

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT[281]

Adopted and Filed

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 256.7(5), the State Board of Education amends Chapter 21, “Community Colleges,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The amendments modify award requirements by phasing out Associate of Science-Career Option programs over a three-year period and implementing an Associate of Professional Studies pilot. These amendments were developed through more than two years of discussion with college academic leaders.

An agencywide waiver provision is provided in 281—Chapter 4.

Notice of Intended Action was published in the December 12, 2012, Iowa Administrative Bulletin as **ARC 0531C**. Public comments were allowed until 4:30 p.m. on January 4, 2013. A public hearing was held on that date; no person attended. No written or oral comments were received.

These amendments are identical to those published under Notice.

After analysis and review of this rule making, no adverse impact on jobs has been found.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 260C.

These amendments shall become effective on May 22, 2013.

The following amendments are adopted.

ITEM 1. Amend subrule 21.2(9) as follows:

**21.2(9) Award requirements.** The director shall approve all new credit certificate, diploma, and degree award programs in accordance with Iowa Code section 260C.14. Awards from a community college shall be certified by the issuance of appropriate recognition, pursuant to award approval requirement guidelines issued by the department, indicating the type of program the student has completed. The minimum number and maximum number of credit hours required for each award type contained within this subrule may be waived pursuant to paragraph 21.2(13) “i.” Each award shall meet the expectations of statewide articulation agreements between Iowa community colleges and public universities.

a. No change.

b. *Associate of science (AS).* The degree is awarded upon completion of a course of study that requires a strong background in mathematics or science. The degree is intended to prepare students to transfer and initiate upper-division work in baccalaureate programs ~~or prepare them for employment.~~ ~~An associate of science degree may also be awarded upon completion of a state-approved associate of science-career option (AS-CO) program of study that includes core technical coursework needed to complete a concentration in a specific field of study. The AS-CO program shall prepare students for entry-level careers and to complete requirements for transfer to a baccalaureate degree.~~ An associate of science degree awarded upon completion of an arts and sciences course of study shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 64 semester (96 quarter) credit hours. ~~An associate of science degree awarded upon completion of an AS-CO course of study shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum number of credit hours stated in program guidelines issued by the department. An associate of science degree awarded upon completion of an AS-CO course of study shall not consist of more than 70 semester (117 quarter) credit hours without an approved waiver pursuant to paragraph 21.2(13) “i.”~~

c. *Associate of general studies (AGS).* The degree is awarded upon completion of a an individualized course of study that is primarily designed for the acquisition of a broad educational background rather than the pursuit of a specific college major or professional/technical program. ~~It~~ The AGS is intended as a flexible course of study and may include specific curriculum in lower division transfer, occupational education, or professional-technical education. It shall not include a marketed course of study. An associate of general studies degree shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 64 semester (96 quarter) credit hours.

d. and e. No change.

f. Associate of professional studies (APS) pilot. The degree is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is intended to prepare students for transfer and upper division coursework in aligned baccalaureate programs or immediate entry into the workforce.

(1) Pilot awards shall be approved on a limited basis at the director's sole discretion. To be eligible to participate in the pilot, a college shall demonstrate that other award types cannot meet needs and the associate of professional studies award is appropriate. The department shall study the effectiveness of associate of professional studies programs with regard to transfer and employment success after five years and make recommendations to the state board of education regarding program parameters and continuation.

(2) Each state-approved associate of science-career option (AS-CO) program of study shall be phased out by the end of the 2015-2016 academic year. All existing AS-CO programs shall be modified to meet the parameters of allowable award types or shall be discontinued.

(3) An associate of professional studies degree shall consist of a minimum of 62 semester (93 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 68 semester (102 quarter) credit hours. The general education component of the associate of professional studies degree shall consist of a minimum of 30 semester (45 quarter) credit hours of general education including 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of each of the following: speech, mathematics, humanities, social and behavioral sciences, science; 6 semester (9 quarter) credit hours of writing; and 9 semester (13.5 quarter) credit hours distributed among mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and science. The technical specialty component of the associate of professional studies degree shall consist of a minimum of 16 semester (24 quarter) credit hours of career and technical coursework accepted by a receiving baccalaureate degree-granting institution with an aligned program as applying toward a specific major or program of study. The technical specialty component of the degree shall also consist of a minimum of 16 additional semester (24 quarter) credit hours of career and technical coursework accepted by the receiving institution as electives.

(4) An associate of professional studies degree program of study shall have a minimum of three program-to-program articulation agreements with baccalaureate degree-granting institutions, at least one of which must be a public institution. A program shall have a minimum of one articulation agreement effective prior to program implementation, provided all three agreements are effective within the program's first year of student enrollment. The agreements shall provide for the application of no fewer than 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours toward the graduation requirements of each articulated baccalaureate degree program.

f. g. Diploma. The diploma is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is a coherent sequence of courses consisting of a minimum of 15 semester (22.5 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 48 semester (72 quarter) credit hours including at least 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of general education. The general education component shall be from any of the following areas: communications, social science or humanities, and mathematics or science. A diploma may be a component of and apply toward subsequent completion of an associate of applied science or associate of applied arts degree.

g. h. Certificate. The certificate is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is designed for entry-level employment and shall consist of a maximum of 48 semester (72 quarter) credit hours. A certificate may be a component of and apply toward subsequent completion of a diploma or associate of applied science or associate of applied arts degree and may be developed in rapid response to the needs of business and industry. A certificate may consist of only career and technical courses and no general education course requirements.

ITEM 2. Amend subrule 21.2(13) as follows:

**21.2(13) Career and technical program length.**

a. Program length for the associate of applied science (AAS) degree in career and technical education, and for the associate of applied arts (AAA) degree, and for the associate of professional studies (APS) degree shall consist of an academic program not to exceed two academic years. All required course offerings are to be available within two academic years. All required offerings in AAS

and AAA degree programs shall not exceed a maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours unless the department of education has granted a waiver pursuant to paragraph 21.2(13)“i.” All required offerings in pilot APS degree programs shall not exceed a maximum of 68 credit hours. Programs shall not exceed an average of 19 credit hours per regular term.

b. All credit-bearing courses required for program admittance or graduation, or both, ~~must~~ shall be included in the ~~86 semester (129 quarter) program length~~ credit hour maximum, with the exception of developmental course credit hours. Prerequisites that provide an option to students for either credit or noncredit shall be counted toward the program ~~maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours~~ parameters. Prerequisite options that are only offered for noncredit ~~will~~ shall not be counted toward the ~~86 semester (129 quarter) credit hour maximum~~ program length parameters. A high school course prerequisite is permissible and shall not count toward program length parameters, provided the prerequisite is reasonable. A high school course prerequisite is reasonable if a community college demonstrates that students entering the program predominantly meet the requirement without prior college coursework.

c. No change.

d. ~~Program length for the state-approved associate of science degree shall consist of an academic program that includes core technical coursework needed to complete a concentration in a specific field of study. The associate of science-career option program may prepare students for entry-level careers or allow students to complete requirements for a transfer to a baccalaureate degree. The associate of science-career option program shall not exceed the credit hour limit stated in department guidelines. To facilitate the transfer of students enrolling in associate of science-career option programs and awarded the associate of science transfer degree, each program shall have articulation agreements with baccalaureate degree programs meeting the articulation agreement requirements stated in department guidelines. The associate of science-career option program shall under no circumstances exceed a maximum of 70 semester (117 quarter) credit hours unless the department has granted a waiver pursuant to paragraph 21.2(13)“i.” Associate of professional studies pilot programs shall not be eligible for a program-length waiver pursuant to paragraph 21.2(13)“i.”~~

e. to h. No change.

i. Waiver process. A college may petition the department to suspend in whole or in part a program-length requirement contained in paragraphs ~~21.2(12)“h” to “m”~~ 21.2(13)“a” to “e” as applied to a specific program on the basis of the particular circumstances of that program.

(1) to (4) No change.

[Filed 3/28/13, effective 5/22/13]

[Published 4/17/13]

EDITOR’S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 4/17/13.