

# WESTERN NEBRASKA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## Western Community College Area Board of Governors' Policy

<b>TITLE:</b>	Differentiation of Educational Programs
<b>DIVISION:</b>	Academic and Educational Programming
<b>CATEGORY:</b>	Academic Programs
<b>REFERENCE:</b>	Nebraska Revised Statute §85-961 Federal 34 CFR 602.16 - Accreditation and Pre-accreditation Standard Higher Learning Commission, Core Component 3.A.2.
<b>NUMBER:</b>	BP-613
<b>APPROVAL/DATE:</b>	F. Lynne Klemke, President, WCCA Board of Governors November 20, 2019

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### **Purpose**

This policy addresses the requirement that the institution articulate and differentiate the learning goals for undergraduate programs.

### **Scope**

This applies to all educational programs offered at Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC).

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### **Policy**

The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education in Nebraska states, "Community colleges provide educational options for students seeking entry-level career training. The education program may culminate in an applied technology associate degree, diploma, or certificate; or an associate of arts or associate of science degree from an academic transfer program."

WNCC is committed to ensuring that its educational programs reflect the larger goals of educational attainment the institution holds for its students. Following are the various educational programs that the institution offers and the standards that must be upheld:

### **Degrees and Formal Awards**

#### *Associate Degrees*

WNCC offers two-year programs of study leading to one of five associate degrees:

- Associate of Arts (AA): An Associate of Arts degree prepares students for careers and/or advanced study at a four-year college or university. The AA degree requires a minimum of 31-32 credit hours from the institution's general education courses.

- Associate of Science (AS): An Associate of Science degree is designed to transfer into math and science four-year college or university degree programs. The AS degree requires a minimum of 33-34 credit hours from the institution's general education courses.
- Associate of Fine Arts (AFA): An Associate of Fine Arts degree is designed to transfer into fine arts four-year college or university degree programs. AFA degree requires a minimum of 31 hours from the institution's general education courses.
- Associate of Applied Science (AAS): The Associate of Applied Science degree prepares students for careers in a variety of technical and vocational areas: applied technologies, business, health, and social sciences. In most instances, students are also able to transfer all or part of an AAS program to a bachelor degree-granting institution. The AAS degree requires a minimum of 16-17 credit hours from the institution's general education courses.
- Associate Degree in Nursing (AD-N): The Associate Degree in Nursing prepares students for a career in the field of nursing. The AD-N degree requires 72 credit hours, with a minimum of 18 hours from the institution's general education requirements.

Specifically,

- All associate degrees require a minimum of 60 credits.
- Courses numbered below the 1000-level do not count as part of the total credits for any degree program – AA, AS, AFA, AAS, and AD-N.
- While the AAS and AD-N degrees are designated as being earned in a specific program, the AA, AS, and AFA degrees are generalist in nature and not awarded “in” a field.

### *Diploma*

Diplomas require a minimum of 24-48 credits of courses from a suggested curriculum list appearing in the *College Catalog*. Some programs may require in excess of the 48 credit hours due to professional standards or mandates.

In addition to coursework specific to an area of study, students are required to take some coursework outside the student's vocational field, including but not limited to written communication, quantitative reasoning, and an elective from personal development, the social or lab sciences, or oral communication.

Courses numbered below the 1000-level will not be counted as part of the total credits.

### *Certificate*

Certificates require completion of 12-18 credits of required courses from a curriculum list in the *College Catalog*. Courses numbered below the 1000-level do not count as part of the total credits.

### **General Education Program**

The general education program at WNCN is designed to broaden the student as a person. The general education experience for students in Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS) degree, and Associate of Fine Arts (AFA) programs is composed of a comprehensive set of choices in communications, quantitative reasoning, lab sciences, social sciences, and the humanities, preparing students for citizenship in a diverse, global environment; taking their roles in society as citizens and professionals; and transfer to other colleges.

Students in Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS), Associate Degree in Nursing (AD-N), and diploma programs take transferable and nontransferable general education courses designed to prepare them for their roles in society as citizens, technicians, and professionals.

### *Goals of the General Education*

As a result of the general education experience, award seeking students develop and improve the following skills and abilities to college-level performance:

- *Communication* – including effective written and oral skills
- *Critical Thinking and Problem Solving* – including information literacy and mathematical and scientific inquiry
- *Humanities and/or Fine Arts Awareness* – including literature, language, philosophy, an appreciation for the arts, and humanities
- *Cultural and Civic Awareness* – including ethics, diversity, and global issues
- *Personal Development* – including mental and physical wellness, leadership, teamwork, and lifelong learning skills

### **Transcripts**

For all associate degrees, the transcript of a student should reveal the exact nature of the program completed. A grade of “C” or better is required in each course applied to the AA, AS, and AFA degrees in order to be accepted for guaranteed transfer.

### **Revising this Policy**

This Board Policy supersedes any prior WNCC policy, procedure, guideline or handbook on this subject matter.

If statutory provisions, regulatory guidance, or court interpretations change or conflict with this Board Policy, the Board retains the right to revise accordingly and for the changes to take effect immediately.

**Adoption Date and Board of Governors’ Minutes Item Number:** 1979  
**Revision Date and Board of Governors’ Minutes Item Number:** November 2019

**Prior Policy Number:**  
610.0100.79  
610.0200.79  
610.0300.79

### **Schedule for Review:**

**Divisions/Department Responsible for Review and Update:** Educational Services  
**Sponsoring Division/Department:** Educational Services  
**Repeal Date and Board of Governors’ Minutes Item Number:**  
**Cross Reference:**  
**Procedure(s) for Policy:** PP-613 (Definition of Credit Hour)  
**Related Policies/References:**