

## **Policy Establishing Standards for Granting Degrees and Certificates**

(a) The College is authorized to award degrees of Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science, and Associate in Fine Arts and to award academic certificates and diplomas to students who have successfully completed the curriculum requirements of approved programs as established by the Board of Trustees and set forth in the College Catalog. The curriculum requirements for awarding degrees and academic certificates shall conform to the standards established in this policy.

1. The Associate in Art (A.A.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize the liberal arts, humanities, and other fine and performing arts. These programs are transfer oriented.
2. The Associate in Science (A.S.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize mathematics, the biological or physical sciences, business and allied health programs intended as pre-baccalaureate work. These programs are transfer oriented.
3. The Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize preparation in the applied arts and sciences for careers, typically at the technical or semiprofessional level. These programs are designed to prepare students for job entry at the completion of the two-year program, notwithstanding any articulation agreements with four-year programs that may be in effect for a particular A.A.S. program.
4. The Associate in Fine Arts (A.F.A.) degree is to be awarded to those who successfully complete programs which emphasize specific arts disciplines of either dance, drama or visual arts through the intensive study of technique, history, theory and hands-on approaches in studio work and/or performance. This program is designed to provide students with the competencies necessary to achieve seamless articulation when joining a bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.) program.

(b) The regular academic year shall fall within a ten-month period and shall include a minimum of 30 weeks, or its equivalent in duration, of regularly scheduled student-faculty instructional activity, exclusive of final examination periods, holidays and summer sessions.

(c) An associate degree program shall be a course of study which requires at least 60 but not more than 66 semester hours, or the equivalent, except when required for licensure or accreditation by a recognized agency or when required for transfer of full junior status, where applicable. Each program shall provide for the following:

1. Demonstration of the basic skills of communication and mathematics. Basic skills courses shall not be used to satisfy the general education requirements.

2. Electives which offer opportunities for enriched general education, preprofessional education and/or competence in an appropriate occupational field.

(d) General education and other requirements for the associate degree shall include the following:

1. All programs leading to an associate degree shall include a broad distribution of courses contributing to the student's general education which emphasize the acquisition of knowledge, comprehension and evaluation of ideas, the ability to think constructively and creatively, and the capacity to communicate effectively. For the purposes of this section, general education shall be grouped into the major categories of:

i. Communications, defined as courses designed to enhance facility in the English language.

ii. Mathematics and sciences, defined as courses designed to enhance mathematical and scientific conceptual understanding and application, including computer science.

iii. Social sciences, defined as courses designed to promote social awareness, including understanding social, economic and political problems and the responsibilities of citizenship in an interdependent world; and

iv. Humanities, defined as courses in literary, philosophical, foreign language, historical, aesthetic, or other humanistic studies to promote the understanding and transmission of values to one's own and other cultures.

v. Global and Cultural Awareness, defined as courses that expose students to a multicultural society or people.

2. The minimum general education requirements for each associate degree shall be as follows:

i. For the Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree programs, the general educational requirements shall total not less than 33 semester credit hours, or the equivalent, in an array of representative courses in each of the following categories: communications, mathematics and sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

ii. For the Associate in Science (A.S.) degree programs, the general education requirements shall total not less than 30 semester credit hours, or the equivalent, in an array of representative courses from each of the following categories: communications, mathematics and sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

iii. For the Associate in Arts (A.A.) and Associate in Science (A.S.) degree programs, no student shall accumulate more than 16 of the required general education credits in any one discipline, except in the Fine and

Performing Arts where the curriculum can demonstrate specific articulation to a program or programs at senior institutions.

iv. For the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) and Associate in Fine Arts degree programs, the general education requirements shall total not less than 20 semester hour credit hours or the equivalent, in an array of representative courses from the communications category, and at least one (1) course from each of the three (3) following categories: mathematics and science, social sciences, and humanities.

3. The array of general education courses in Associate in Arts (A.A.) and Associate in Science (A.S.) curricula shall be designed to prepare the student for transfer into a baccalaureate program.

4. Theoretically-based physical education courses may be counted as general education if they are a requirement of the College.

(e) An academic certificate program or diploma program shall be a credit bearing course of study which, by virtue of educational content or duration, does not satisfy requirements for an associate degree program, but which is specifically designed to offer content and skill acquisition and other experience appropriate to the objective of such a program. An academic program certificate shall be at least 30 credits in length and shall have a minimum of three (3) credits of general education. A certificate of achievement shall be less than 30 credit hours and shall represent in-depth study in a particular technical or skill area.

(f) The curriculum for degree, academic certificate and diploma programs shall be consistent with the institutional plan and programmatic mission of the College.

(g) To be eligible for award of a degree or academic certificate the student must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Earn a cumulative point average of 2.0 or above and complete the general and prescribed course work for the student's major.
2. Degree students must complete at least 30 credits at the College.
3. Academic Certificate students must complete at least 15 credits at the College. (The length of time that the course remains current and acceptable shall be at the discretion of the respective department chairperson.)
4. Complete at least one-half (1/2) of the student's major at the College.
5. Apply for graduation at the Registrar's Office during the first month of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.
6. Make payment of the applicable graduation fee.
7. Students must graduate within 10 years of matriculating in their programs of study. Any deviation from this must be approved by the Department Chair and/or

Academic Dean prior to the conferral of a degree.

(h) Programs for secondary and dual degrees shall be governed by the following rules:

1. Second Degrees: Students who have completed an academic certificate or degree will be eligible to matriculate for another academic certificate or degree provided it is not closely related to the first program. Programs with heavy enrollment demands will not accommodate students seeking second degrees.

A credit transfer evaluation from a student's first degree to the second degree will be made at the time of matriculation. Courses will be treated as internal transfer credits and grades will not be used in the grade point average calculation for the second degree.

A minimum of 21 academic credits related to a major must be earned in the second program. This will replace the residency requirement applicable to the first degree. Where necessary, additional credits must be completed to meet the general education requirements for the second degree. All other current degree requirements must also be met before the second degree will be awarded.

2. Dual Degrees: Where a student seeks to earn dual/simultaneous degrees, one program must be selected as the primary degree with the other as a secondary degree. All requirements for both degrees must be completed with at least a 2.0 grade point average. Courses from the primary degree may be used to meet the requirements of the secondary degree, but a minimum of 21 additional credits must be earned in the secondary degree. In some programs, more than 21 credits may be necessary to meet degree requirements.

(i) Courses are recorded in terms of semester hours. One (1) semester hour of credit normally is earned by 15 hours of lecture class work per semester.

(j) The following grading system shall be utilized:

Grade	Interpretation	Quality Points
A	Superior	4
A-		3.67
B+		3.33
B	Above Average	3
B-		2.67
C+		2.33
C	Average	2
D	Minimum passing	1
F	Failure	0
R	Registered to Audit	None
I	Incomplete	None
P	Pass	None*
SP	Satisfactory Progress	None*

W	Withdrew	None**
EX	Credit by Examination	None

\* Grades used in non-credit courses

\*\* Without academic penalty

A student's Term Grade Point Average is a measure of his or her credit courses completed for any one semester. The cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) represents all credit courses completed at the College. Grades for courses transferred to the College and grades removed as a result of the Academic Bankruptcy policy are not included in the GPA calculation.

- (k) Academic Distinctions at Graduation. Students with outstanding academic achievements throughout their County College of Morris career are awarded the following honors based on the following cumulative grade point averages.

Degree Designation:

Summa cum laude	3.850 – 4.000 GPA
Magna cum laude	3.650 – 3.840 GPA
Cum laude	3.450 – 3.640 GPA

Academic Certificate Designation:

Academic Certificate with Merit	3.450 – 4.000 GPA
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- (l) Students may repeat any course to increase their knowledge level. This choice is left to the discretion of the student except in cases when the student has received an “F” and is ***required*** to repeat the course for their particular major. When repeating a course, the original grade and the repeat grade will appear on the student’s transcript. However, the student’s cumulative average will be computed based on the repeat course grade. Students should be aware of the possible consequences of receiving a grade which is lower than their original grade. For example, if a “D” grade is repeated and an “F” is earned on the second attempt, the “F” will replace the “D”. Students who must take a course for the third time will have their cumulative average computed based on the second and third repeat course grades. The second and third grades are averaged together in the GPA. If a student who repeats a course receives a “W,” the original grade will prevail. A student may register for the same course three times (excluding formal withdrawals or where precluded by departmental regulations). However, a student will be blocked from registering on the third and subsequent attempts without express permission from the appropriate academic department chairperson and/or division dean.
- (m) Recognition of transfer credits and the award of degree credits for non-traditional experience shall be governed by the following rules:

1. **Transfer of credits:** Previous college transcripts when received in sealed envelopes will be reviewed and evaluated for transfer of credit. Per the *Comprehensive State-Wide Transfer Agreement*, “All decisions made with respect to the transfer process shall be based on the principle of equivalence of expectations requirements for native and transfer students.” Upon individual review, in special circumstances a transfer of credits

may be accepted from non-accredited institutions and through other forms of post-secondary education. Transfer students must complete at least 30 credits at the County College of Morris to earn a degree, or 15 credits to earn an academic certificate. Credits received at other institutions are not used to compute the accumulated grade point average at the County College of Morris. After the applicant has been matriculated, and with respect to the student's academic program, the Records and Registration Office will notify the student in writing what credits have been accepted for transfer via their CCM email account. Credits that have been earned seven or more years ago may need to be repeated. Students should obtain advisement from the Academic Department regarding expiration of prerequisites taken more than seven years ago.

2. Challengers Program: The College has established the Challengers Program to provide eligible high school students with the opportunity to enroll in college courses, to gain classroom experience, and to be academically challenged. College credits earned in the Challengers Program will be accepted when the applicant has been matriculated in a degree or academic certificate program if the credits are applicable to the student's degree or academic certificate program at the County College of Morris.

3. Advance Placement Examinations: High school students may earn course credit or advanced placement in County College of Morris courses. To receive such credit students must present official Advance Placement Examination scores of 3, 4 or 5 and the course description to the Testing Office. The number of credits granted to the student will be determined by the appropriate department chairperson.

4. Credit By Examination: Students who have acquired knowledge through life experiences may earn college credit without enrolling in a course. To determine a student's level of knowledge in a particular subject, the college offers College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) Subject Examinations. Additionally, in certain disciplines, Departmental Examinations, approved by the college, may be administered. Credits earned through CLEP will be recorded on the student's official transcript as "Ex." Students who register for a course will not be eligible to take the applicable College-Level Subject Examination (in that semester) unless the student has officially withdrawn from the course before the end of the second week of classes. Students will be eligible to challenge the course in a future semester regardless of whether the student received a "W" or an "F" grade. The prior grade will remain on the student's transcript. If the grade is an "F," it will continue to be computed in the student's grade point average even if the student has successfully challenged the course.

5. Reverse Transfer Credit. Matriculated students who complete a minimum of 30 credits at the County College of Morris (CCM) and transfer to another accredited college or university are eligible to have future credits earned at the institution to which they transfer apply towards the completion of their declared CCM associate degree. Students must have completed at least half of the credits from their major at CCM. The reverse credit transfer may be arranged by the student requesting that the transcript be sent for the first two consecutive terms of enrollment at the college/university to CCM. The reverse

credit transfer may also be arranged by CCM through formal agreements with select colleges and universities. Students may have seven years from the date of their transfer to take advantage of this policy.

CCM will evaluate the student's college/university transcript to determine if the associate degree requirements are met. A student who meets the requirements will be awarded the associate degree from CCM. All graduation requirements from CCM must be met.

Certificate Programs: The College shall also offer College-credit programs of varying lengths leading to the certificates as listed in the College Catalog. The certificate programs are intended to meet the needs of individuals for self-development, personal enrichment, and occupational advancement. Students who enroll in certificate programs may elect to continue their education in a degree program or simultaneously matriculate for a degree.

(m) The curriculum requirements as set forth in the 2025 College Catalog for the degree and certificate programs offered by the College are hereby adopted and continued. The College President is authorized to approve revisions to curriculum requirements, when necessary, based upon program changes, new courses added, courses discontinued, or to satisfy accreditation standards.

(n) **CCM Honors** is a course of study that is incorporated into a student's academic degree program:

Full- and part-time students have the opportunity to take honors classes or to join the CCM Honors Program. Honors classes are designed to support exemplary students in developing their special talents and engaging in an intensive and stimulating learning atmosphere. Two honors class formats are offered: Honors and Honors Option. Honors classes offer smaller class sizes in which all students enrolled are Honors students, while Honors Option offers those who excel in the core courses of their major or specific subjects an opportunity to achieve a higher level of competence in a regular section of a class. Those who qualify may take as many Honors courses as desired.

1. Eligibility: Students must fulfill any one of the individual criteria

- i) Incoming: Minimum score of 1240 on the SAT; 26 on the ACT; top 10% of high school graduating class
- ii) Current: Minimum of 12 CCM credit completed and a 3.3 GPA or higher
- iii) Transfer: Evaluation of previous institution credits and transcript
- iv) High school students: Evaluation of high school coursework and transcript

2. CCM Honors Program: The CCM Honors Program is a full-time program for a cohort of students. After applying to and being accepted into the program, students work towards earning honors designation on their transcript for their degree. In addition to the required number of credits, students must complete an honors capstone project that is presented at the Student Showcase hosted by CCM Honors.

3. Notation of Honors designation on academic transcript: Students that complete a minimum of 16-18 honors course credits within their academic degree program, maintain a minimum of 3.3 GPA, and remain in good academic standing will receive Honors designation.

4. Eligibility and achievement criteria may be adjusted to support student success and in acknowledgment of the variety of CCM's academic programs.