

STANDARD X – OCCUPATIONAL ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE PROGRAMS
January 2017

The institution offers Occupational Associate Degree programs and/or courses that are consistent with the institution’s mission and educational objectives. The institution has the discretion to offer associate degrees. Associate degree offerings may be based on demographic needs, student learning outcomes, and industry market needs. Associate Degrees may reflect concentration within areas such as Beauty, Health and Wellness, and corresponding Management programs. All occupational Associate Degree programs must comply with federal, state, and local regulations and NACCAS Standards and requirements.

D 1. Administrators of Associate Degree programs shall possess at least a Bachelor’s Degree, an educational background, as well as experience in the program field.

D 2. Preparation of faculty members shall be academically and experientially appropriate to the subject matter they teach. Faculty members shall be competent to teach the subject matter offered and shall have reasonable latitude in their choice of teaching methods.

D 3. Instructors teaching general education courses must have at least a Bachelor’s Degree with appropriate course work in the subject area(s) in which the instructor is teaching.

D4. Faculty members who teach in technical areas of Associate Degree programs hold at least an associate degree in an area related to the technical courses they teach. (See Policy X.01, Item 1 for exceptions)

D/A 5. During any academic term, a faculty member shall not be assigned to teach more than three fields of instruction and no more than five classes.

D 6. If the institution has a transfer or articulation policy, the institution from which the student transferred must be an accredited institution. The policy must also state that a minimum of 50% of the degree program must be delivered by the institution awarding the degree (at least 25% in the area of concentration and 25% of general education).

D 7. Programs must be offered in credit hours, with a minimum of 60 semester credit hours or 90 quarter credit hours normally earned over a period of 4 semesters, 6 quarters, or equivalent; or 2250 clock hours in length earned over a period of five semesters; or competency based hybrid clock hour programs as defined by the State and outlined in Instructions for Reporting Competency Based Programs. (See Policy X.01, Item 2)

D 8. The program must include at least 45 semester credit hours or 67 quarter credit hours in the occupational area.

D 9. The program must include a minimum of 15 semester credit hours or 23 quarter credit hours of General Education courses with at least one course from the following areas: Mathematics, English; Humanities; Natural/Applied Science; and Behavioral Science.

A 10. Courses and/or programs must enhance the ability of an individual to apply academic and occupational skills in the workplace.

A 11. Courses and/or programs must qualitatively and quantitatively approximate the standards at other collegiate institutions related to the occupational degree offered.

D/O/A 12. The institution has learning resources, (see Glossary definition for Learning Resources), available that are required for degree-granting institutions including:

1. A trained and knowledgeable staff is available to manage resources and ensure assistance to students and faculty in the use of the technologies and resources provided,
2. A learning resources budget,
3. Resources that reflect a degree-granting institution that offer programs in Health, Beauty and Wellness (including but not limited to English, business ethics, law, management, humanities, sciences, and social sciences) to support the general education component of the educational programs, and
4. Interlibrary agreements may supplement but not replace resources.

A/O 13. Research information is available through hard copy reference materials and/or full-text virtual libraries to support programs offered at the institution and enhance student learning outcomes.

A/O 14. Learning resources are accessible to all students during classroom and/or lab hours and on-line, as applicable. (See Glossary Terms for Learning Resources)

A/O 15. Learning resource materials must be current and relevant to program offerings and student population.

D16. Students are made aware of resources available including location, hours of operation, staff responsible, and materials.

A 17. The student teacher ratio shall be in keeping with generally accepted delivery modes and course content (See Policy X.01, Item 3)

D 18. The institution shall make available to students a syllabus which meets NACCAS requirements. (See Policy X.01, Item 4)

A/O 19. Enrollment in the second year of a two-year program must be sufficient to support regularly scheduled classes and laboratory work. Second year work shall be based upon appropriate first year prerequisites.

D 20. Externships and internships shall be supervised by qualified staff members who are responsible for the evaluation of the student, a viable learning environment, an overall effective learning experience. A fully executed externship/internship agreement must be on file. It is the responsibility of the institution to locate an externship/internship site and place the students. (See Policy X.01, Item 5)

Policy VII.03 – Financial Practices & Management: Policy on Financial Statement Reserves

This Policy applies to audited financial statements with a fiscal year end date of July 1, 2017 and thereafter.

1. **Reserve Requirement:** The institution must have (at least) 3% of Net Revenue in reserves.

For these purposes, “Net Revenue” is defined as revenue minus refunds, or discounts. It does not include cost of goods sold, operating expenses, or taxes. Reserves shall consist of cash and/or cash equivalents as defined by U.S. GAAP, or any documented commercial line of credit issued to the institution. (Any letter of credit requirement imposed by the U.S. Department of Education cannot be included as reserves as required by this Policy VII.03.)

2. **Compliance Deadlines:** All accredited institutions and applicants for accreditation must demonstrate compliance with this Policy VII.03 by the following deadlines.
 - a. **Applicants for Initial Accreditation:** Institutions applying for initial accreditation must have 3% of Net Revenue in reserves at the time of application. [This means that any financial statements with a fiscal year end date of July 1, 2017 and thereafter that are submitted in connection with an application for initial accreditation must show reserves of at least 3% of Net Revenue.]
 - b. **Accredited Institutions:** Accredited institutions may demonstrate compliance with this Policy VII.03 by increasing their reserves over a three-year period, in accordance with the following timetable:
 - i. The institution should (but is not required to) demonstrate at least 1% of Net Revenue in reserves for audited financial statements with year-ending dates between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.
 - ii. The institution must demonstrate at least 2% of Net Revenue in reserves for audited financial statements with year-ending dates between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.
 - iii. The institution must demonstrate at least 3% of Net Revenue in reserves for audited financial statements with year-ending dates of July 1, 2019 and thereafter.
3. **Average Reserve Balance:** In each fiscal year, the institution must maintain the required reserve balance (as described above) (a) for the 90 days prior to fiscal year end and (b) for at least nine (9) of the twelve (12) months in that fiscal year. [For example, an institution with a 3% reserve requirement and a December year end must meet the 3% reserve requirement for (i) October through December, and (ii) at least 6 other months during that year.] This requirement does not apply to accredited institutions in their first year of transitioning to the 3% Reserve Requirement (as described in Section 2(b)(i) above).
4. **CPA Certification of Compliance:** The institution’s audited financial statements must include auditor footnote(s) indicating the institution is compliant with this Policy VII.03.
5. **Temporary Waiver:** An institution that has suffered a disaster (as described in Policy VIII.01: Policy on Disasters) may Petition the Commission for a temporary waiver of this Policy VII.03.

POLICIES X.01 – Occupational Associate Degree Programs January 2017

Item 1. Exceptions to instructor qualifications: Exceptions to the associates degree requirement may be justified for instructors who have demonstrable current exceptional professional certification(s), letters of recommendation or attestations from previous employer(s), letters attesting to this expertise from professional peers not connected to the college, real examples of previous success in the field such as published work, juried exhibits and shows, evidence of a professional portfolio accepted by the institution and available for review, and/or other significant documented experience relevant to the courses to be taught.

Item 2. Clock to credit hour conversion:

15 clock hours of lecture = 1 semester credit hour

10 clock hours of lecture = 1 quarter credit hour

30 clock hours of lab = 1 semester credit hour

20 clock hours of lab = 1 quarter credit hour

45 clock hour of clinical/internship = 1 semester credit

30 clock hours of clinical/internship = 1 quarter credit

Lecture hours refer to classroom instruction in theory/academic learning.

Lab hours refer to classroom instruction in practical/hands-on learning.

Clinical hours refer to students performing services.

Item 3. Student/Teacher Ratio: The institution shall consider the following factors in determining the student/teacher ratio:

1. the amount of lecture given by instructors in skill building and practice classes;
2. the level of existing skills of the student;
3. the amount of direct supervision exercised by the instructor and the availability of instructional equipment in the lab setting where there is primary instruction in a specific skill; and
4. the use of technology in providing alternative instruction or evaluation

Item 4. Syllabus: A description of how the course will be taught with a planned arrangement of materials and activities. The minimum requirements for a course syllabus shall consist of the title and course description, course number, course prerequisites and/or core requisites, instructional contact hours/credits, learning objectives, instructional materials and references, topical outline of the course, instructional methods, out-of-class learning activities and assignments, assessment criteria, method of evaluating students, and the date the syllabus was last reviewed. A course syllabus should be reviewed to ensure that it reflects the most recent trends, developments, and instructional materials for the specific subject areas. A current syllabus prepared and utilized by instructors in guiding and directing the learning experience of the students is necessary to ensure the quality of instruction

Item 5. Externships/Internships: A supervised practical experience that is the application of previously studied theory. Normally, three hours of work in a practical setting has the

credit equivalency of one hour of classroom lecture. Under the supervision of a faculty member, a written agreement shall be developed that outlines the arrangement between the institution and the externship site, including specific learning objectives, course requirements, and evaluation criteria.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS January 2017

Fields of Instruction for core courses (Associate Degree): refers to courses leading to licensure and/or certification.

General Education (Associate Degree): Shall include, but are not limited to, Arts and Business courses (Ethics, Law, Management, Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences) to support the general education component of the educational programs.

Independent Study (Associate Degree): Independent study involves a high level of independence and self-direction on the part of the student to read, conduct research, and complete written examinations, reports, research papers, and similar assignments designed to measure the student's grasp of the subject matter. Under the supervision of a faculty member, a learning contract signed by the student and institution shall be developed which outlines specific learning objectives, texts, supplemental readings, course requirements, evaluative criteria, and examination dates. Because independent study classes are the exception and not the rule, the number of courses that a student will be allowed to take independently should be limited.

Learning Resources (Associate Degree): Shall include, but are not limited to, such resources as standard reference texts, current periodicals, professional journals, and multimedia materials. Such resources should assist a student with acquiring necessary skills such as reading, writing, communicating, critical thinking, and basic use of computer technology. Curricula should clearly outline the appropriate use of library resources.

Occupational Associate Degrees: Career and technical programs designed to prepare students for employment. They meet the increasing demand for technicians, and skilled workers for employment in the medical, health, wellness and beauty industries.

Syllabus: A syllabus is a description of how the course will be taught with a planned arrangement of materials and activities.