Title: Regulations Governing Standards and Criteria for Credit Certificates

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ISSUE
This item proposes amending the regulations of the following provision of California Code of Regulations, title 5: section 55070 Credit Certificates. The purpose of the amendments will change the minimum unit requirements to better align to federal financial aid eligibility regulations.

By changing the minimum units for high and low credit Certificates of Achievement will improve the alignment with federal regulations and better serve California Community College students by more clearly documenting programs eligible for financial aid eligibility, and will result in more programs eligible for financial aid being submitted to and approved by the Chancellor’s Office. This will assist colleges by giving them the ability to more clearly demonstrate program eligibility to the U.S. Department of Education. Additionally, it enables colleges to be more responsive to the need of providing opportunities to better serve community college students and communities including, those workforce needs as stated in the Taskforce on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy.

The proposed regulations will be presented to the Board of Governors for a first reading in January 2018. The Board of Governors must hold a public hearing for receipt of comments, both written and oral, which are offered concerning the proposed action. It is anticipated that the regulations will be presented to the Board for adoption at its February 2018 meeting.
BACKGROUND
Currently Certificates of Achievement are required to have a sequence of courses consisting of a minimum of 18 units. However, in accordance to federal regulations for financial aid, students are eligible for financial aid with a minimum of 16 units.

Additionally, low unit Certificates of Achievement require a sequence of courses a minimum of 12 units. However, in accordance to federal regulations for financial aid and for short-term goals, students are eligible for financial aid with a minimum of eight units.
California Code of Regulations, title 5, section 55070. Credit Certificates

(a) Any sequence of courses consisting of \( \geq 16 \) or more semester units or \( \geq 24 \) or more quarter units of degree-applicable credit coursework shall constitute an educational program subject to approval by the Chancellor pursuant to section 55130. The college-awarded document confirming that a student has completed such a program shall be known as a certificate of achievement and may not be given any other designation. The award of a certificate of achievement is intended to represent more than an accumulation of units. Listing of the certificate of achievement on a student transcript symbolizes successful completion of patterns of learning experiences designed to develop certain capabilities that may be oriented to career or general education; provided however, that no sequence or grouping of courses may be approved as a certificate of achievement pursuant to this section if it consists solely of basic skills and/or ESL courses. For purposes of this subdivision, the term “general education” includes coursework taken to satisfy transfer patterns established by the University of California, the California State University, or accredited public postsecondary institutions in adjacent states which award the baccalaureate degree.

(b) Shorter credit programs leading to a certificate may be established without review and approval by the Chancellor after approval by the college curriculum committee and the district governing board. Such a certificate may be given any name or designation deemed appropriate by the district governing board, except that such a certificate may not be referred to as a certificate of achievement, a certificate of completion, or a certificate of competency, unless approved by the Chancellor pursuant to subdivision (c). Such a certificate may not be listed on a student’s transcript, unless approved by the Chancellor pursuant to subdivision (c).

(c) A district may submit any sequence of courses consisting of \( \geq 8 \) or more semester units or \( \geq 12 \) or more quarter units of degree-applicable credit coursework to the Chancellor and request that it be approved as a program leading to a certificate of achievement. The Chancellor may approve such a program if he or she determines that it satisfies the requirements of subdivision (a) despite requiring fewer than \( \geq 16 \) semester or \( \geq 24 \) quarter units of degree-applicable credit coursework.
(d) Content and assessment standards for certificates shall be defined by the local curriculum committee and comply with the requirements of this chapter. Such standards should also ensure that certificate programs will be consistent with the mission of the college, meet a demonstrated need, be feasible, and adhere to guidelines on academic integrity which may be developed by the Chancellor, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges or other appropriate statewide bodies.

(e) A description of each approved program shall be included in the college catalog.

(f) The Chancellor shall develop forms and procedures for submission of applications for approval of a program leading to a certificate of achievement.

(g) Provisions of this section regarding the naming or designation of certificates shall become effective for the Fall 2008 term.


HISTORY

1. New article 7 (sections 55070-55072) and section filed 7-17-2007; operative 8-16-2007. Submitted to OAL for printing only pursuant to Education Code section 70901.5 (Register 2007, No. 35).

2. Amendment of subsection (a) filed 5-16-2008; operative 6-15-2008. Submitted to OAL for printing only pursuant to Education Code section 70901.5 (Register 2008, No. 21).

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5 CCR § 55070, 5 CA ADC § 55070