

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT [281]

Notice of Intended Action

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code chapter 260C, the State Board of Education hereby proposes to amend Chapter 21, “Community Colleges,” Iowa Administrative Code.

The purpose of the proposed amendments to chapter 21 are as follows:

Items 1 and 4 revise chapter 21 to accommodate the establishment by community colleges of specialized programs of study, referred to as transfer majors, within general associate of arts and associate of science degree options. The rules ensure consistency in the development and approval of transfer major programs.

Items 2 and 3 align Iowa Administrative Code to two policies established by the regional accrediting body for postsecondary institutions, the Higher Learning Commission. The first policy sets the required general education credits in career and technical education programs at 15 credits. The second policy allows for integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary models of general education in career and technical education programs. Modifications to 281 – subsection 21.2(9), paragraphs “*d*” and “*e*” increase the general education credits in the Associate of Applied Arts and Associate of Applied Science award options from 12 to 15 credits, and establish a framework for consistency in identifying and documenting general education learning requirements integrated into career and technical education programs.

Item 5 implements a recommendation of the Developmental Education Work Group, a department-convened entity consisting of community college stakeholders tasked with developing strategies to achieve the Future Ready Iowa goal of 70 percent of Iowans with some form of postsecondary training by the year 2025. Accordingly, the strategies identified by the

group will increase success in developmental education coursework and the likelihood of completing a postsecondary credential.

Items 6 and 7 preserve under new subsections existing statutory language regarding adult education and community services.

An agency-wide waiver provision is provided in 281–Chapter 4.

Interested individuals may make written comments on the proposed amendments on or before June 26, 2018, at 4:30 p.m. Comments on the proposed amendments should be directed to Nicole Proesch, Department of Education, Second Floor, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146; telephone 515-281-8661; e-mail Nicole.proesch@iowa.gov; or fax (515)242-5988.

A public hearing will be held on June 26, 2018 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the State Board Room, Grimes State Office Building, East 14th Street and Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa, at which time persons may present their views either orally or in writing. Any person who intends to attend the public hearing and has special requirements, such as those related to hearing or mobility impairments, should contact and advise the Department of Education of specific needs by calling (515) 281-5295.

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code section 260C.

The following amendments are proposed.

Item 1. Amend 281 – subsection 21.2(2), paragraph “a” as follows:

a. This program shall offer courses that are the equivalent of the first two years of a baccalaureate program and may also include: such courses as may be necessary to develop skills that are prerequisite to other courses and objectives; ~~and~~ specialized courses required to provide career options within the college parallel or transfer program; and approved transfer major programs meeting the requirements of 281 - section 21.3. College parallel or transfer programs are associate of arts and associate of science degree programs. General education courses in college parallel or transfer programs are required to be college transfer courses. A follow-up of students terminating shall be conducted to determine how well students have succeeded and which adjustments in the curriculum, if any, need to be made.

Item 2. Amend 281 – subsection 21.2(9), paragraph “d” as follows:

d. Associate of applied science (AAS). The degree is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is intended to prepare students for entry-level career and technical occupations. An associate of applied science degree shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours. The general education component of the associate of applied science degree program shall consist of a minimum of ~~12~~15 semester (~~18~~22.5 quarter) credit hours of general education and shall include at least one course from each of the following areas: communications, social science or humanities, and mathematics or science. A maximum of 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of the required 15 general education credits may be documented through an integrated, embedded, and interdisciplinary model adopted by the chief academic officers of the 15 community colleges

in consultation with the department. The technical core of the associate of applied science degree shall constitute a minimum of 50 percent of the course credits.

Item 3. Amend 281 – subsection 21.2(9), paragraph “e” as follows:

e. Associate of applied arts (AAA). The degree is awarded upon completion of a state-approved program of study that is primarily intended for career training in providing students with professional skills for employment in a specific field of work such as arts, humanities, or graphic design. An associate of applied arts degree shall consist of a minimum of 60 semester (90 quarter) credit hours and a maximum of 86 semester (129 quarter) credit hours. The general education component of the associate of applied arts degree program shall consist of a minimum of ~~12~~15 semester (~~18~~22.5 quarter) credit hours of general education and shall include at least one course from each of the following: communications, social science or humanities, and mathematics or science. A maximum of 3 semester (4.5 quarter) credit hours of the required 15 general education credits may be documented through an integrated, embedded, and interdisciplinary model adopted by the chief academic officers of the 15 community colleges in consultation with the department. The technical core of the associate of applied arts degree shall constitute a minimum of 50 percent of the course credits.

Item 4. Amend 281 – chapter 21 by adding the following new section:

21.3 Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Transfer Major Programs.

21.3(1) General program. Each community college shall offer a general college parallel program of study leading to an associate of arts award or an associate of science award, pursuant

to 281-IAC 21.2(9) and 21.4(2). These programs shall offer courses equivalent to the first two years of a baccalaureate program and shall not be discipline-specific.

21.3(2) *Transfer majors.* A community college may establish discipline-specific transfer major programs to improve student recruitment, advising, and success, and enhance transferability of associate-level courses into aligned baccalaureate degree programs. The transfer major program shall consist of discipline-relevant credits from an approved discipline framework which satisfies the requirements of paragraph “b”. A community college shall ensure all students are appropriately advised regarding the availability, structure, purpose, and other pertinent information related to the transfer major program.

a. Degree option. A transfer major shall be embedded within an associate of arts or associate of science degree which meets the requirements of this chapter and any applicable statewide transfer agreement between the Iowa community colleges and public universities. Credits within the transfer major may be utilized to fulfill the general education requirements of an associate of arts or associate of science degree, as appropriate.

b. Discipline framework. Each approved transfer major program shall adhere to the appropriate adopted discipline framework to ensure transferability with the aligned baccalaureate program of study at one or more public university in Iowa.

1. A discipline framework shall consist of a minimum of 18 discipline-relevant semester credits (27 quarter credits) that align with a framework of elements based on accepted practices of an aligned baccalaureate degree program of study at a public university in Iowa.

2. The courses within the discipline framework shall articulate with a regionally-accredited public university in Iowa so that the course credits are recognized by the university as fulfilling equivalent course requirements in at least one aligned baccalaureate degree program of study.

2a. If the requirements of subsection 2, paragraph “b”, subparagraph 2 cannot be achieved with at least one regionally-accredited public university in Iowa, a request may be submitted to the department for articulation with a regionally-accredited public institution in a contiguous state or a group of no less than three regionally-accredited private postsecondary institutions which confer baccalaureate degrees, are based in Iowa, and are approved under chapter 261 to operate in the state of Iowa.

3. The discipline framework shall be developed and adopted by a statewide committee convened by the department.

c. Use of term. Consistent with department guidance, each community college shall exclusively use the term “transfer major” to record the completion of an approved transfer major program on the student’s official transcript and other academic records, publish in the college catalog, and market the transfer major program to current and potential students and the general public. A community college shall not transcript, catalog, or market an associate of arts or associate of science program using other terms containing or synonymous with the term “major”, or which imply a specialization within a subject area.

21.3(3) Approval. Per Iowa Code section 260C.14, each transfer major program shall be submitted to the department for approval utilizing the state system for program management. Approval shall be obtained prior to the enrollment of students in the transfer major program. The approval process shall not include components specific to career and technical education program approval, including advisory committees and labor market analysis.

21.3(4) Reporting. Each community college shall comply with data reporting requirements established by the department. The department shall produce and make available a report detailing enrollment and outcomes of participants in transfer major programs.

21.3(5) *Effective date.* The requirements of this section shall take effect beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year. In implementing the provisions of this section, the department shall consult key stakeholders including, but not limited to, representatives of the Iowa's community colleges and public universities.

Item 5. Strike 281 – subsection 21.4(4) and insert the following in lieu thereof:

21.4(4) *Developmental Education.* Students who enter community colleges underprepared for postsecondary coursework are provided opportunities to improve their cognitive and non-cognitive skills via developmental education academic and student support services. In an effort to enhance these opportunities, while respecting the local authority of Iowa's community colleges, each college shall adopt proven developmental education strategies to identify and address the needs of students, shorten the time to completion, prepare students for academic success, and reduce the financial burden for students underprepared for postsecondary coursework. Such proven strategies include, but are not limited to, multiple measures of placement; accelerated and integrated strategies, such as co-requisite models; and support services that address students' cognitive and non-cognitive needs. These reform efforts require collaboration among community colleges, school corporations, and education stakeholders to systemically expand proven strategies to prepare students for postsecondary success.

Item 6. Strike 281 – subsection 21.4(5) and insert the following in lieu thereof:

21.4(5) *Adult and continuing education.* Adult education shall be offered and may include adult basic education, adult continuing and general education, college parallel or transfer, high

school completion, supplementary and preparatory career education programs, and other programs and experiences as may be required to meet the needs of people in the merged area.

Item 7. Amend 281 – section 21.4 by adding the following new subsection

21.4(6) *Community services.* The community colleges shall provide a program of community services designed to meet the needs of persons residing in the merged area. The purpose of the community service program shall be to foster agricultural, business, cultural, industrial, recreational and social development in the area.