the whole degree varies by field of study.

- B. The minimum requirements for the baccalaureate degree at any institution in the State System shall include the following:

The completion of a basic general education core of a minimum of 40 semester credit hours shall include the following:

1. English Composition 6 hours

2. U.S. History and U.S. Government 6 hours.

(Fulfilled by a U.S. History and a U.S. Government course, each of which is general in nature. Specialized courses do not satisfy the intent

of the general education.)

3. Science 6 hours.  
(One course must be a laboratory science)
4. Humanities 6 hours.  
(Chosen from non-performance courses. Courses defined as humanities by the institution granting the degree.)
5. Mathematics 3 hours.
6. Guided Electives 3 hours  
(Fulfilled by psychology, social sciences, foreign languages, fine arts (i.e., art, music, drama))
7. Additional liberal arts and sciences courses as needed to meet the minimum total of 40 credit hours required in this policy.

C. Types of Baccalaureate Degrees

The State Regents recognize three types of baccalaureate degree designations: the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree is awarded for successful completion of a program of study that is primarily liberal arts and sciences; the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree is awarded for successful completion of a program of study designed to lead to graduate study or to entry into a particular profession; the Bachelor of (Specialty) degree is awarded for successful completion of a program of study of a conservatory or studio nature, or that is designed primarily for entry into a professional or occupational field. It is conceivable that an institution might offer more than one type of degree in a discipline.

Undergraduate degrees are to be distinguished as follows by the minimum amount of liberal arts and sciences required for each degree type described below.

D. Requirements and Standards

Following is a list of requirements, standards, and recommendations for use by institutions in the development and evaluation of baccalaureate degree programs.

1. Traditional baccalaureate degrees with the exception of professional or conservatory-type degrees should be attainable in four years of full-time academic study. Baccalaureate degrees shall be based upon at least 120 semester hours of course work excluding physical education activity courses.
2. A minimum of 30 hours of resident credit applied toward the baccalaureate degree shall be taken at the awarding institution.
3. Each baccalaureate degree awarded by a State System institution shall be based on a minimum of 40 hours of general education excluding physical education activity courses.
4. Students recommended for the baccalaureate degree must achieve a GPA of 2.0 as a minimum on all course work attempted, excluding any courses repeated, reprieved or renewed as detailed in the State

Regents' Grading policy, and excluding physical education activity courses.

5. The requirements and standards set forth in this policy statement should be considered minimum.
6. Demonstrate successful completion of a course in one of the following areas at the high school or college level: computing systems, networking, programming, computer applications, desktop publishing, web design or cybersecurity.
7. Each baccalaureate degree granting institution shall list and update the requirements for each program leading to the baccalaureate degree and shall publicize these requirements for use by all other institutions in the State System. Each baccalaureate degree-granting institution shall include in its official publications (whether print or electronic) information stating all lower-division prerequisite requirements for each upper-division course. All requirements for admission to a university, college, or program should be set forth with precision and clarity. The degree requirements in effect at the time of the student's initial full-time enrollment in a State System college or university shall govern lower-division prerequisites and all degree requirements, provided that the student has had continuous enrollment as defined in the official college or university publications.

E. Summary of Minimum Standards for a Baccalaureate Degree

Bachelor of Arts Degree

|                                                                                                                                  | Number of<br>Hours Required |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total semester credit hours required                                                                                             | 120                         |
| General education                                                                                                                | 40                          |
| Liberal arts and sciences course work                                                                                            | 80                          |
| Credit in residence at the awarding institution (15 of the final 30 hours or 50 percent of the major also required in residence) | 30                          |
| Credit from a baccalaureate degree-granting institution (40 hours must be upper-division)                                        | 60                          |
| Area of specialization (50 percent must be upper-division)                                                                       | 30                          |

### Bachelor of Science Degree

|                                                                                                                                  | Number of Hours Required |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total semester credit hours required                                                                                             | 120                      |
| General education                                                                                                                | 40                       |
| Liberal arts and sciences course work                                                                                            | 55                       |
| Credit in residence at the awarding institution (15 of the final 30 hours or 50 percent of the major also required in residence) | 30                       |
| Credit from a baccalaureate degree-granting institution (40 hours must be upper-division)                                        | 60                       |
| Area of specialization (50 percent must be upper-division)                                                                       | 30                       |

### Bachelor of (Specialty) Degree

|                                                                                                                                  | Number of Hours Required |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total semester credit hours required                                                                                             | 120                      |
| General education                                                                                                                | 40                       |
| Liberal arts and sciences course work                                                                                            | 40                       |
| Credit in residence at the awarding institution (15 of the final 30 hours or 50 percent of the major also required in residence) | 30                       |
| Credit from a baccalaureate degree-granting institution (40 hours must be upper-division)                                        | 60                       |
| Area of specialization (50 percent must be upper-division)                                                                       | 30                       |

#### 3.15.5 General Education Framework

##### A. General Education Outcomes

The following framework should be followed by each institution when developing or reviewing its general education program.

1. All institutions in the State System will require a general education component in each undergraduate degree program.
2. Faculty should provide the oversight for general education and each institution should regularly assess the effectiveness of its general education program.
3. Institutions should clearly and publicly articulate the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of the general education provided to students.
4. An institution's general education program should impart common knowledge and intellectual concepts that every educated person should possess.
5. Effective general education should help students gain competence in independent intellectual inquiry and stimulate the examination and understanding of personal, social, and civic engagement.