

# CURRICULUM POLICY

## I. Policy Section

7.0 Instruction

## II. Policy Subsection

7.18 Curriculum

## III. Policy Statement

A. The GRCC Curriculum Policy establishes guidelines and standards for GRCC degrees and programs.

1. Academic programs are purposefully defined in the context of the goals and expectations of students and their learning needs.
2. The curriculum is outcomes-based and learning is defined by measurable student learning outcomes.
3. Degrees are defined and granted by the institution.
4. Programs are created and delivered within schools and departments.
5. Programs are designed to meet the same learning outcomes regardless of delivery method (face-to-face, online, or hybrid) and location where offered.
6. General education is included in all programs that lead to a degree as required by the program type. The College's general education program is clearly articulated with regards to its purpose, philosophy, and structure in order to provide broad knowledge.
7. All programs are designed to meet the College's minimum graduation requirements.
8. The College has a regular review process to ensure quality, rigor, and effectiveness of its courses and programs.

B. GRCC's Academic Programs include the following:

1. Pre-Major
2. Articulated Pre-Major
3. Career
4. Career (M.T.A.)
5. Articulated Career
6. Pathway Concentration
7. Pre-Professional
8. Professional
9. Articulated Pre-Professional
10. Apprenticeship
11. Certificate of Completion (Clock Hour and Non-Credit Programs)

- C. GRCC offers and awards the following types of degrees and credentials for college credit:
1. Associate of Arts (A.A.)
  2. Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences (A.A.A.S.)
  3. Associate of Business (A.B.)
  4. Associate of Nursing (A.N.)
  5. Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.)
  6. Associate of Music (A.M.)
  7. Associate of General Studies (A.G.S.)
  8. Certificate
  9. Advanced Certificate
- D. GRCC offers the following clock hour and non-credit certificates:
1. Certificate of Completion
- E. Degrees and program types are integrated to create GRCC academic programs.
1. Associate of Arts (A.A.) – Must be aligned with the Michigan Transfer Agreement with one exception: MA107 may be used to meet the math general education requirement. Thirty credits of general education are required. No program name is specified on the diploma. Pre-Major (2+2), Articulated Pre-Major (2+2 or 3+1), and Pathway Concentration program types are associated with this degree.
  2. Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences (A.A.A.S.) – Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. Career, Career (M.T.A.), and Articulated Career (2+2 or 3+1), and Apprenticeship program types are associated with this degree. The program name is specified on the diploma. Curricular “Tracks” may be included.
  3. Associate of Music (A.M.) - Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. Pre-Professional and Articulated Pre-Professional (2+2 or 3+1) program types are associated with this degree. The name is specified on the diploma for Professional programs. The name is not specified on the diploma for Pre-Professional or Articulated Pre-Professional programs. A “Major” may be included.
  4. Associate of Business (A.B.) - Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. Professional, Pre-Professional, and Articulated Pre-Professional (2+2 or 3+1) program types are

associated with this degree. The program name is specified on the diploma for Professional programs. The name is not specified on the diploma for Pre-Professional or Articulated Pre-Professional programs. A “Major” may be included.

5. Associate of Nursing (A.N.) - Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. The program name is specified on the diploma. The Professional program type is associated with this degree.
6. Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.) - Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. Pre-Professional and Articulated Pre-Professional (2+2 or 3+1) program types are associated with this degree. The program name is not specified on the diploma. A “Major” may be included.
7. Associate of General Studies (A.G.S.) - Fifteen credits of general education are required including: EN 101 and EN 102 or COM 131 or COM 135; 1 Humanities course; 1 Social Sciences course; and 1 Math or 1 Natural Sciences course. There are no “programs” associated with this degree. The degree is listed on the diploma.
8. Certificate – Must have a minimum of 8 credit hours. If less than 15 credit hours, must be aligned with an external credential or have an external accreditation. The Apprenticeship and Career program types are associated with certificates.
9. Advanced Certificate – Must have a minimum of 8 credit hours. Students must have earned an associate’s degree prior to enrolling in this program. The Career program type is associated with Advanced Certificates.

#### IV. Reason for the Policy

The GRCC Curriculum Policy establishes guidelines and standards for GRCC degrees and programs by defining existing degrees, credentials, clock hour and non-credit certificates, as well as two additional credit bearing credentials: Advanced Certificate and Certificate of Completion. Each degree that the College offers will have a defined purpose in terms of the role it plays in preparing students to pursue entry-level employment, transfer to a four-year institution, or both. The policy also provides clear direction with regards to the role of GRCC’s general education program and outcomes-based curriculum.

#### V. Entities Affected by this Policy

GRCC Students, Faculty, and Staff

## VI. Who Should Read this Policy

Faculty Members and Academic Administrators who are formally involved in developing, delivering, evaluating, supporting, and approving GRCC curriculum.

Faculty and/or Staff Members who advise students about GRCC degrees and programs.

## VII. Related Documents

GRCC College Catalog  
GRCC Course Format and Credit Hour Definition Policy (7.13)  
GRCC Seminar Course Definition Policy (7.14)  
GRCC Course Substitution and Course Waiver Policy (7.19)  
GRCC Graduation Requirements Policy (7.20)  
GRCC Catalog Policy (8.5)  
GRCC General Education Learning Outcomes AGC Decision  
Michigan Transfer Agreement (M.T.A.)

## VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: Associate Provost of Instructional Support and Institutional Planning  
School of Business & Industry, Health Sciences, Liberal Arts, and STEM  
Deans and Associate Deans  
Director of Curriculum Development and Assessment  
Director of Transfer and Articulation Services  
Director of Curriculum Management  
Registrar

## IX. Definitions

- A. Advanced Certificate: a program designed for students who have earned an associate degree. The Career program type is associated with Advanced Certificate.
- B. Apprenticeship: a program designed to prepare students with specific knowledge and skills necessary for a trade or industry in which they are already employed.
- C. Articulation Agreement: a formal agreement between GRCC and four-year colleges or university partners that outlines expectations to ensure the transfer of courses to a specific academic program and/or institution. Articulation agreements are also called transfer agreements or program agreements and may include minimum grade and other admissions requirements for transfer. Articulation

agreements are also possible with partners other than four-year colleges and universities. A list of partners with whom GRCC has established an articulation agreement can be found within the GRCC website.

- D. Articulated Career: a program designed for students who are interested in preparing to enter the workforce upon graduating from GRCC and preparing to transfer into a specified bachelor's degree at a four-year college or university. The GRCC courses in articulated career programs are intended to transfer to the partner four-year college or university as outlined in an articulation agreement.
- E. Articulated Pre-Major: a program designed for students who are interested in transferring to a four-year college or university to complete a specified bachelor's degree. The GRCC courses in articulated pre-majors are intended to transfer to the partner four-year college or university as outlined in an articulation agreement.
- F. Articulated Pre-Professional: a program designed for students who are interested in preparing to enter the workforce upon graduating from GRCC and preparing to transfer into a specified bachelor's degree in the professions at a four-year college or university. The GRCC courses in articulated pre-professional programs are intended to transfer to the partner four-year college or university as outlined in an articulation agreement.
- G. Associate of Applied Arts and Sciences (A.A.A.S.): a program designed for students who are interested in preparing for a career that does not require a bachelor's degree. This degree prepares students to enter the workforce upon graduation.
- H. Associate of Arts (A.A.): a program designed for students who plan to transfer to a college or university to complete a bachelor's degree.
- I. Associate of Business (A.B.): a program designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in the business field. This degree prepares students to enter the workforce upon graduation.
- J. Associate of Fine Arts (A.F.A.): a program designed to prepare students to transfer to a college or university to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts.
- K. Associate of General Studies (A.G.S.): a program designed for students with broad interests who wish to earn an associate degree without following a specified academic concentration.
- L. Associate of Music (A.M.): a program designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in the music field or to prepare students to transfer to a college or university to pursue a Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Music Education, or another music performance-related degree.

- M. Associate of Nursing (A.N.): a program designed to prepare students to qualify to take the NCLEX-RN examination to become registered nurses.
- N. Career Programs: programs designed for students who are interested in preparing for a career that does not require a bachelor's degree.
- O. Career (M.T.A.) Programs: programs designed for students who are interested in preparing to enter the workforce upon graduating from GRCC. The Michigan Transfer Agreement requirements are also embedded in these programs.
- P. Certificate Programs: programs designed to prepare students with specific knowledge and skills necessary to enter a career or continue employment.
- Q. Certificate of Completion (Clock Hour and Non-Credit) Training Programs: programs designed to provide students with exposure to specialized career fields. Clock Hour and Non-Credit programs articulate to credit, based on national credentials or articulation agreements.
- R. Curricular Tracks: areas of curricular focus in a career program with a minimum of 8 credits of coursework.
- S. Curriculum: a scope and sequence of learning activities that is arranged in a logical order for a defined audience. The scope responds to the breadth of learning intended and the sequence illustrates the order, with complexity of learning outcomes becoming greater over time. The overarching purpose of curriculum is to describe the intentions of a learning experience. A curriculum is also a planning and communication tool that lets stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, and the community) know what is being taught, why, and how the intended learning is to inspire and impact the learners.
- T. Major: an area of curricular focus in a pre-professional program with a minimum of 15 credits of coursework.
- U. Michigan Transfer Agreement (M.T.A.): agreement that provides transferability of up to 30 semester credits to meet many of the General Education Requirements at participating Michigan four-year colleges and universities. Students may complete the requirements as part of the Associate of Arts, Career (M.T.A.) programs, or as a stand-alone package. Once the MTA requirements are met, the courses will transfer and be applied toward meeting the general education requirements at the four-year college or university.

- V. MiTransfer and MiWorkforce Pathways: multi-institutional articulation agreements that provide guidance about transferring courses in specific academic programs to participating institutions in Michigan, and allow students to complete associate and bachelor's degrees.
- W. Pathway Concentration Programs: programs designed to help students deciding on their academic and career goals to identify an area of interest. These programs are also designed for students who are interested in transferring to a college or university to complete a bachelor's degree in an area where GRCC does not have an academic program. The programs can be customized to meet individual students' needs. They also allow students to fulfill general education and graduation requirements at GRCC and transfer to a four-year institution to complete a bachelor's degree.
- X. Pre-Major Programs: programs designed for students who are interested in transferring to a college or university to complete a bachelor's degree in a particular major.
- Y. Pre-Professional Programs: programs designed for students who are interested in transferring to a college or university to complete a bachelor's degree in a particular major in the professions.
- Z. Professional Programs: programs designed for students who are interested in preparing for a career in a profession that does not require a bachelor's degree.
- AA. Transfer Programs: programs designed for students who intend to transfer to a four-year institution after completing their associate's degree.
- BB. 2+2 Agreement: a term GRCC uses to describe articulation agreements in which students may complete approximately 50% of the coursework required of a bachelor's degree at a community college—with the goal of earning an associate's degree—then transfer to complete the remaining bachelor's degree at a four-year institution. The actual number of years a student spends at an institution is dependent on many factors (student enrollment status, course offerings, etcetera).
- CC. 3+1 Agreement: a term GRCC uses to describe articulation agreements in which students may complete at least 67% of the coursework required of a bachelor's degree at a community college—with the goal of earning an associate's degree—then transfer to complete the remaining bachelor degree requirements at a four-year institution. The actual number of years a student spends at an institution is dependent on many factors (student enrollment status, course offerings, etcetera).

## X. Procedures

- A. The Curriculum Support Office will use the Curriculum Policy to develop and revise curriculum processes at the program and course level.
- B. Faculty members and Academic Administrators will use these processes to develop, evaluate, and revise curriculum at all levels.
- C. The Registrar's Office will input developed curriculum into GRCC's College-wide Information System.
- D. The Curriculum Support Office will publish developed curriculum in the GRCC online College Catalog.
- E. The Academic Advising and Transfer Center will use the policy to help students in their academic planning.
- F. As appropriate and as indicated throughout this document, associate degrees will be aligned with multiple types of programs, based on their purpose or role in the preparation of students. Academic departments will review updates to the policy in order to determine if changes are necessary to existing associate degree programs and when developing new programs.
- G. Each learning experience at the general education, career/professional program, and course level is characterized by explicit student learning outcomes, activities that lead students to master those outcomes, and plans to assess and evaluate student proficiency of those outcomes to improve student learning.
- H. GRCC's general education program is aligned to the M.T.A. distribution categories as follows: English Composition, Communications, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Humanities and Fine Arts, and Natural Sciences. As outlined in relevant sections above and in the GRCC Graduation Requirements policy, GRCC's general education and transfer programs are aligned to the Michigan Transfer Agreement (in accordance with Section III. E.1. in this policy). GRCC's General Education/M.T.A. Course List will be determined according to the AGC General Education Learning Outcomes Decision and/or instructions from the College Provost. AGC's General Education Review Team is charged with defining the distribution categories for GRCC's general education program/M.T.A. Course List, determining the outcomes for each of the distribution categories, defining the criteria that will be used in making decisions about inclusion of courses in the general education distribution areas, and reviewing courses according to that criteria.
- I. The policy guides all curriculum processes and is related to a number of procedures and processes, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Curriculog New Course and New Program Development Processes
  - b. Curriculog Course and Program Revision Processes
  - c. Academic Program Review Process
  - d. Academic Program and Course Descriptions in the GRCC College Catalog



- e. General Education/M.T.A. Course List
- f. Graduation Audit Processes
- g. Academic Advisement
- h. Declaration of Academic Program Process
- i. Workforce Training Program Development
- j. Job Training Program Development
- k. Articulation Agreements & Transfer Guides

#### XI. Forms

This policy will be operationalized through all curriculum development processes. Many of these processes are facilitated by Curriculum Support and managed in the curriculum development system currently used at GRCC, Curriculog, as noted above. There are no specific curriculum policy forms.

#### XII. Effective Date

Original Curriculum Model: August 22, 2013.

Revised Curriculum Policy Approved by AGC, February 14, 2017;  
Effective Fall 2017.

Revised Curriculum Policy Approved by AGC, November 12, 2019;  
Effective immediately with Provost's February 12, 2019, Decision and Full Implementation completed by Fall 2020 with the publication of the 2020-21 GRCC College Catalog.

Reviewed Curriculum Policy approved by AGC March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

#### XIII. Policy History

This policy was developed over the 2012-13 Academic Year as the Curriculum Model and approved at AGC on April 9, 2013.

During the 2016-17 Academic Year, this policy was revised during a scheduled policy review and renamed the Curriculum Policy. Changes to the policy included: separating policies from resources in Curriculum Model document; revising outdated language to align with current policies and requirements, including graduation and M.T.A. requirements and Academic Pathways; including information on non-credit programs and certificates; removing General Education, Institutional Learning Outcomes, and Courses from policy, since these are addressed in other academic policies, procedures, and/or documents. This revised policy was approved at AGC on February 14, 2017.

During the 2019-20 Academic Year, this policy was revised during a scheduled policy review. Changes to the policy included: clarifications to the policy statement to align with curriculum development and revision

processes, including the review of general education courses; additions to the policy statement to include clock hour offerings along with non-credit offerings; addition of the MA107 exception to the A.A. degree/program type to facilitate transfer and/or development of articulated transfer programs; and removal of the A.S. degree/program type after careful deliberation of A.S. degree offerings, Pathway A.A. programs, and transfer partnership information. This revised policy was approved at AGC on November 12, 2019.

The policy document Definitions section was updated on September 6, 2022, with a revised definition of 3+1 Agreement in CC.

During the 2022-2023 Academic Year, this policy was reviewed by the Curriculum Approval Team and AGC. The Policy was approved by AGC on March 14, 2023.

#### XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

2025-2026 Academic Year