

NUMBERED MEMO CC26-031

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: Amendment of 1D SBCCC 400.3 – Program Classification

DATE: July 21, 2026

On July 17, 2026, the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) voted to amend the State Board Code, **1D SBCCC 400.3 – Program Classification**. The amendment replaces “4-year college” with “baccalaureate granting” college and consolidates Degree Programs into three sections: Transfer, Associate in Applied Science, and Associate in General Education.

The amendment will be effective **August 1, 2026**. At that time, the amended rule will be published on the North Carolina Community College System’s website, [State Board Code - NCCCS \(ncccommunitycolleges.edu\)](https://ncccommunitycolleges.edu). For your convenience, a copy of the rule in its final form is attached to this memorandum.

CC26-031

Email Copy
Attachment

**State Board of Community Colleges Code
TITLE 1. COMMUNITY COLLEGES**



CHAPTER D. EDUCATION PROGRAMS

SUBCHAPTER 400. CURRICULUM

1D SBCCC 400.3 Program Classification

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

- (a) Curriculum Programs: A curriculum program is an organized sequence of courses leading to an associate degree, a diploma, or a certificate. Curriculum programs are designed to provide education, training, or retraining for the work force, transfer to baccalaureate granting colleges and universities, or to confer general liberal arts degrees.
- (1) Certificate programs lead to employment or provide skills upgrading or retraining for individuals already in the workforce. A certificate program may be a stand-alone curriculum program title, or a college may award a certificate under the college's associate degree or diploma curriculum program for a series of courses taken from the program of study.
 - (2) Diploma programs provide entry-level employment training. A diploma program may be a stand-alone curriculum program title, or a college may award a diploma under the college's associate in applied science degree curriculum program for a series of courses taken from the program of study and structured so that a student may complete additional non-duplicative coursework to receive an associate in applied science degree.
 - (3) Degree programs are planned programs of study that prepare students for either employment or transfer to a baccalaureate granting college or university.
 - a. Transfer-focused associate degrees are designed to build a strong foundation in general education and pre-major

coursework, allowing students to enter a university at the junior level. These programs align with statewide articulation agreements to ensure the seamless transfer of credits and support progression into bachelor's degree programs across a range of academic and professional fields.

- b. Associate in Applied Science programs focus on industry-specific career and technical education fields, preparing students with the practical skills and applied knowledge needed for direct entry into the workforce, while also supporting transfer opportunities where applicable.
- c. The Associate in General Education Degree programs are designed for students who desire a general, liberal arts education that will prepare them for advancements within their field of interest.

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

*History Note: Authority G.S. 115D-1; 115D-2; 115D-6.1; S.L. 1995, c. 625; S.L. 2001, c. 424, s. 30.3(b), (e);
Eff. February 1, 1976;
Readopted Eff. January 24, 1978;
Amended Eff. September 1, 1993; September 1, 1982; August 17, 1981;
Temporary Amendment Eff. June 1, 1997;
Amended Eff. July 1, 1998;
Temporary Amendment Eff. October 4, 2001;
Amended Eff. [August 1, 2026](#); [November 1, 2017](#); June 1, 2009; April 1, 2003.*