

**Title 5, Chapter 6, Subchapter 2, Article 1. Approval of Credit Educational Programs  
§ 55100. Course Approval.**

- (a) The governing board of each community college district shall establish policies for, and may approve individual degree-applicable credit courses which are offered as part of an educational program approved by the Chancellor pursuant to section 55130. Such courses need not be separately approved by the Chancellor.
- (b) Effective for courses to be offered beginning in Fall 2007, a community college district may, until December 31, 2012, approve and offer nondegree-applicable credit courses and degree-applicable credit courses which are not part of an approved educational program without separate approval by the Chancellor, provided that the district continuously complies with the following requirements:
  - (1) the college curriculum committee and district governing board have approved each such course pursuant to section 55002;
  - (2) the district submits a certification by September 30th of each year verifying that the persons who will serve on the curriculum committee and others who will be involved in the curriculum approval process at each college within the district for that academic year have received training consistent with guidelines prescribed by the Chancellor on the review and approval of courses not part of educational programs;
  - (3) no course which has previously been denied separate approval by the Chancellor or is part of a program that has been disapproved by the Chancellor may be offered pursuant to this subdivision unless the proposed course has been modified to adequately address the reasons for denial and has been subsequently reapproved by the college curriculum committee and district governing board;
  - (4) no group of courses approved pursuant to this subdivision which total 18 or more semester units or 27 or more quarter units in a single four-digit Taxonomy of Programs code may be linked to one another by means of prerequisites or corequisites;
  - (5) no student may be permitted to count 18 or more semester units or 27 or more quarter units of coursework approved pursuant to this subdivision toward satisfying the requirements for a certificate or other document evidencing completion of an educational program or towards a major for completion of an associate degree; and
  - (6) the district promptly reports all courses approved pursuant to this subdivision to the Chancellor through the Chancellor's Office Management Information System.
- (c) The Chancellor may, at any time, terminate the ability of a district to offer courses pursuant to subdivision (b) if he or she determines that a district has failed to comply with all of the conditions set forth in that subdivision. In that event, the district will become immediately subject to the requirements of subdivision (d).
- (d) Effective January 1, 2013, or earlier if so required by subdivision (c), the governing board of each community college district shall separately submit for approval by the Chancellor all nondegree-applicable credit courses and individual degree-applicable credit courses which are not part of any approved educational program.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901, Education Code.

1. When will the change take effect?

Immediately after the certification form is received and validated at the System Office, the college is certified to approve new stand-alone credit courses. The college will be notified and a unique user name and password will be sent to the college's CIO and CISO.

**Training**

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2. Who specifically must be trained: Voting members or non-voting members of the curriculum committee? Staff who attend in order to take notes?

All voting members of the curriculum committee must be trained. Staff and administrators who attend curriculum meetings, but do not vote, should also be trained. The chief instructional officer of the college may determine whether or not administrators will be required to complete training.

3. Do people who serve on the curriculum committee for many years need to be trained annually?

The certification that curriculum committee members have been trained must be processed annually, but continuing members do not have to be trained every year, unless there are changes to the regulations and processes that require new training. It is the responsibility of the college curriculum committee chair to be aware of changes that require new training.

4. If curriculum committee members are replaced mid-year, does the college have to be re-certified after new members are trained?

No, the new members should be trained but certification is only required once during an academic year.

**Certification**

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5. Does the local governing board need to certify the colleges for local approval of stand-alone credit courses?

The Chief Executive Officer of the district certifies the college. In multi-college districts, the college President and the district CEO both sign the form. Board approval is not required.

6. If one college in a multi-college district fails to comply with all requirements, will all colleges within the district be penalized?

No, each college is certified separately from other colleges in the district because curriculum is approved for each college, not for all colleges in the district.

7. What happens if a college is not certified by September 30<sup>th</sup>?

If a college is not certified for any year, then new stand-alone credit courses must be submitted to the System Office for approval, using the existing form and instructions as described in the Program and Course Approval Handbook, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, March 2003, until it is revised. Colleges will be designated authority to approve the types of courses under "blanket approval."

**Courses**

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8. Will the college report noncredit courses into the CRCC web site in order to get course control numbers?

No, all noncredit courses must be submitted to the System Office for approval. When approved, the System Office will notify the college that the course is approved and provide the course control number.

9. Can “restricted electives” be fairly open-ended, such as: “9 units of coursework selected from Agriculture courses #1-50,” or must specific courses be listed as in “9 units selected from AGR 1 or AGR 2 or AGR 4 etc.”?

Specific courses must be listed in order to be considered program-applicable. If they are not listed, then the courses are not applicable to this program. They may be applicable to another program, however.

10. Are groups of courses referred to as a block (e.g. “all Aviation courses numbered 100 to 150”) considered “restricted electives” when listed as a requirement to fulfill the degree or certificate?

No. See previous answer.

11. Are courses that meet GE – IGETC/CSU, but not local GE requirements, considered “program-applicable”?

Courses that have been approved to fulfill local GE requirements are program-applicable. Other courses that only fulfill GE requirements at other institutions, including CSU and UC, are not program-applicable.

12. What if a course is approved as a stand-alone and then is added to a program later? Will the course need to be approved again?

The course does not need to be reported again. At the end of the semester when it is approved as program-applicable, you will need to work with MIS to change the data element CB24 from 2 to 1 and identify the program by unique code. Ask the MIS staff on your campus or at your district office for information about the Master Course File Maintenance process.

13. When revising a previously approved stand-alone course, what data elements can change without the need to submit the course as “new” for the purpose of reporting it to the System Office?

The discussion about which data elements can change from term to term is still ongoing. Currently, this is the list of codes that may not change without generating a new course control number, for purposes of reporting enrollments to the System Office. CB03 – TOP Code; CB04 – Credit Status (D to C or C to D allowed); CB06 – Maximum Units; CB07 – Minimum Units; CB08 – Basic Skills Status; CB09 – SAM Code; CB21 – Prior to College Level; CB22 – Noncredit Category; CB23 – Funding Agency Category. This list is subject to change.

14. Courses already approved as stand-alone don’t need to be submitted when they are revised. When the course is substantively changed, does it need to be re-submitted in order to get a new control number?

A previously approved course that is substantively changed will require a new control number. See the response for question 13 above.

15. Does the local governing board have to approve a new credit course before it can be offered?

Yes, the new course may be offered in **the next term that starts after** the board approval date. District policy on scheduling courses may impose additional requirements.

16. What if the board approves all curricula only once every year, for example in June? If a course is approved by the curriculum committee in the previous fall, can the course be offered before the board approves it in June?
- No, the board must approve the course **prior to** the beginning of the first term in which it is offered. In this example where the board approves all curriculum in June, then new courses may not be offered until July or later, depending on the beginning date of the next term.
17. Can you offer a course prior to obtaining a control number from the System Office?
- Yes, if the local governing board has approved the course. The control number will be obtained at the end of the first term in which the course is offered.
18. Could a certificate (less than 18 semester units) be composed of stand-alone courses?
- Certificates of less than 18 semester units that are not approved by the System Office include courses that are considered stand-alone. When the certificate of 12 to 18 units is approved by the System Office, then all required courses and restricted electives for the approved certificate become program-applicable courses.
19. If a new course is added to a certificate under 18 semester units, is the new course stand-alone, and is it necessary to report it to the System Office?
- Courses required in certificates under 18 semester units that are not approved by the System Office are stand-alone, including any courses that are added to the certificate requirements. Courses required in any certificate that is approved by the System Office are program-applicable, including new courses that are added to the certificate requirements. However, colleges need to report approval of all new courses in order to obtain course control numbers.
20. Suppose you put together a 17-unit certificate with 11 units from existing, approved credit courses and 6 units from 2 new courses designed solely for this certificate. Can the local process for stand-alone courses be used to approve the 2 new courses?
- Yes, the new courses are stand-alone courses that do not require System Office approval, which becomes necessary only if the requirements are changed to 18 or more semester units or if the 17-unit certificate is approved by the System Office.
21. Can 18 units of stand-alone courses be a major or an area of emphasis?
- No, because when the group or sequence of courses is 18 or more units, then the program must be approved by the System Office. The status of such courses is changed to program-applicable.
22. Title 5 §55100 part (b)(4) is confusing. Can you give an example that will illustrate how stand-alone courses may be “linked together” and considered to be a program that requires System Office approval?
- This part of the regulation is intended to guard against creating a group of stand-alone courses that are linked into a sequence of courses. For example, the college could approve three stand-alone courses that are prerequisite to each other, such as ACCT 100 Introduction to Accounting, ACCT 110 Principles of Accounting and ACCT 120 Computer Applications for Accounting. ACCT 100 is prerequisite to ACCT 110, which is prerequisite to ACCT 120. These three stand-alone courses are required for a 10-unit Skills Certificate in Accounting. At this point, the college is in compliance and can offer these courses and the certificate without System Office approval.
- Two years later, however, the college approves some new stand-alone courses in Tax Studies, including ACCT 200 Introduction to Tax Law (3 units), ACCT 201 Tax Preparation (3 units) and ACCT 202 Tax Planning (3 units). The course ACCT 120 is a prerequisite to ACCT 200, which is prerequisite to ACCT 201 and corequisite to ACCT 202. Now there is a sequence of 19 units of

stand-alone courses that are linked together by prerequisites and corequisites. Approval of all the listed Accounting courses as a program is now required, after which the status of these courses changes to “program-applicable.”

23. Will MIS submission and course reporting be done at separate times? How often do you expect us to report to the System Office: every time there is an approval?

MIS submission of enrollment data will only occur after the end of the term when the course has been offered. Course reporting may occur separately, at any time after the board approval date. The district and college may develop their own schedule for reporting new credit courses in order to obtain course control numbers. Refer to the instructions for the Master Course File Maintenance process.

## Local Approval of Credit Courses

## HANDOUT 3

Examples of credit stand-alone courses that were denied when submitted to the System Office for approval when submission was required prior to fall 2007.

Denied Course	Reason
Chemistry course for nursing students in CSU Chico nursing program	<b>Mission – Inappropriate population.</b> A program or course must be directed at the appropriate level for community colleges; ... it must not be directed either at a level beyond the associate degree or the first two years of college. <b>Compliance – Violates open course regulations.</b>
Course designed to provide counseling services (without reading, writing, body of knowledge, or instructional outcomes)	<b>Quality - Outlines of Record for each course must meet all the requirements of Title 5.</b> <b>Mission - A course must provide distinct instructional content and specific instructional objectives.</b> It must not provide only an activity or service, without instructional content (e.g., assistive or therapeutic activity, use of college facilities or resources without specific instructional objectives, or assessment testing).
Course designed and scheduled to provide testing activity (e.g. time spent taking test for national paramedic registry)	<b>Quality - Outlines of Record for each course must meet all the requirements of Title 5.</b> <b>Mission - No distinct instructional content and specific instructional objectives.</b>
Course designed as in-service training for faculty (usually pedagogy, but in one case training for computer faculty in how to teach Cisco academy)	<b>Mission – Inappropriate population.</b>
Course designed to circumvent limitation on four semesters for a given activity, such as Physical Fitness	<b>Compliance – Violates course repeatability regulations</b>
Course consists only of taking a learning disability assessment; no instructional content	<b>Quality - Outlines of Record for each course must meet all the requirements of Title 5.</b> <b>Mission - No distinct instructional content and specific instructional objectives.</b>
Inappropriate use of credit nondegree-applicable status for recreational course (musical theatre and chorus without college-level rigor)	<b>Mission - A program or course must address a valid transfer, occupational or basic skills purpose.</b> It must not be primarily avocational or recreational.
Tutoring course	<b>Compliance - Title 5 §58170 mandates that tutoring must be noncredit.</b>
Intended specifically for school-age children (youth symphony, high school theatre competition)	<b>Mission – Inappropriate population.</b> A program or course must be directed at the appropriate level for community colleges.
Course specifically for professionals already working in field high above associate degree level (architecture, advanced molecular biology techniques)	<b>Mission – Inappropriate population.</b>
Too many units awarded for hours of work (geology, one weekend field trip)	Defined by Title 5 §55002.5 sets a minimum of 48 hours of study for each unit of credit. <b>Compliance – Must revise number of units to be compliant.</b>
Degree-applicable status placed on basic math (below elementary algebra)	<b>Mission – Inappropriate population.</b> Course not taught at the college level.
Restricted to U.S. military personnel only	<b>Compliance – Violates open course regulations.</b>

**§ 55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses.**

(a) Degree-Applicable Credit Course. A-degree-applicable credit course is a course which has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of section 55062, and which has been recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a collegiate course meeting the needs of the students.

- (1) Curriculum Committee. The college and/or district curriculum committee recommending the course shall be established by the mutual agreement of the college and/or district administration and the academic senate. The committee shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a committee that includes faculty and is otherwise comprised in a way that is mutually agreeable to the college and/or district administration and the academic senate.
- (2) Standards for Approval. The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course for associate degree credit if it meets the following standards:
  - (A) Grading Policy. The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with section 55023. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of essays, or, in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students
  - (B) Units. The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course also requires a minimum of three hours of student work per week, including class time for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term, extended term, laboratory and/or activity courses.
  - (C) Intensity. The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that requires students to study independently outside of class time.
  - (D) Prerequisites and Corequisites. When the college and/or district curriculum committee determines, based on a review of the course outline of record, that a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student has knowledge or skills not taught in the course, then the course shall require prerequisites or corequisites that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with the requirements of this article.
  - (E) Basic Skills Requirements. If success in the course is dependent upon communication or computation skills, then the course shall require, consistent with the provisions of this article, as prerequisites or corequisites eligibility for enrollment in associate degree credit courses in English and/or mathematics, respectively.
  - (F) Difficulty. The course work calls for critical thinking and the understanding and application of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.
  - (G) Level. The course requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.
- (3) Course Outline of Record. The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the unit value, the expected number of contact hours for the course as a whole, the prerequisites, corequisites or advisories on recommended preparation (if any) for the course, the catalog description, objectives, and content in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, other outside-of-class assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students.

(4) Conduct of Course. Each section of the course is to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of objectives and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

(5) Repetition. Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of sections 51002, 55040-55043 and 58161.

(b) Nondegree-Applicable Credit Course. A credit course designated by the governing board as not applicable to the associate degree is a course which, at a minimum, is recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee (the committee described and established under subdivision (a)(1) of this section) and is approved by the district governing board.

(1) Types of Courses. Nondegree-applicable credit courses are:

(A) nondegree-applicable basic skills courses as defined in subdivision (j) of section- 55000;

(B) courses designed to enable students to succeed in degree-applicable credit courses (including, but not limited to, college orientation and guidance courses, and discipline-specific preparatory courses such as biology, history, or electronics) that integrate basic skills instruction throughout and assign grades partly upon the demonstrated mastery of those skills;

(C) precollegiate career technical preparation courses designed to provide foundation skills for students preparing for entry into degree-applicable credit career technical courses or programs;

(D) essential career technical instruction for which meeting the standards of -subdivision (a) is neither necessary nor required.

(2) Standards for Approval. The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course on the basis of the standards which follow.

(A) Grading Policy. The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with section 55023. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of written expression that may include essays, or, in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students.

(B) Units. The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course requires a minimum of three hours of student work per week, per unit, including class time and/or demonstrated competency, for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term, extended term, laboratory, and/or activity courses.

(C) Intensity. The course provides instruction in critical thinking and generally treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that prepares students to study independently outside of class time and includes reading and writing assignments and homework. In particular, the assignments will be sufficiently rigorous that students successfully completing each such course, or sequence of required courses, will have acquired the skills necessary to successfully complete degree-applicable work.

(D) Prerequisites and corequisites. When the college and/or district curriculum committee deems appropriate, the course may require prerequisites or corequisites for the course that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with this article.

(3) Course Outline of Record. The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the unit value, the expected number of contact hours for the course as a whole, the prerequisites, corequisites or advisories on recommended preparation (if any) for the course, the catalog description, objectives, and content in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing

assignments, other outside-of-class assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students. Taken together, these course specifications shall be such as to typically enable any student who successfully completes all of the assigned work prescribed in the outline of record to successfully meet the course objectives.

(4) Conduct of Course. All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of objectives and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

(5) Repetition. Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of sections 51002, 55040-55043 and 58161.

(c) Noncredit Course. A noncredit course is a course which, at a minimum, is recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee (the committee described and established under subdivision (a)(1) of this section) and approved by the district governing board as a course meeting the needs of enrolled students.

(1) Standards for Approval. The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course if the course treats subject matter and uses resource materials, teaching methods, and standards of attendance and achievement that the committee deems appropriate for the enrolled students. In order to be eligible for state apportionment, such courses must be approved by the Chancellor pursuant to article 2 (commencing with section 55150) of subchapter 2 of this chapter and satisfy the requirements of section 58160 and other applicable provisions of chapter 9 (commencing with section 58000) of this division.

(2) Course Outline of Record. The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the number of contact hours normally required for a student to complete the course, the catalog description, the objectives, contents in terms of a specific body of knowledge, instructional methodology, examples of assignments and/or activities, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met.

(3) Conduct of Course. All sections of the course are to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with the set of objectives and other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

(4) Repetition. Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of section 58161.

(d) Community Services Offering. A community services offering must meet the following minimum requirements:

(1) is approved by the district governing board;

(2) is designed for the physical, mental, moral, economic, or civic development of persons enrolled therein;

(3) provides subject matter content, resource materials, and teaching methods which the district governing board deems appropriate for the enrolled students;

(4) is conducted in accordance with a predetermined strategy or plan;

(5) is open to all members of the community willing to pay fees to cover the cost of the offering; and

(6) may not be claimed for apportionment purposes.

**Note:** Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code.

Reference: Section 70901, Education Code.