

**TITLE 135
PROCEDURAL RULE
WEST VIRGINIA COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE EDUCATION**

**SERIES 11
DEGREE DESIGNATION, GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS, NEW PROGRAM
APPROVAL, AND DISCONTINUANCE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS**

§135-11-1. General.

1.1. Scope. -- This rule establishes standards for community and technical colleges to determine the appropriate degree designation for academic programs and the general education requirements for the respective degrees. Additionally, this rule delineates the responsibilities of the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education in the approval and discontinuance of academic programs and establishes processes for institutions in seeking Council approval of new academic programs.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §18B-2B-6.

1.3. Filing Date. -- June 15, 2011.

1.4. Effective Date. -- July 15, 2011.

§135-11-2. Purpose.

2.1. Certificate and associate degree programs are central to the mission of community and technical colleges. They are a means through which the institution develops and maintains integrity in its educational programs. Appropriately defined, these degrees become an integrating force for the institution, set academic standards and goals for achievement of students, and establish the relationship between the college and other institutions at community college and baccalaureate college levels.

The associate degree program establishes the community college vision of what it means to be an educated person and affirms the college's commitment to program coherence, continuity, and student success. Awarding the associate degree is a way by which an institution indicates the student has completed a program of academic development and has achieved a level of performance reflected in student learning outcomes sufficient to progress to upper division collegiate work or to enter directly into specific occupations in the workplace. The associate degree is recognized by baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and by employers as a critical indicator a student has demonstrated proficiencies at levels deemed appropriate to enter upper-division college programs or to enter a field of work. Certificate and associate degree programs must consist of a coherent and sequenced set of courses, including an evaluation procedure that assesses the outcomes of the learning process.

All degree programs must include a complement of general education requirements appropriate to the level of the degree. Therefore, it is the purpose of this policy to adopt and require the use of nationally standardized nomenclature regarding certificate and associate degrees and the nationally promulgated standards for the general education components of the respective degrees. It is the goal of this policy to ensure a common understanding of the associate degrees awarded by West Virginia community and technical colleges; to promote the transferability and portability of degrees among the colleges and with baccalaureate degree granting institutions; and to foster recognition of the degrees as a respected credential for employment.

The West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education is charged by statute with general authority for academic program approval for West Virginia community and technical colleges. To facilitate the discharge of these responsibilities, the procedures and format included within this rule shall be followed by each institution in submitting to the chancellor for consideration by the Council proposals to establish academic programs.

§135-11-3. Degree Designations.

3.1. Degree program: A degree program is an area of study approved as such by the institution and the Council and listed on the official Council inventory of degree programs, e.g. Business, Criminal Justice, and General Studies. The degree, which is an award signifying a rank or level of educational attainment and which is conferred on students who have successfully completed a degree program, is represented by the official degree designation, e.g. A.A. - Associate in Arts, A.S. - Associate in Science, A.F.A. - Associate in Fine Arts, or A.A.S. - Associate in Applied Science. The degree program completed would be listed on the student's diploma.

There are nationally recognized associate degree designations adopted for use. Each has a specific purpose and declares the specific intent of those who framed the academic program requirements. The respective degree designations communicate clearly the primary, predetermined goal for the preparation of the student. Associate degrees require a maximum of sixty-credit hours unless otherwise required by accrediting agencies for completion of the degree and the certificate degree requires a maximum of thirty-credit hours for completion unless otherwise required by accrediting agencies.

The curriculum is the foundation of certificate and associate degree programs. For students to earn the degrees, the program must consist of a coherent and sequenced set of courses, including an evaluation procedure that assesses the outcomes of the learning process. The program must state the proficiency outcomes required for the students to transfer to baccalaureate institutions and/or achieve career goals.

Certificate and associate degree programs must include a full complement of general education requirements appropriate to the level of the degree, including essential communication and computation skills.

3.1.a. The Associate in Arts (AA) degree. The purpose and intent of this degree are to prepare the student to transfer to an upper division baccalaureate degree program. It gives emphasis to those majoring in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and similar areas. While a student may enter directly into employment upon attainment of this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful transfer with junior status.

3.1.a.1. General Education. For successful transfer with program emphasis in arts, humanities, social sciences, and similar areas, a substantial component of this degree, at least 24 semester hours of coursework, shall be in general education.

3.1.b. The Associate in Science (AS) degree. The purpose and intent of this degree are to prepare the student to transfer to an upper division baccalaureate degree program. It gives emphasis to those majoring in the areas with substantial undergraduate requirements in mathematics, natural sciences, and similar areas. While a student may enter directly into employment upon attainment of this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful transfer with junior status.

3.1.b.1. General Education. For successful transfer with program emphasis in agriculture, engineering and technology, and the sciences with a substantial undergraduate requirement in mathematics and the natural sciences, a large component of this degree, at least 24 semester hours of coursework shall be in general education.

3.1.c. The Associate in Fine Arts (AFA) degree. The dual purpose and intent of this degree is to prepare students to enter directly into employment in a specific art-related career while also preparing students for transfer to an upper division baccalaureate program. It gives emphasis to those majoring in areas with substantial emphasis in the arts. While a student may enter directly into employment upon attainment of this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful transfer with junior status.

3.1.c.1. General Education. For successful transfer with program emphasis in art-related areas, a large component of this degree, at least 24 semester hours of coursework shall be in general education.

3.1.d. The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree. The purpose and intent of this degree are to prepare the student to enter directly into employment in a specific career. It gives emphasis to those majoring in occupational programs designed with and through employer advisory committees. It is the goal of this degree to achieve acceptance as an employment credential. While a student may be able to achieve successful transfer of some or all the courses within this degree, the goal of programs that award this degree is successful employment.

3.1.d.1. General Education. For successful entry directly into employment in a specific career and to provide a basic foundation for life-long learning and future career changes, at least 15 semester hours of coursework for this degree shall be in general education unless otherwise required by the accrediting agency. General education shall include communication and computational skills and other general education coursework related to the specific occupational career area.

3.1.e. Certificate in Applied Science Degree [CAS] program. A certificate program in applied science is a coherent, specialized curriculum designed for students in search of a specific body of knowledge for personal/career development or professional continuing education. The purpose and intent of the certificate degree program are to prepare the student to enter directly into employment in a specific career and meet the documented workforce needs of local employers. Generally, certificate programs provide the foundation for the associate in applied science (AAS) degree for occupational programs. Like the AAS degree, the goal of certificates is to achieve acceptance as an employment credential.

3.1.e.1. General Education. As the foundation of the Certificate in Applied Science degree and for successful entry into employment in a specific career, at least 6 semester hours of coursework for the certificate shall be in general education, including essential communication and computation skills.

3.2. Program of Study: A program of study is a defined curriculum within an approved degree program. An institution should include the program of study on the student's transcript. The program of study is identified by a distinct Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code.

3.3. Concentration: Concentrations provide a thematic focus of study that enable the student to spend the time and effort to acquire depth in a particular discipline, in addition to meeting the normal breadth of requirements for the associate's degree. A student might choose a concentration to begin early preparation for a specific academic area that they might wish to later pursue in a bachelor degree program. Typically, approximately 12-18 credit hours would be expected for a concentration within an associate degree program. Concentrations should appear on the student's transcript.

3.4. Advanced Skill Set Certificate: A series of courses or competencies that prepare individuals for a specific skill and carry value of 12 or more but less than 30 credit hours or non-credit contact hours equivalent to 12 or more but less than 30 credit hours.

3.5. Skills Set Certificate: A series of courses or competencies that prepare individuals for a specific skill and carry value fewer than 12 credit hours or non-credit contact hours equivalent to fewer than 12 credit hours.

§135-11-4. Submission Procedures.

4.1. Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Fine Arts academic degree programs with distinct CIP codes: Proposals for approval of new Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Fine Arts academic degree programs require approval from the appropriate Board of Governors and the Council. These associate degree programs are primarily designed as transfer programs. Decisions to establish concentrations or certificate programs within existing associate degree academic programs may be made at the institutional Board of Governors level or may be delegated to the institutional president and do not require external approvals. All changes to existing programs and addition of new programs should be reported to the chancellor.

4.1.a. Timelines for new degree programs: Proposals to add new degree programs shall be submitted to the chancellor at least 60 days prior to the date the Council considers program approval for associate level programs.

4.2. Associate in Applied Science and Certificate in Applied Science programs: New occupational programs may be implemented by the community and technical colleges and do not require the approval of either the institutional governing board or the Council. While the approval of the institutional governing board is not required, it is recommended that the appropriate institutional governing board be consulted. An occupational program may either be an associate degree program, certificate program, advanced skill set certificate, or skills set certificate delivered by a community and technical college with the primary intent of preparing the student to enter employment on completion of the program. All changes to existing programs and addition of new programs should be reported to the chancellor.

4.3. Delivery outside of the community and technical college consortia planning district: If a community and technical college desires to offer a program or courses outside its assigned community and technical college consortia planning district, the CTC must first contact the community and technical college(s) assigned to that consortia planning district. If it is not the desire of the assigned community and technical college(s) to offer the requested program or courses, the CTC may offer the specific program or courses. However, if any of the community and technical college(s) assigned to that consortia planning district desires to offer the program or courses, the requesting CTC may not offer the program or courses in that district. Once a decision is made to offer a program or courses outside of the assigned consortia planning district, the community and technical college should notify the chancellor of the agreement reached between the relevant colleges.

4.4. Delivery outside of West Virginia: An institution planning to offer existing academic courses and/or programs at sites outside West Virginia must have the approval of the appropriate out-of-state agency which regulates such offerings, as well as the approval of the Council.

§135-11-5. Accountability Process.

5.1. General Education Curriculum Policy: Each community and technical college shall file with the Council their institutional policy on general education as approved by the respective Board of Governors. Such institutional policy shall address the college's vision for the common core of learning outcomes that are essential to the definition of an educated person regardless of the field of study undertaken. Such institutional policy shall include the institutional minimum requirements for general education for each certificate and associate degree designation.

5.2. Program Review Component: During the established five-year program review cycle for certificate and associate degrees, each community and technical college shall demonstrate compliance with this Council policy regarding degree designation and general education requirements. Specifically, the institution shall document that the purpose, intent and goals of the program are consistent with the degree designation and the full complement of general education courses support the program learning outcomes.

§135-11-6. Intent to Plan.

6.1. Intent to Plan: An institution must express to the chancellor by a statement of intent to plan a new Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degree program at least 120 days prior to the date when the Council considers approval of the new program. Early consultation allows exploration of such fundamental concerns as needs analyses, consistency with institutional mission, resource requirements, and other issues prior to engaging in extensive and detailed planning. Since community and technical college occupational programs or certificates do not require external approvals, no intent to plan request should be filed for these occupational programs or certificates.

The chancellor and staff will review the statement of intent to plan. Consultants may be used when deemed necessary. Approval of requests to plan shall be made by the chancellor.

Authorization to plan a new academic program does not, however, in any way constitute a commitment on the part of the Council to approve the program at such time as the planning is completed and the program approval request is submitted. The authorization indicates that the program is consistent with the mission of the institution. Planning authorization allows the institution to formulate a proposal for establishment of the new program.

6.2. A request to develop a plan should indicate the projected date of submission of the full proposal and the projected date of implementation. It should also include the following:

6.2.a. A statement describing the educational objectives, the relationship of the objectives to the mission of the institution, and any special features or conditions that make the institution a desirable or unique place to initiate such a program.

6.2.b. A brief description of the program.

6.2.c. A statement describing how the institution will assure high quality standards for the program and maintain a continuing assessment of quality.

6.2.d. A statement listing other institutions in West Virginia that offer similar programs.

6.2.e. A statement on what societal, occupational, research, or public service needs will be met, as well as anticipated student demand for the program.

6.2.f. A statement on what additional resources will be needed to offer the program.

§135-11-7. Submission Requirements for New Program Proposals.

7.1. Once the institution has received notification that the Intent to Plan has been approved, an institution may develop the program proposal. The format of the proposal should follow the sequence of items as they appear on the following pages. Please respond to each item if only to indicate that it is not applicable. Information may be presented in narrative or in outline form or in a combination of the two. Supporting materials such as charts and tables may be included or attached.

The cover page should include the following:

Name of Institution
Date
Category of Action Required
Title of Degree or Certificate
Location
Effective Date of Proposed Action
Brief Summary Statement

7.2. Program Description.

7.2.a. Program Objectives: State the program objectives so that they can be related to the criteria in the evaluation plan.

7.2.b. Program Identification: Each proposal shall include an appropriate program identification as provided in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) developed and published by the U.S. Department of Education Center for Education Statistics.

7.2.c. Program Features: Summarize the important features of the program and include a full catalog description. This section should contain:

7.2.c.1. Admissions and Performance Standards: Describe admissions and performance standards and their relationship to the program objective.

7.2.c.2. Program Requirements: Describe course requirements (indicating new courses with asterisks), areas of emphasis or concentrations, credit-hour requirements, research-tool requirements, examination procedures and other requirements. Also include field work or similar requirements and any other information that helps to describe the program of study.

7.2.d. Program Outcomes: Indicate the expected results of the program and, if this is a proposal for an expanded or modified program, specify how the proposed change may achieve results different from those produced by the current program.

7.2.e. Program content. The proposed educational programs shall be compatible with the institutional mission. The relationship shall be described in documents provided to the Council.

7.2.e.1. The content and length of the proposed academic program shall follow practices common to institutions of higher education. The commonly accepted program length is: 60 semester credits for associate's degrees unless otherwise required by the accrediting agency.

7.2.e.2. All proposed A.A. and A.S. undergraduate degree programs shall include a coherent general education component that is consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to its educational programs. The undergraduate general education component shall be documented.

7.2.e.3. The minimum requirement for general education for all undergraduate programs delivered through the traditional distributed curricula is 15 semester credits for technical associate's degrees unless otherwise required by the accrediting agency and 24 semester credits for transfer associate's degrees such as the Associate in Arts, the Associate in Science, and the Associate in Fine Arts, unless otherwise required by the accrediting agency. If the general education component is delivered

through integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary, or other accepted models, institutions must demonstrate that the program meets minimum requirements equivalent to the distributed model.

7.2.f. Program Delivery: Describe any instructional delivery methodologies to be employed such as distance education, on-line course delivery, weekend course delivery, or compressed time delivery, etc. Indicate costs associated with distance education or technology-based delivery.

7.3. Program need and justification.

7.3.a. Relationship to Institutional Goals/Objectives: Relate this program to the institution's goals and objectives and the statewide master plan.

7.3.b. Existing Programs: List similar programs (and their locations) offered by other institutions (public or private) in West Virginia. State why additional programs or locations are desirable.

7.3.c. Program Planning and Development: Indicate the history to date of the development and submission of this program proposal. What resources (e.g., personnel, financial, equipment) have already been invested in this program? What planning activities have supported this proposal?

7.3.d. Clientele and Need: Describe the clientele to be served and state which of their specific needs will be met by the program. Indicate any special characteristics, such as age, vocation, or academic background. Indicate manpower needs, interest on the part of industry, research and other institutions, governmental agencies, or other indicators justifying the need for the program.

7.3.e. Employment Opportunities: Present a factual assessment of the employment opportunities that are likely to be available to program graduates. Include data and references supporting this assessment. Indicate the types and number of jobs for which such a curriculum is appropriate.

7.3.f. Program Impact: Describe the impact of this program on other programs that it will support or that will be supported by it.

7.3.g. Cooperative Arrangements: Describe any cooperative arrangements (including clinical affiliations, internship opportunities, personnel exchanges, and equipment sharing) that have been explored.

7.3.h. Alternatives to Program Development: Describe any alternatives to the development of this program that have been considered and why they were rejected.

7.4. Program implementation and projected resource requirements.

7.4.a. Program Administration: Describe the administrative organization for the program and explain what changes, if any, will be required in the institutional administrative organization.

7.4.b. Program Projections: Indicate the planned enrollment growth and development of the new program during the first five years (FORM 1). If the program will not be fully developed within five years, indicate the planned size of the program in terms of degrees and majors or clients served over the years to reach full development of the program.

7.4.c. Faculty Instructional Requirements: Indicate the number, probable rank, experience, and cost of faculty required over the five-year period.

7.4.d. Library Resources and Instructional Materials: Evaluate the adequacy of existing library resources and instructional materials for the proposed program. Estimate the nature and probable cost of additional resources necessary to bring the proposed program to an accreditable level.

7.4.e. Support Service Requirements: Indicate the nature of any additional support services (e.g., laboratories, computer facilities, equipment, etc.) likely to be required by the proposed program. Include the expected costs, and describe how such expansions will be incorporated into the institutional budget. Describe any student support services that will be put in place to enhance student retention and successful completion for this new program.

7.4.f. Facilities Requirements: Indicate whether the program will require the addition of new space or facilities or the remodeling or renovation of existing space. If so, provide a statement detailing such plans and space needs and their estimated funding requirements. Describe the impact of this new program on space utilization requirements.

7.4.g. Operating Resource Requirements: Using FORM 2, provide a summary of operating resource requirements by object of expenditure.

7.4.h. Source of Operating Resources: Indicate the source of operating resource requirements if the service levels are to reach those projected in FORM 1. Describe any institutional plans to reallocate resources to the program in each year of the five-year period. Describe the supplementary resource needs that are beyond the usual or expected institutional allocations that are derived through the regular budget request process.

7.5. Program evaluation.

7.5.a. Evaluation Procedures: Indicate the evaluation or review guidelines, procedures, schedule, and assessment measures that will be used for this program. Criteria and standards for program evaluation will vary according to the purpose of the program. The evaluation should address the viability, adequacy, and necessity of the program in relation to the mission of the institution. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators are important. Among the measures may also be the value of the program to the State and its people, its roles in contributing to human development, and its social utility in contributing to the further development of West Virginia.

7.5.b. Accreditation Status: Indicate the accrediting agency for the proposed program, the schedule for initiating and receiving accreditation, and the costs of each stage of the process. Attach to the proposal the statement of standards used by the accrediting agency for such a program and how each accreditation standard will be addressed within the proposed program.

§135-11-8. Council Review of New Program Proposals.

8.1. Review of New Program Proposals: The chancellor's staff will review the proposal and contact the institution if additional information or consultation is required. Any requests for financial support of the program shall be integrated into budget requests for the appropriate year. Questions about the proposal may be raised at the institutional budget hearing.

8.2. Following the review of submitted documentation, Council staff will develop a recommendation for the Council regarding the new program proposal. Only those programs which meet state standards of quality will be recommended for approval. The Council will make the decision as to whether or not to approve the new program.

8.3. All associate degree program proposals and Certificate of Applied Science program proposals implemented under the provisions of Section 4.1 and Section 4.2 of this rule shall be reviewed via a post-approval audit three years after the initial approval was received. The structure of the audit will be determined by Council staff and will include review of such issues as enrollment, retention, adequacy, necessity, viability and consistency with mission.

8.4. Once implemented, per Council for Community and Technical College Education policy, Series 10, Policy Regarding Program Review, the new program must be reviewed at least every five years at the institution(s) of higher education where implemented. In the review process, the following must be addressed: the viability, adequacy, necessity, and consistency with mission of the program to the institutional master plan, the institutional compact, and the education and workforce needs of the responsibility district. Additionally, periodic studies of graduates and their employers to determine placement practices and the effectiveness of the education experience should be conducted.

§135-11-9. Termination of a program.

9.1. An institution with the approval of its Board of Governors may discontinue a degree or certificate program. In seeking the Board of Governors approval, the president should explain the reason for the proposed action (e.g. lack of enrollment, high cost) and indicate the institution's plan for assigning the positions and workload of faculty who are involved in the program and the impact on students who are already enrolled. The request to the Board of Governors should describe any plans that may have been made to transfer students, library holdings, equipment, etc. to another institution and indicate any financial savings that would accrue to the institution as a result of the termination. The institution shall also report to the chancellor any termination that is approved by the Board of Governors.

9.2. The West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education through the program review process also has the authority to recommend that an academic program be terminated. Per Series 10, Policy Regarding Program Review, every institution is to establish a five-year review cycle that includes all academic programs offered by the institution. At the conclusion of the annual institutional evaluation cycle, which examines such things as the viability, adequacy, necessity and consistency of the program with the institutional mission, the Board of Governors will report to the Chancellor, by May 31, the results of the program reviews conducted each academic year. The Council, through its staff or other appropriate entities, shall review annually the program review actions reported by each institution. The Council has the responsibility for review of academic programs including the use of institutional missions as a template to assess the appropriateness of existing programs and the authority to implement needed changes. The Council may modify any institutional action consistent with its authority for review of academic programs. Accredited programs that meet productivity guidelines will not be subject to further review by the Council.

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF PROGRAM SIZE

	First Year (20__)	Second Year (20__)	Third Year (20__)	Fourth Year (20__)	Fifth Year (20__)
Number of Students Served through Course Offerings of the Program:					
Headcount:					
FTE:					
Number of student credit hours generated by courses within the program (entire academic year):					
Number of Majors:					
Headcount:					
FTE majors:					
Number of student credit hours generated by majors					
Number of degrees to be granted (annual total):					

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF TOTAL OPERATING RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS*

	First Year FY (20__)	Second Year FY (20__)	Third Year FY (20__)	Fourth Year FY (20__)	Fifth Year FY (20__)
A. FTE POSITIONS					
1. Administrators					
2. Full-time Faculty					
3. Adjunct Faculty					
4. Graduate Assistants					
5. Other Personnel:					
a. Clerical Workers					
b. Professionals					
<i>Note: Include percentage of time of current personnel</i>					
B. OPERATING COSTS (Appropriated Funds Only)					
1. Personal Services:					
a. Administrators					
b. Full-time Faculty					
c. Adjunct Faculty					
d. Graduate Assistants					
e. Non-Academic Personnel:					
Clerical Workers					
Professionals					
Total Salaries					

FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF TOTAL OPERATING RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS*

	First Year (20__)	Second Year (20__)	Third Year (20__)	Fourth Year (20__)	Fifth Year (20__)
2. Current Expenses					
3. Repairs and Alterations					
4. Equipment:					
Educational Equipment					
Library Books					
5. Nonrecurring Expense (specify)					
Total Costs					
C. SOURCES					
1. General Fund Appropriations (Appropriated Funds Only) __Reallocation __New funds (check one)					
2. Federal Government (Non-appropriated Funds Only)					
3. Private and Other (specify)					
Total All Sources					

Note: Total costs should be equal to total sources of funding

*Explain your Method for Predicting the Numbers (Use additional sheet if necessary)