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**AP 4260 PREREQUISITES, COREQUISITES**

**References:**

Title 5 Sections 55000 et seq.

Prerequisites, corequisites, advisories, and limitations on enrollment 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, corequisites, advisories, and limitations do not constitute unjustifiable obstacles to student access and success. Therefore, to foster the appropriate balance between these two concerns, the Education Code requires that prerequisites, corequisites, advisories, and limitations be established based solely on content review or content review with statistical validation.

**I. Information in the Catalog and on the Website**

The college shall provide the following explanations both in the college catalog and on the website:

- A. Definitions of prerequisites, corequisites, and limitations on enrollment including the differences among them and the specific prerequisites, corequisites, and limitations on enrollment that have been established.
- B. Procedures for a student to challenge prerequisites, corequisites, 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 District.
- 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.
- D. Definitions of contract course, corequisite, noncredit basic skills course, non-degree-applicable basic skills courses, prerequisite and satisfactory grade.

**II. Challenge Process**

- A. Any student who does not meet a prerequisite or corequisite or who is not permitted to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment but who provides



satisfactory evidence may seek entry into the course by completing the appropriate prerequisite verification form available on the District's website. If approved, the student may register in an open course section.

- B. Any prerequisite or corequisite may be challenged by a student on one or more of the grounds listed below. The student shall bear the initial burden of showing that grounds exist for the challenge. Challenges shall be resolved in a timely manner and, if the challenge is upheld, the student shall be permitted to enroll in the course or program in question. Grounds for challenge are:

1. The prerequisite or corequisite has not been established in accordance with the District's process for establishing prerequisites and corequisites;
2. The prerequisite or corequisite is in violation of policies for prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation;
3. The prerequisite or corequisite is either unlawfully discriminatory or is being applied in an unlawful discriminatory manner;
4. The student has the knowledge or ability to succeed in the course or program despite not meeting the prerequisite or corequisite; or
5. The student will be subject to undue delay in attaining the goal of their educational plan because the prerequisite or corequisite course has not been made reasonably available.

- C. Curriculum Review Process

The curriculum review process shall at a minimum be in accordance with all of the following:

1. Establish a curriculum committee and its membership in a manner that is mutually agreeable to the college administration and the academic senate.
2. Establish prerequisites, corequisites, and advisories on recommended preparation (advisories) 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.



3. Establish prerequisites, corequisites, advisories on recommended preparation, and limitations on enrollment only if:
  - a) The faculty in the discipline or, if the District has no faculty member in the discipline, the faculty in the department do all of the following:
    - (1) Approve the course; and,
    - (2) As a separate action, approve any prerequisite or corequisite, only if:
      - (a) The prerequisite or corequisite is an appropriate and rational measure of a student's readiness to enter the course or program as demonstrated by a content review including, at a minimum, all of the following:
        - (i) involvement of faculty with appropriate expertise;
        - (ii) consideration of course objectives set by relevant department(s). The curriculum review process should be done in a manner that is in accordance with accreditation standards.
        - (iii) be based on a detailed course syllabus and outline of record, tests, related instructional materials, course format, type and number of examinations, and grading criteria;
        - (iv) specification of the body of knowledge and/or skills which are deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with enrollment;
        - (v) identification and review of the prerequisite or corequisite which develops the body of knowledge and/or measures skills identified under iv.
        - (vi) matching of the knowledge and skills in the targeted course (identified under iv) and those developed or measured by



- the prerequisite or corequisite (i.e., the course or assessment identified under v); and
    - (vii) maintain documentation that the above steps were taken.
  - (3) Approve any limitation on enrollment that is being established for an honors course or section, for a course that includes intercollegiate competition or public performance, or so that a cohort of students will be enrolled in two or more courses, and, in a separate action, specify which.
  - (4) Approve that the course meets the academic standards required for degree applicable courses, non-degree applicable courses, noncredit courses, or community service respectively.
  - (5) Review the course outline to determine if a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student had knowledge or skills not taught in the course. If the student would need knowledge or skills not taught in the course itself, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements for establishing the appropriate prerequisite have been met excepting only approval by the curriculum committee.
  - (6) Review the course outline to determine whether receiving a satisfactory grade is dependent on skills in communication or computation. If receiving a satisfactory grade is sufficiently dependent on such skills, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements have been met for establishing a prerequisite or corequisite of not less than eligibility for enrollment in a degree-applicable course in English or mathematics, respectively.
- b) A course which should have a prerequisite or corequisite as provided in (5) or (6) but for which one or more of the



requirements for establishing a prerequisite have not been met may only:

- (1) Be reviewed and approved pursuant to the standards for non-degree applicable credit, noncredit, or community service; or
  - (2) Be revised and reviewed as required to meet the criteria for establishing the necessary prerequisites or corequisites.
- c) The curriculum committee also reviews the course and prerequisite in a manner that meets each of the requirements specified above.
- d) Content review as defined in Title 5 Section 55000(c) may be used to define prerequisites and corequisites in reading, written expression, or mathematics for courses that are degree applicable and are not in a sequence. The following are the procedures developed for the District consistent with Title 5 Section 55003(c):
- (1) **Identification:** The discipline faculty will identify courses for which they would consider requiring a math, English, or English as a Second Language prerequisite or corequisite. This identification should be based on several factors, including documented low course success rates, analysis of the outcomes of current students who have and have not completed the prerequisite or corequisite, student performance on individual class assignments, and surveys of students and instructors regarding their perceptions about the need for the prerequisite or corequisite.
  - (2) **Statistical analysis:** A statistical analysis of student success rates of the identified course is undertaken with appropriate levels of math, English, reading, and/or ESL skills courses. A significant level threshold shall be based upon less than 50% of the students successfully completing the course. Analysis shall be based upon a minimum of 100 student completers



and five sequential semesters of the course being offered.

- (3) **In-Depth Content Review:** Title 5 Section 55000(c), Content review “is the rigorous, systematic process developed in accordance with Sections 53200 to 53204, approved by the State Chancellor as part of the District’s Student Success and Support Program plan required under Title 5 Section 55510 and that is conducted by faculty to identify the necessary and appropriate body of knowledge or skills students need to possess prior to enrolling in a course or which students need to acquire through simultaneous enrollments in a corequisite course.” The content review of each course is completed by the discipline faculty and should at a minimum include the following:
- (a) Involvement of faculty with appropriate expertise.
  - (b) Consideration and review of course objectives set by relevant department(s), which should be in accordance with accreditation standards.
  - (c) Be based on detailed course syllabus and outline of record, tests, related instructional materials, course format, type and number of examinations, and grading criteria.
  - (d) Specification of the body of knowledge and/or skills which are deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with enrollment.
  - (e) Identification and review of the prerequisite or corequisite which develops the body of knowledge and/or measures skills identified in item (d) above.
  - (f) Matching of the knowledge and skills in the targeted course and those developed or measured by the prerequisite or corequisite course and maintenance of documentation of all steps involved.



- (4) **Courses Exempt from Content Review:** A prerequisite or corequisite need not be scrutinized using content review as defined by this subsection if:
- (a) It is required by statute or regulations; or
  - (b) It is part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline; or
  - (c) It is required by a four-year institution; or
  - (d) Baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has the particular communication or computation skill prerequisite.
- (5) **Curriculum Committee Review:** The Curriculum Committee will review the documentation of the in-depth content review. The Curriculum Committee may require more content review documentation if needed.
- (6) **Factors to consider in order to mitigate disproportionate impact:** After the prerequisite or corequisite has been implemented:
- (a) Determine whether the students enrolling in the target course changed from before and after the prerequisite was implemented.
  - (b) Among students who meet the prerequisite skill level, determine if any student groups are less likely to succeed.
  - (c) Assess disproportionate impact, and, if occurring, develop a plan to mitigate disproportionate impact.
- (7) **Courses Requiring Reading, Writing, or Math Prerequisites:** If a prerequisite requires pre-collegiate skills in reading, written expression, or mathematics, the District shall:
- (a) ensure that courses designed to teach the required skills are offered with reasonable frequency and that the number of sections available is reasonable given the number of



students who are required to meet the associated skills prerequisites and who diligently seek enrollment in the prerequisite course.

(b) monitor progress on student equity in accordance with Title 5 Section 54220.

Monitoring shall include:

(i) conducting an evaluation to determine the impact on student success including whether the prerequisite or corequisite has a disproportionate impact on particular groups of students described in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age, or disability, as defined by the State Chancellor.

(ii) where there is a disproportionate impact on any such group of students, the district shall, in consultation within the State Chancellor, develop and implement a plan setting forth the steps the District will take to correct the disproportionate impact.

4. **Program Review.** Any new prerequisite or corequisite shall be reviewed after three semesters of the course being offered with subsequent reviews occurring after six semesters of the course being offered or five years, whichever comes first. Thereafter, this review shall occur as a regular part of the program review process or at least every six years, except for the prerequisites and corequisites for career and technical education courses or programs, which shall be reviewed every two years. The District shall review each prerequisite, corequisite, 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 corequisite that is still supported shall be reviewed promptly thereafter to assure that it is in compliance with





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all other provisions of this policy and with the law. Some courses may require more frequent reviews based upon other requirements.

5. **Implementing Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Limitations on Enrollment.** Implementation of prerequisites, corequisites, 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.
6. **Instructor's Formal Agreement to Teach the Course as Described.** Each college shall establish a procedure so that courses for which prerequisites or corequisites 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 corequisite. The process shall be established by consulting collegially with the local academic senate and, if appropriate, the local bargaining unit.

### **Review of Individual Courses**

If the student's enrollment in a course or program is to be contingent on his/her having met the proposed prerequisite(s) or corequisite(s), then such a prerequisite or corequisite must be established as follows. If enrollment is not blocked, then what is being established is not a prerequisite or corequisite but, rather, an advisory on recommended preparation and must be identified as such in the schedule and catalog. Establishing advisories does not require all the following steps.

1. **Advisories on Recommended Preparation**

The District may recommend that a student meet a standard of readiness at entry only if recommended by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as outlined above. This process is required whether the college used to describe such recommendations in its catalog or schedule as "prerequisites," or "recommended," or by any other term.

2. **Limitations on Enrollment**

The types of limitation on enrollment specified below may only be established through the curriculum review process by the discipline or department faculty and the curriculum committee specified above, including the requirement to review



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them again at least every six years; for example, as part of program review. The following requirements must also be met in order to establish these particular limitations on enrollment.

- a. **Performance Courses.** The District may establish audition or tryout 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 provided that:
  - i. For any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking this course, there is another course or courses which satisfy the same requirement; and
  - ii. Limitations on enrollment established as provided for performance courses shall be reviewed during program review or at least every six years to determine whether the audition or tryout process is having a disproportionate impact on any historically underrepresented group and, if so, a plan shall be adopted to seek to remedy the disproportionate impact. If disproportionate impact has been found, the limitation on enrollment may not be printed in subsequent catalogs or schedules nor enforced in any subsequent term until such a plan has been endorsed by the department and the District's administration and put into effect.
- b. **Honors Courses.** A limitation on enrollment for an honors course may be established if, in addition to the 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.

### **Blocks of Courses or 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 as provided above, there is another section or another course or courses that satisfy the same requirement.



Santa Barbara  
Community College District

**Administrative Procedure**  
Chapter 4, Academic Affairs

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