

Baccalaureate Degree Standards

Baccalaureate degrees should provide evidence of competencies in communications, social sciences, humanities and fine arts, analytical and inferential reasoning, and computational skills, as well as understanding a defined area of knowledge and the ability to learn on one's own.

Minimum Standards

All baccalaureate degrees should require the equivalent of at least four years of full-time study built around a defined body of knowledge. Because full-time enrollment is becoming less common, the minimum standards have been expressed here in terms of credits. Programs that do not measure academic progress by credits will need to demonstrate through equivalent measures that these standards are met.

In accordance with commonly held standards, the minimum requirement for a baccalaureate degree is 180 quarter or 120 semester credits. It is understood that institutions may use other terms (e.g., hours, courses) to express equivalent student accomplishment.

General Education

General education should be an integral part of all baccalaureate degree programs in order to develop characteristics that help define an educated person. Liberal arts and sciences (Communication, Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Humanities, and Social Science) are a fundamental component of collegiate degrees. Granting a degree implies that the student has achieved general education experiences in addition to preparation in a major field of study. There are standards for the minimum number of general education credits required for each type of baccalaureate degree.

- A. ***Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)*** degree programs are primarily intended to provide a broad liberal arts and sciences background. B.A. degree programs should include a minimum of 60 quarter or 40 semester credits distributed across at least the following four areas: Communication, Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Humanities, and Social Science. Included in the 60 (qtr) or 40 (sem) credits should be at least 8 (qtr) or 5 (sem) credits in Communications, and a minimum of 12 (qtr) or 8 (sem) in each of the categories of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences/Mathematics. The remaining general education credits should be chosen from one or more of these four categories.
- B. ***Bachelor of Science (B.S.)*** should include a minimum of 45 quarter or 30 semester credits distributed across at least the following four areas: Communication, Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Humanities, and Social Science. Included in the 45 (qtr) or 30 (sem) credits should be at least 6 (qtr) or 4 (sem) credits in each of the four categories. The remaining credits should be chosen from one or more of these four categories.

- C. **Bachelor of _____** (discipline specific, interdisciplinary studies, other specialized nomenclature) degree programs should include a minimum of 45 quarter or 30 semester credits distributed across at least the following four areas: Communication, Natural Sciences/Mathematics, Humanities, and Social Science. Included in the 45 (qtr) or 30 (sem) credits should be at least 6 (qtr) or 4 (sem) credits in each of the four categories. The remaining general education credits should be chosen from one or more of these four categories.

Major Requirements

The minimum number of credits required within a major program of study should be 45 quarter or 30 semester credits. Study within a major program should form a coherent pattern in which introductory work in the major field may provide a foundation for advanced work.

Level of Study

A baccalaureate degree should include both introductory and advanced course work. Introductory course work should provide a broad exposure to the concepts, principles, and substance of individual disciplines. Advanced course work should be of sufficient intensity and complexity to provide an in-depth examination of the concepts, principles and substance of individual disciplines. The minimum number of required advanced level credits, including courses from a major program of study, should equal 30% of the total number of credits required to complete a baccalaureate degree program.

Relationship of Baccalaureate Degrees to Associate Degrees

- A. An Associate in Arts degree should be equivalent to a minimum of 90 quarter or 60 semester credit hours towards a Bachelor of Arts degree.
- B. An Associate in Science degree should be equivalent to a minimum of 90 quarter or 60 semester credit hours towards particular Bachelor of Science degrees.
- C. The general education portion of an Associate in Applied Science degree should be equivalent to a minimum of 30 quarter or 20 semester credit hours towards a baccalaureate degree.

Equivalent Measures

If an institution does not use a quarter or semester system, it must define and describe how the terms that are used are equivalent to quarter or semester credit hours.

Baccalaureate Degree Standards in Credit Equivalencies

ISSUE	TYPE OF DEGREE		
	B.A.	B.S.	BACHELOR of
Total Credits - minimum	180 quarter/ 120 semester	180 quarter/ 120 semester	180 quarter/ 120 semester
Curriculum Components			
<i>General Education:</i>			
Minimum credits	60 quarter/ 40 semester	45 quarter/ 30 semester	45 quarter/ 30 semester
Core areas (in quarter credits):			
Communication	8 (qtr)/5 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)
Social Science	12 (qtr)/8 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)
Humanities	12 (qtr)/8 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)
Natural Sciences/Mathematics	12 (qtr)/8 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)	6 (qtr)/4 (sem)
Additional quarter credits from core areas	16 (qtr)/11 (sem)	21 (qtr)/14 (sem)	21 (qtr)/14 (sem)
<i>Major Requirements - minimum credits</i>	45 quarter/ 30 semester	45 quarter/ 30 semester	45 quarter/ 30 semester
<i>Advanced Level Course Work</i>	30%	30%	30%