

NUMBERED MEMO CC26-025

TO: Members of the State Board of Community Colleges, Chairs of the Community College Boards of Trustees, Community College Presidents, Chief Academic Officers, Chief Admissions Officers, Basic Skills Directors, Business Officers, Continuing Education Officers, Customized Training Directors, Chief Financial Officers, Distance Learning, Financial Aid Officers, Personnel Officers, Student Development Administrators, Public Information Officers, Registrars, & Other Interested Parties

FROM: Jonnell Carpenter, *NCCCS General Counsel*

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendment of 1D SBCCC 400.3 – Program Classification

DATE: May 19, 2026

On May 15, 2026, the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) initiated the rulemaking process to amend **1D SBCCC 400.3 – Program Classification**. The proposed amendment would replace “4-year college” with “baccalaureate granting” college and simplify Degree Programs into three sections: Transfer, Associate in Applied Science, and Associate in General Education. The proposed amendment is published on the NC Community College System's website, [Numbered Memos - NCCCS \(ncccommunitycolleges.edu\)](#). For your convenience, a copy of the proposed rule, with the adopted language indicated, is attached to this memorandum. Strikethroughs indicate deletions of existing language and underlines indicate additions of language.

Any member of the public has the right to submit written comments on the proposed rule. Please note that any person who submits public comments on behalf of their community college should comply with their college’s local process for submitting comments on a proposed rule. **Written comments on the rule must be received by no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 18, 2026.** Any member of the public has the right to request a hearing on the proposed rule. **Requests for a hearing must be received by no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 3, 2026.**

Written comments and requests for hearing shall be directed to the following address:
Jonnell Carpenter, 5001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-5001 or by email to
publiccomments@nccommunitycolleges.edu. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

CC26-025

Email Copy
Attachment



State Board of Community Colleges Code

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Form

Date: May 19, 2025

Title, Chapter, Subchapter, and Rule Number of Rule Proposed to be Adopted, Amended, or Repealed	Amendment of 1D SBCCC 400.3 – Program Classification
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Specify whether the SBCC proposes to amend, adopt, or repeal a rule:

Adopt (new rule)	Amend (change existing rule)	Repeal (delete entire rule)
	X	

Rationale for proposed adoption, amendment, or repeal:	This amendment would replace “4-year college” with “baccalaureate granting” college to align more with student experience and simplify Degree Programs into three sections: Transfer, Associate in Applied Science, and Associate in General Education.
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Proposed Effective Date of Rule	August 1, 2026
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1D SBCCC 400.3 is proposed for amendment as follows:

1 **State Board of Community Colleges Code**
2 **TITLE 1 – COMMUNITY COLLEGES**



3
4 **CHAPTER D. EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

5
6 **SUBCHAPTER 400. CURRICULUM**
7

8 **1D SBCCC 400.3 Program Classification**

9 The following definitions are used for classifying the curriculum programs offered in
10 the North Carolina Community College System.

11 (a) Curriculum Programs: A curriculum program is an organized sequence of
12 courses leading to an associate degree, a diploma, or a certificate. Curriculum
13 programs are designed to provide education, training, or retraining for the work
14 force, transfer to ~~four-year~~ baccalaureate granting colleges and universities, or to
15 confer general liberal arts degrees.

16 (1) Certificate programs lead to employment or provide skills upgrading or
17 retraining for individuals already in the workforce. A certificate program
18 may be a stand- alone curriculum program title, or a college may award
19 a certificate under the college's associate degree or diploma curriculum
20 program for a series of courses taken from the program of study.

21 (2) Diploma programs provide entry-level employment training. A diploma
22 program may be a stand-alone curriculum program title, or a college may
23 award a diploma under the college's associate in applied science degree
24 curriculum program for a series of courses taken from the program of
25 study and structured so that a student may complete additional non-
26 duplicative coursework to receive an associate in applied science
27 degree.

28 ~~(3) Associate degree programs are planned programs of study culminating~~
29 ~~in an associate in applied science, associate in arts, associate in~~
30 ~~science, associate in engineering, associate in fine arts in music,~~

1 ~~theatre, and visual arts, associate in general education or associate in~~
2 ~~general education nursing degree.~~

3 ~~a. The associate in applied science degree programs are designed~~
4 ~~to prepare individuals for employment. These programs involve~~
5 ~~the application of scientific principles in research, design,~~
6 ~~development, production, distribution, or service.~~

7 ~~b. The associate in arts and associate in science degrees are~~
8 ~~designed to prepare students for transfer at the junior level to~~
9 ~~four-year colleges and universities under the Comprehensive~~
10 ~~Articulation Agreement.~~

11 ~~c. The associate in engineering degree is designed to prepare~~
12 ~~students for transfer to meet the prerequisite requirements of~~
13 ~~the University of North Carolina engineering programs. The~~
14 ~~Associate in Engineering to Bachelor of Science in Engineering~~
15 ~~Uniform Articulation Agreement establishes the procedures~~
16 ~~governing the transfer of credits for students who graduate from~~
17 ~~North Carolina Community College associate in engineering~~
18 ~~programs and apply to bachelor of science engineering~~
19 ~~programs at constituent institutions of The University of North~~
20 ~~Carolina.~~

21 ~~d. The associate in fine arts in music and the associate in fine arts~~
22 ~~in theatre degree programs are designed to prepare students~~
23 ~~for fine arts careers or for transfer to a four-year institution~~
24 ~~under bilateral articulation agreements.~~

25 ~~e. The associate in fine arts in visual arts degree program is~~
26 ~~designed to prepare students for fine arts careers or for transfer~~
27 ~~to a four-year institution. The Uniform Articulation Agreement~~
28 ~~Between the University of North Carolina Baccalaureate of Fine~~
29 ~~Arts Programs and North Carolina Community College System~~
30 ~~Associate in Fine Arts in Visual Arts Programs establishes the~~
31 ~~procedures governing the transfer of credits for students who~~

1 graduate from North Carolina Community College associate in
2 fine arts in visual arts programs and apply to bachelor of fine
3 arts programs at constituent institutions of The University of
4 North Carolina.

5 f. ~~The associate in general education degree programs are~~
6 ~~designed for students who desire a general, liberal arts~~
7 ~~education that will prepare them for advancements within their~~
8 ~~field of interest.~~

9 g. ~~The associate in general education nursing degree is designed~~
10 ~~to prepare students for transfer through the Uniform Articulation~~
11 ~~Agreement between the University of North Carolina's~~
12 ~~Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs~~
13 ~~and the North Carolina Community College Associate Degree~~
14 ~~Nursing Programs. This uniform articulation agreement~~
15 ~~establishes the procedures governing the transfer of credits for~~
16 ~~students who graduate from the North Carolina Community~~
17 ~~College associate in general education nursing degree and the~~
18 ~~associate in applied science in nursing degree and apply to~~
19 ~~bachelor of science in nursing programs at constituent~~
20 ~~institutions of The University of North Carolina.~~

21 (3) Degree programs are planned programs of study that prepare students
22 for either employment or transfer to a baccalaureate granting college or
23 university.

24 a. Transfer-focused associate degrees are designed to build a
25 strong foundation in general education and pre-major
26 coursework, allowing students to enter a university at the junior
27 level. These programs align with statewide articulation
28 agreements to ensure the seamless transfer of credits and
29 support progression into bachelor's degree programs across a
30 range of academic and professional fields.

1 b. Associate in Applied Science programs focus on industry-
2 specific career and technical education fields, preparing
3 students with the practical skills and applied knowledge needed
4 for direct entry into the workforce, while also supporting transfer
5 opportunities where applicable.

6 c. The Associate in General Education Degree programs are
7 designed for students who desire a general, liberal arts education
8 that will prepare them for advancements within their field of
9 interest.

10 (b) Developmental Education: Developmental Education consists of courses and
11 support services that include diagnostic assessment and placement, tutoring,
12 advising, math and writing assistance. These programs are designed to address
13 academic preparedness, development of general learning strategies, and
14 barriers to learning. Developmental courses do not earn credit toward a degree,
15 diploma, or certificate.

16
17 *History Note: Authority G.S. 115D-1; 115D-2; 115D-5; S.L. 1995, c. 625; S.L. 2001,*
18 *c. 424, s. 30.3(b), (e);*
19 *Eff. February 1, 1976;*
20 *Readopted Eff. January 24, 1978;*
21 *Amended Eff. September 1, 1993; September 1, 1982; August 17, 1981;*
22 *Temporary Amendment Eff. June 1, 1997;*
23 *Amended Eff. July 1, 1998;*
24 *Temporary Amendment Eff. October 4, 2001;*
25 *Amended Eff. _____; [November 1, 2017](#); June 1, 2009; April 1,*
26 *2003.*