



AP 4260 Prerequisites and Co-requisites

Prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations are necessary to ensure that students succeed in their coursework and have access to the courses they require. It is important to have prerequisites in place where they are a vital factor in maintaining academic standards. It is also necessary to ensure that prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations do not constitute unjustifiable obstacles to student access and success. Therefore, to foster the appropriate balance between these two concerns, Education Code requires that prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations be established based solely on content review or content review with statistical validation, unless (1) it is required by statute or regulation; (2) it is part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline; (3) it is required by four-year institutions; (4) baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has the particular communication or computation skill prerequisite or (5) it is a co-requisite that has been recommended through placement guidelines approved by the Chancellor. (Title 5 §55003). Determinations about prerequisites and co-requisites shall be made on a course-by-course or program-by-program basis (Title 5 §55003).

Definitions (Title 5 §55000)

- **Prerequisite** means a condition of enrollment that a student is required to meet in order to demonstrate current readiness for enrollment in a course or educational program.
- **Co-requisite** means a condition of enrollment consisting of a course that a student is required to simultaneously take in order to enroll in another course.(55000)
- **Advisories on recommended preparation** is a condition of enrollment that a student is advised, but not required, to meet before or in conjunction with enrollment in a course or educational program.
- Additional types of **limitation on enrollment** include:
 - a. **Performance Courses.** The college may establish audition or try-out as a limitation on enrollment for courses that include public performance or intercollegiate competition such as but not limited to band, orchestra, theater, competitive speech, chorus, journalism, dance, and intercollegiate athletics.
 - b. **Honors Courses/Sections.** A limitation on enrollment for an honors course or an honors section of a course may be established if, in addition to the



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review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, there is another section or another course or courses at the college which satisfy the same requirements. If the limitation is for an honors course and not only for an honors section, the college must also include in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course or courses which meet the same associate degree or certificate requirement.

- c. Health and Safety/Certification. When courses have a requirement for enrollment by an outside agency, enrollment in that course may be considered "limited," (e.g., current TB test for child development courses; CPR certification for EMT courses, etc.).
- d. A limitation on enrollment for sections of courses targeted to students participating in state sanctioned programs (e.g., Puente, UMOJA) may be established.
- e. Cohort Courses/Sections. Blocks of courses or blocks of sections of courses are two or more courses or sections for which enrollment is limited in order to create a cohort of students. Such a limitation on enrollment may be established if, in addition to review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee, there is another section or another course or courses that satisfy the same requirement. If the cohort is created through limitations on enrollment in the courses rather than limitations on specific sections of courses, then the college must include in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course or courses which satisfy the same associate degree or certificate requirement.

Prerequisites or co-requisites may be established only for any of the following purposes (§55003 (d)):

- A. the prerequisite or co-requisite is expressly required or expressly authorized by statute or regulation, or expressly required by institutions for which the college has transfer agreements; or
- B. the prerequisite will assure, consistent with section 55002, that a student has the skills, concepts, and/or information that is presupposed in terms of the course or



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program for which it is being established, such that a student who has not met the prerequisite is highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade in the course (or at least one course within the program) for which the prerequisite is being established; or

- C. the co-requisite course will assure, consistent with section 55002, that a student acquires the necessary skills, concepts, and/or information, such that a student who has not enrolled in the co-requisite is highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade in the course or program for which the co-requisite is being established, and if the co-requisite course is intended as additional support for students enrolling in transfer-level English or mathematics (or quantitative reasoning) courses, then it must be determined that the co-requisite course increases the likelihood that the student will pass the transfer-level course; or
- D. the prerequisite or co-requisite is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or the health or safety of others.

Establishing Prerequisites, Co-Requisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation

Except as provided in section 55522, when the college and/or district curriculum committee determines, based on a review of the course outline of record, that a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student has knowledge or skills not taught in the course, then the course shall require prerequisites or co-requisites that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with the requirements of this article (§55002). When the college and/or district curriculum committee deems appropriate, a noncredit course may serve as a prerequisite or co-requisite for a credit course as established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with this article (§55002).

Prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories on recommended preparation (advisories) may be established only upon the recommendation of the Academic Senate except that the Academic Senate may delegate this task to the Curriculum Committee without forfeiting its rights or responsibilities under Title 5 Sections 53200-53204 and within the limits set forth in Title 5 Section 55003. Certain limitations on enrollment must be established in the same manner. The process for establishing prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories on recommended preparation, and limitations on enrollment only if:



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- A. The faculty in the discipline or, if the college has no faculty member in the discipline, the faculty in the department approve the course and
- a) As a separate action, provide evidence that:
 - 1) it is required by statute or regulation;
 - 2) it is part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline;
 - 3) it is required by four-year institutions;
 - 4) baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has the particular communication or computation skill prerequisite; or
 - 5) it is a co-requisite that has been recommended through placement guidelines approved by the Chancellor. (Title 5 §55003).
 - b) Or as a separate action, approve a communication skill, computational skill, or interdisciplinary prerequisite subject to a statistical validation performed by the Office of Institutional Research. Statistical analyses conducted by the Office of Institutional Research include but are not limited to: an examination of performance outcome differences in the target course between students who do/do not meet the prerequisite or co-requisite; an examination of effect size differences between groups; an examination of a restricted bivariate correlation coefficient with corrections for restriction of range to determine the relationship between successful performance in the proposed prerequisite/co-requisite course and performance in the target course; and whether enforcement of the proposed prerequisite/co-requisite course has a disproportionate impact on a particular subgroup of students by student characteristics identified in the District's Student Equity and Achievement (SEA) Plan.
 - c) Or as a separate action, approve any other type of prerequisite or co-requisite by a **content review that shows** the prerequisite or co-requisite is an appropriate and rational measure of a student's readiness to enter the course or program. A **content review must** include, at a minimum, all of the following:
 - 1) involvement of faculty with appropriate expertise;
 - 2) consideration of course content, objectives, and learning outcomes set by relevant department(s);



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- 3) identification of the prerequisite or co-requisite learning objectives deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with enrollment to develop the body of knowledge and/or skills;
 - 4) documentation that the above steps were taken.
- d) Or approve any limitation on enrollment established for an honors course, a course that includes intercollegiate competition or public performance, or a course for which an outside agency requires a health and safety certification.
- B. The curriculum committee reviews the course prerequisite, co-requisite, advisory, and/or limitation on enrollment in a manner that meets each of the requirements specified above.

Program Review

As a regular part of review through the standard curriculum updating cycle or at least every six years, except that the prerequisites and co-requisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years, the college shall review each prerequisite, co-requisite, or advisory to establish that each is still supported by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee and is still in compliance with all other provisions of this procedure and with the law. Any prerequisite or co-requisite that is still supported shall be reviewed promptly thereafter to assure that it is in compliance with all other provisions of this procedure and with the law.

Implementing Prerequisites, Co-requisites, and Limitations on Enrollment

Implementation of prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment must be done in a consistent manner and not left exclusively to the classroom instructor. Every attempt shall be made to enforce all conditions a student must meet to be enrolled in the course through the registration process so that a student is not permitted to enroll unless he/she has met all the conditions or has met all except those for which they have a pending challenge or for which further information is needed before final determination is possible of whether the student has met the condition.



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Instructor's Formal Agreement to Teach the Course as Described

Each college shall establish a procedure so that courses for which prerequisites or co-requisites are established will be taught in accordance with the course outline, particularly those aspects of the course outline that are the basis for justifying the establishment of the prerequisite or co-requisite. The process shall be established by consulting collegially with the Academic Senate and, if appropriate, the local bargaining unit.

Information in the Catalog and Schedule of Courses

The college shall provide the following explanations both in the college catalog and in the schedule of courses:

- A. Definitions of prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment including the differences among them and the specific prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment that have been established.
- B. Procedures for a student to challenge prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to make such a challenge. The information about challenges must include, at a minimum, the specific process including any deadlines, the various types of challenge that are established in law, and any additional types of challenge permitted by the college.
- C. Definitions of advisories on recommended preparation, the right of a student to choose to take a course without meeting the advisory, and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to exercise that right.

Challenge Process

- A. If space is available in a course when a student files a challenge to the prerequisite or co-requisite, the student is permitted to enroll. If the challenge is denied, the student will be dropped from the course. If it is upheld or the District fails to resolve the challenge within the five (5) working-day period, the student shall be allowed to remain in the course.



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- B. If space is available in the waitlist for a course when a student files a challenge to the prerequisite or co-requisite, the district shall reserve a spot on the waitlist for the student and resolve the challenge within five (5) working days. If the challenge is upheld or the district fails to resolve the challenge within the five (5) working-day period, the student shall be allowed to remain on the waitlist and, if the student is given the opportunity to enroll from the waitlist in the normal operation of the waitlist process, enroll in the course.
- C. If no space is available in the course when a challenge is filed, the challenge shall be resolved prior to the beginning of registration for the next term and, if the challenge is upheld, the student shall be permitted to enroll if space is available when the student registers for that subsequent term.
- D. Where multiple disciplines are involved in a challenge, the discipline faculty for the prerequisite course evaluates and signs the challenge, rather than the faculty for the challenged course.

As provided for in Title 5 section 55203 (p), grounds for challenge shall include the following:

- A. A prerequisite for a course necessary for graduation, transfer, or a certificate is not offered and the unavailability of that prerequisite poses a hardship.
- B. The prerequisite has not been validated.
- C. The student has the knowledge or ability to succeed in the course despite not meeting the prerequisite.
- D. The prerequisite is discriminatory or being applied in a discriminatory manner.
- E. The student has not been allowed to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment established for a course that involves intercollegiate competition or public performance, or one or more of the courses for which enrollment has been limited to a cohort of students and they would be delayed by a semester or more in attaining the degree or certificate specified in their educational plan.
- F. The student seeks to enroll in a course that has a prerequisite established to protect health and safety, and the student demonstrates that they do not pose a health and safety threat to themselves or others.



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The student has the obligation to provide satisfactory evidence that the challenge should be upheld. However, where facts essential to a determination of whether the student's challenge should be upheld are or ought to be in the college's own records, then the college has the obligation to produce that information. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, official high school or college transcripts, additional test results, work experience, or writing sample. Prior enrollment in the course does not exempt a student from the current prerequisite of that course. Students who wish to challenge a prerequisite must submit a Prerequisite/Co-requisite Challenge form. The form must be filed in the Counseling Department up to one week prior to the beginning of each term.

References: Title 5 Sections 55000 et seq.

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