

STANDARDS AND AUTHORITY FOR DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- I. Under New Jersey law and the regulations of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education (N.J. 9A:1-6.3), Mercer County Community College is authorized to award the degrees of Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science and Associate in Fine Arts, and to award certificates and diplomas to students who have successfully completed the curriculum requirements of approved programs as established by the Board of Trustees and set forth in the college Catalog. The curriculum requirements for awarding degrees and certificates shall conform to the standards established in this policy and in related policies of this Board.
 - A. The Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete transfer-oriented programs which emphasize the liberal arts, humanities and other fine and performing arts.
 - B. The Associate in Science (A.S.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete transfer-oriented programs which emphasize mathematics or the biological or physical sciences, or prebaccalaureate programs in business or allied health.
 - C. The Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize career preparation in the applied arts and sciences. These programs are designed to prepare students for job entry at the completion of the two-year program, notwithstanding any articulation agreements with four-year programs that may be in effect for a particular A.A.S. program.
 - D. The Associate in Fine Arts (A.F.A. degree) is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize career preparation in the fine and performing arts. These programs are designed to prepare students either for entry-level professional practice in their field or for transfer into a related B.F.A. program.
- II. The regular academic year shall fall within a ten-month period and shall include a minimum of 30 weeks, or its equivalent in duration, of regularly scheduled faculty-student instructional activity, exclusive of final examination periods, holidays and summer sessions.
- III. An Associate degree program shall be a course of study which requires not less than 60 nor generally more than 66 semester hours, or the equivalent, except as specifically approved by the Board of Trustees to meet requirements for licensure or accreditation by a recognized agency or for transfer to full junior status.
- IV. Mercer County Community College is committed to promoting the intellectual development, aesthetic appreciation and cultural awareness of all students through general education. General education requirements for Associate degree and Certificate programs are delineated in OMB470.
- V. A Certificate of Proficiency program shall be a credit-bearing course of study which requires not less than eighteen nor generally more than thirty-six credits which, by virtue

- of educational content or duration, does not satisfy requirements for an associate degree program, but which is specifically designed to offer content, skill acquisition and other experience appropriate to the objectives of such a program. Each Certificate of Proficiency program shall require at least one English composition course beyond the academic foundations level.
- VI. All degree and certificate programs shall provide for student demonstration of basic skills in communication and mathematics and required academic foundations coursework for those whose skills do not meet established standards. Academic foundations courses may not be used to satisfy general education requirements.
- VII. The establishment and continuation of degree and certificate programs must be consistent with the programmatic mission and strategic priorities of the college.
- A. New Associate degree programs are established by formal action of the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation by the President, after completion of inter-institutional notification and review procedures as required by the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education.
- B. The following programs and modifications to programs are established by formal action of the Board of Trustees, upon recommendation by the President:
- new Certificate programs,
 - new Associate degree options,
 - title (nomenclature) changes for Associate degree or Certificate programs,
 - deactivation or deletion of Associate degree or Certificate programs.
- C. Consistent with the standards set forth in this policy, the President is authorized to approve revisions to program requirements, when recommended and justified by the faculty.
- VIII. The print and online versions of the college catalog are the official publications for communicating curriculum requirements to students and the public. Reasonable efforts shall be made to disseminate information about new programs and program revisions which are not included in the current catalog.

Approved:
Board of Trustees
May 18, 1995

Revised:
March 16, 2017