

## **PRE-REQUISITES AND CO-REQUISITES**

**Reference:** *Title 5, Sections 55000, 55002, 55003, and 58106.*

The following provides for the establishment, implementation, and evaluation of pre-requisites, co-requisites, advisories on recommended preparation, advisories on recommended concurrent enrollment, and certain limitations on enrollment in a manner consistent with law and good practice. If pre-requisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations are established unnecessarily or inappropriately, they constitute unjustifiable obstacles to student access and success. Therefore, this procedure calls for caution and careful scrutiny in establishing all requisites and advisories. It is as important to have requisites and advisories in place where they are a vital factor in maintaining academic standards as it is to avoid establishing requisites and advisories where they are not needed. For these reasons, the College District has sought to foster the appropriate balance between these two concerns.

### **Information in the Catalog and Schedule of Courses.**

The College District shall provide the following explanations both in the college catalog and in the schedule of classes:

1. Definitions of pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment including the differences among them and the specific pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment that have been established.
2. Procedures for a student to challenge pre-requisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to make such a challenge. The information about challenges must include, at a minimum, the specific process including any deadlines, the various types of challenge that are established in law, and any additional types of challenge permitted by the college.
3. Definitions of advisories on recommended preparation and recommended concurrent enrollment, the right of a student to choose to take a course without meeting the advisory, and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to exercise that right.
4. Definition of satisfactory grade necessary for pre-requisite completion.
5. Procedures for meeting college requisites if pertinent courses and/or assessment were completed at other colleges or universities. The information must include that students should submit a Pre-requisite Evaluation Request form along with proof of successful course completion (e.g., transcripts or grade reports) and/or assessment results to the Assessment Center.

### **Curriculum Review Process**

The curriculum review process shall be completed in accordance with accreditation standards. The curriculum review process shall at a minimum include all of the following:

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1. Establish a curriculum committee and its membership in a manner that is mutually agreeable to the college administration and the academic senate.
2. Establish requisites and advisories on a course-by-course basis and only upon the approval of the College District Curriculum Committee (as designated by the Academic Senate without forfeiting its rights or responsibilities under Sections 53200-53204 of Title 5\*) and the College District Governing Board.
3. Establish requisites and advisories on courses only if the pre-requisite or co-requisite is an appropriate and rational measure of a student's readiness to enter the course or program as demonstrated by a statistical validation accompanied by a content review.
4. Use a process of statistical validation that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:
  - a. Research design, operational definitions, and numerical standards, if appropriate, shall be developed by research personnel, discipline faculty, and representatives of the Assessment Center. The standard for any comparison done shall be that a student is highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade in the course unless the student has met the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite. Upon completion of that development, data are gathered according to sound research practices in at least one of the following areas:
    - i. The extent to which students, those currently enrolled in the course or those who have completed it, believe the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite is necessary.
    - ii. A comparison of the faculty members' appraisal of students' readiness for the course to whether students met the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite. The faculty appraisal - based on independent assignments, quizzes and exams, participation in courses or other indicators that the student was or was not ready to take the course - could be done at any time in the semester that the college determined was appropriate and based on independent assignments, quizzes and exams, participation in courses or other indicators that the student was or was not ready to take the course.
    - iii. Comparison of students' performance at any point in the course with completion of the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite.
    - iv. Comparison of student performance in the course to their scores on assessment instruments in the manner required to validate an assessment instrument and cut scores for the course in question as described above.
    - v. If the evidence fails to meet the standard established, the college may establish the proposed pre-requisite or co-requisite as a recommended preparation and may seek to establish it as a pre-requisite or co-requisite only by following the process described in this policy and any applicable college policies.
    - vi. If the curriculum committee has determined as provided in these

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procedures that a new course needs to have a pre-requisite or co-requisite, then the pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established for a single period of not more than two years while research is being conducted and a determination is being made.

- vii. Other measures of readiness, such as recency, may be established as a pre-requisite or co-requisite only if the "Curriculum Review Process" including statistical validation detailed above is followed.
5. Use a process of content review that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:
- i. Consideration of course objectives set by relevant department(s);
  - ii. Specification of the body of knowledge and/or skills which are deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with enrollment;
  - iii. Identification and review of the pre-requisite or co-requisite which develops the body of knowledge and/or measures skills identified;
  - iv. Matching of the knowledge and skills in the targeted course (identified under v.) and those developed or measured by the pre-requisite or co-requisite (i.e., the course or assessment identified under vi.);
  - v. Review of the course outline to determine if a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student had knowledge or skills not taught in the course. If the student would need knowledge or skills not taught in the course itself, then a pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established if it meets all of the above criteria and is in accordance with Title 5 regulations.;
  - vi. Review of the course outline to determine whether receiving a satisfactory grade is dependent on skills in communication or computation. If receiving a satisfactory grade is sufficiently dependent on such skills, then a pre-requisite or co-requisite may be established if it meets all of the above criteria and is in accordance with Title 5 regulations; and
  - vii. Documentation in CurricUNET that the above steps were taken.
6. Approve any limitation on enrollment that is being established to meet legal requirements imposed by statute, regulation, and/or contract; for an honors course or section; for a course that includes intercollegiate competition or public performance; or so that a cohort of students will be enrolled in two or more courses, and, in a separate action, specify which.
7. Approve that the course meets the academic standards required for degree applicable courses, non-degree applicable courses, non-credit courses, or community service respectively.
8. Review the course outline to determine if a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student had knowledge or skills not taught in the course. If the student would need knowledge or skills not taught in the course itself, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements

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for establishing the appropriate pre-requisite or co-requisite have been met (with the exception of approval by the curriculum committee).

9. Review the course outline to determine whether receiving a satisfactory grade is dependent on skills in communication or computation. If receiving a satisfactory grade is sufficiently dependent on such skills, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements have been met for establishing a pre-requisite or co-requisite of not less than eligibility for enrollment to a degree-applicable course in English or mathematics, respectively.
10. A course which should have a pre-requisite or co-requisite as provided in Procedure 4260, but for which one or more of the requirements for establishing a pre-requisite have not been met, may only:
  - a. Be reviewed and approved pursuant to the standards for non-degree applicable credit, non-credit, or community service; or
  - b. Be revised and reviewed as required to meet the criteria for establishing the necessary pre-requisites or co-requisites.
  - c. Be reviewed to ensure that the course and requisite are approved in a manner that meets each of the requirements specified above.
11. Pre-requisites establishing communication or computational skill requirements may not be established across the entire curriculum unless established on a course-by-course basis. (Note: If enrollment is not blocked, then what is being established is not a pre-requisite or co-requisite but, rather, an advisory on recommended preparation or advisory on recommended concurrent enrollment and must be identified as such in the schedule and catalog.)
12. Title 5, Section 55003 specifies additional rules, which are to be considered part of this document as though reproduced here.

**Requisite Review**

The college shall review each requisite and advisory to establish that each is still supported by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee and is complies with all other provisions of this policy and with the law. In addition, requisites must be revalidated at least every six years using statistical validation. If a requisite review is not completed, the program risks being out of compliance with the law and may be discontinued. [Title 5 section 55003 (b)(4)]. This review shall be documented in CurricUNET.

**Requisites for Career Technical Education Courses**

Requisites for Career Technical Education courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years. [Title 5 section 55003 (b)(4)]. This review shall be documented in CurricUNET.

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### **Implementing Requisites**

Pre-requisites and co-requisites will be implemented consistently and not left to the classroom instructor's discretion. Every attempt shall be made to enforce pre-requisites and co-requisites prior to official registration in the course so that a student is not permitted to enroll unless he or she has met those requisites.

Pursuant to Section 55003(o) of Title 5, if enrollment is permitted pending verification that the student has met the pre-requisite or co-requisite, and the verification shows that the student has failed to meet the requisite, then the student will be involuntarily dropped from the course and all applicable enrollment fees will be promptly refunded.

Limitations on Enrollment will be implemented consistently and equitably by all classroom instructors.

### **Challenge Process**

Any student who does not meet a pre-requisite or co-requisite or who is not permitted to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment but who provides satisfactory evidence may seek entry into the course as follows:

1. Complete the required Requisite Challenge Form in the Assessment Center, providing documentation that explains/demonstrates that the student has the background, skills, or abilities to succeed in the course. Examples of such documentation include licenses or certificates earned, alternative (non-transferable or non-credit) coursework, work experience, and/or a portfolio of writing samples or artistic works completed. The appropriate School Dean or designee, typically the Department Chair will evaluate the challenge within ten working days (15 days during the summer) of receipt of the challenge form in the School office. If the Dean or designee approve the petition, or the College District fails to resolve the challenge within the ten working-day period (15-day period during the summer), the student shall be permitted to enroll in the course or program in question.
2. If the challenge is denied, the student may appeal the decision by requesting a meeting with the appropriate School Dean, Department Chair and the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee.
3. Grounds for challenge shall include the following:
  - a. Those grounds for challenge specified in Title 5, Section 55003(p):
    - i. The pre-requisite or co-requisite has not been established in accordance with the College District's process for establishing pre-requisites and co-requisites;
    - ii. The pre-requisite or co-requisite is in violation of this section;
    - iii. The pre-requisite or co-requisite is either unlawfully discriminatory or is

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- being applied in an unlawfully discriminatory manner;
- iv. The student has the knowledge or ability to succeed in the course or program despite not meeting the pre-requisite or co-requisite;
- v. The student will be subject to undue delay in attaining the goal of his or her educational plan because the pre-requisite or co-requisite course has not been made reasonably available.
- b. Additional grounds approved by the Southwestern Community College District Governing Board:
  - i. The student seeks to enroll and has not been allowed to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment established for a course that involves intercollegiate competition or public performance, or one or more of the courses for which enrollment has been limited to a cohort of students. The student shall be allowed to enroll in such a course if, otherwise, he or she would be delayed by a semester or more in attaining the degree or certificate specified in his or her educational plan.
  - ii. The student seeks to enroll in a course that has a pre-requisite established to protect health and safety, and the student demonstrates that he or she does not pose a threat to himself or herself or others.
- 4. The student has the obligation to provide satisfactory evidence that the challenge should be upheld. However, where facts essential to a determination of whether the student's challenge should be upheld are or ought to be in the college's own records, then the college has the obligation to produce that information.

**Instructor's Formal Agreement to Teach the Course as Described**

Once requisites are formally established, the College will ensure that faculty will fully implement the requisites by teaching each course in accordance with the course outline. A process for ensuring faculty compliance shall be established by consulting collegially with the local academic senate and, if appropriate, the local bargaining unit.

**Disproportionate Impact for Computation and Communications Pre-requisites**

For pre-requisites requiring precollegiate skills in reading, written expression, or mathematics, the college district must also conduct an evaluation to determine the impact on student success and whether there is any disproportionate impact on particular groups of student in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age, or disability in coordination with its student equity plan [§54220]. §54220 delineates the requirements for college student equity plans and identifies five broad areas that colleges are required to address: (1) access, (2) retention, (3) degree and certificate completion, (4) ESL and basic skills completion, and (5) transfer. Where there is disproportionate impact on any such group of students, the district shall, in

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consultation within the Chancellor, develop and implement a plan setting forth the steps the district will take to correct the disproportionate impact. [§ 55003(l)(2)(A) and (B)]

### **Criteria for Establishing Requisites without Content Review and Statistical Validation**

Per A pre-requisite or co-requisite need not be scrutinized using content review with statistical validation, in the following situations:

1. The requisite is required by statute or regulation
2. The requisite is part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline
3. The requisite is required by four-year institutions
4. At least one University of California or California State University campus will not grant credit for the course unless it has the designated communication or computation skill level.
5. Baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has the particular communication or computation skill pre-requisite.
6. The requisite is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other students in the course.

### **Assessment Results and Pre-requisites**

Data collected to validate assessment instruments and cut scores is always relevant to reviewing the pre-requisites for the associated courses. If data are not sufficient to establish cut scores, pre-requisites cannot be enforced but may be changed to advisories or recommended preparation until data validates the need for the pre-requisites.

The assessment process used must entail multiple measures, and any assessment instrument used must:

1. Yield valid and reliable information, minimize or eliminate cultural and/or linguistic bias, and be normed on appropriate community college populations.
2. Be approved for use by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges.
3. Be used in accordance with all other requirements of law.

### **Criteria for Establishing Requisites and Advisories for Programs**

In order to establish a pre-requisite for a program, the proposed program pre-requisite must be approved as a pre-requisite for at least one course that is required as part of the program. This approval must follow established procedures for establishing pre-requisites as explained above.

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### **Establishing a Recency Requirement as a Pre-requisite**

Recency is defined as the length of time that has passed since a student successfully completed the pre-requisite course. Recency may be used as a pre-requisite or co-requisite only if, in addition to the review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, a process of statistical validation as explained in "Curriculum Review Process" is followed and presented as part of the pre-requisite proposal to the curriculum committee.

### **Advisories on Recommended Preparation and Advisories on Recommended Concurrent Enrollment**

The college may recommend that a student meet a standard of readiness at entry only if recommended by pertinent discipline faculty, subjected to the process of content review, and approved by the curriculum committee as provided above.

### **Limitations on Enrollment**

The types of limitation on enrollment specified below may only be established through the content review process by the pertinent discipline or department faculty, and the curriculum committee approval process specified above. This includes the requirement to review limitations as part of the discipline's academic program review process.

In addition, the following requirements exist to establish these particular limitations on enrollment:

1. Performance Courses
  - a. The college may establish an audition or tryout as a limitation on enrollment for courses that include public performance or intercollegiate competition such as but not limited to band, orchestra, theater, competitive speech, chorus, journalism, dance, and intercollegiate athletics provided that:
    - i. For any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking this course, there is another course or courses which satisfy the same requirement(s).
2. Honors Courses
  - a. A limitation on enrollment for an honors course or an honors section of a course may be established if there is another section or another course or courses at the college which satisfy the same requirement(s).
3. Blocks of Courses or Sections
  - a. Blocks of courses or blocks of sections of courses are two or more courses or sections for which enrollment is limited in order to create a cohort of students. Such a limitation on enrollment may be established if there is another section



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or another course or courses that satisfy the same certificate or associate degree requirement(s).

4. Legal Requirements

- a. A limitation on enrollment may be established for certain courses where enrollment must be restricted to meet statutory, regulatory, or contractual requirements. The college must cite the statute or regulation in the catalog and class schedule.