

# 2.01.00.00 General Education Core and Degree Requirements



## Policy/Guideline Area

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Academic Policies

## Applicable Division

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Community Colleges

## Purpose

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The purpose of this policy is to specify the general education core requirements for degrees conferred by community colleges.

## Policy/Guideline

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### I. General Education Core Requirements

- A. Each community college will subscribe to the general education core requirements stated in the policy sections below and as published in the TBR Core framework document, effective fall semester 2025 (see exhibit A).
- B. These requirements consist of forty-one (41) semester hours in the following subject categories and are required for completion of the Associate of Arts (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), Associate of Science in Teaching (A.S.T.), and Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.).
  1. Communication: 9 semester hours
    - a. Six (6) semester hours of English composition and three (3) semester hours in English oral presentational communication are required.
  2. Humanities and/or Fine Arts: 9 semester hours
    - a. One course must be in literature.
  3. Social/Behavioral Sciences: 6 semester hours
  4. History: 6 semester hours
  5. Natural Sciences: 8 semester hours
  6. Mathematics: 3 semester hours
- C. Courses specified as meeting general education requirements are published in the catalog of each institution.

D. Students pursuing an Associate of Fine Arts degree in Music as a Tennessee Transfer Pathway will complete all of the required general education hours in Section B. above except for six hours of the humanities requirement, including one course in literature, which must be completed at a university upon transfer.

## II. Degree Requirements and Provisions

A. All Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees offered by institutions in the Tennessee Board of Regents System shall be designated on the THEC Academic Program inventory as University Parallel degrees and require a maximum of 60 semester hours except in certain degree programs in which approval to exceed the maximum has been granted. The programs approved as exceptions to the maximum are identified in institutional catalogs. For students who complete a Tennessee Transfer Pathway, the corresponding Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Fine Arts degree shall include the title of the pathway in the catalog and on the diploma.

B. Students pursuing an Associate of Arts degree shall be required to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to completing of one year of college-level work.

C. The Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is not generally designed to transfer to baccalaureate programs without the creation of specific articulation agreements; however, a general education component is required.

D. The following distribution of general education core courses is required for the A.A.S. degree in all community colleges within the Tennessee Board of Regents System:

1. English Composition: 3 semester hours
2. \*Humanities and/or Fine Arts: 3 semester hours
3. \*Social/Behavioral Sciences: 3 semester hours
4. \*Natural Science/Mathematics: 3-4 semester hours
5. One additional course from the categories of Communication, Humanities and/or Fine Arts, Social/Behavioral Sciences, or Natural Science/Mathematics 3-4 semester hours

E. Total 15-17 semester hours

F. \*Specific courses satisfying these requirements must be the same courses that satisfy the general education core requirement for the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees.

## III. Core Course Approval

- A. Each community college will list its general education core courses in its catalog and on its website where appropriate.
- B. All core courses must be approved by the systemwide Core Review Committee.
- C. The Core Review Committee will include one representative from each community college as appointed by its Chief Academic Officer.
- D. The Core Review Committee may include one representative from each of the six locally governed TN public universities and one from the UT system.

#### IV. Transfer Provisions of the General Education Core and

- A. Community college students who do not complete the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Science in Teaching, or Associate of Fine Arts degree and transfer to another community college within the Tennessee Board of Regents System but who complete blocks of subject categories will have satisfied the general education requirements for the categories of note.
  - 1. For example, if the eight (8) semester hours of natural sciences are completed, then this block of the general education requirement is fulfilled upon transfer to another community college within the Tennessee Board of Regents System.
  - 2. When a subject category is incomplete, a course by-course evaluation will be conducted, and the student will be subject to specific requirements of the receiving institution

## Exhibits

For Exhibits, click the Attachments button at the top right of the page.

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## Sources

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### Authority

T.C.A. § 49-8-203; THEC; SACS

### History

TBR Meetings, June 25, 1976; June 25, 1982; March 20, 1987; June 24, 1988; December 5, 1997; June 29, 2004; September 24, 2004; March 27, 2008; TBR Board Meeting September 25, 2009. TBR Board Meeting, December 2, 2010; September 21, 2012; December 21, 2014 (Removed language in Section I.D. referring to finding the course information on the TBR and/or Policies & Guideline website. This information will now be on the individual institution's

website.); (Added a new link for pathways information.) TBR Meeting March 30, 2016; Revised at Board Meeting June 20, 2019; Revised at Board Meeting September 20, 2024.