

Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer Degree Guidelines

DRAFT APPROVED BY JBAC 11-09-09

BACKGROUND AND INTENT OF THE DEGREE

The AAOT (Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer) degree was created in the late 1980s, through collaboration between Oregon community college faculty and Oregon University System faculty, to reduce bureaucratic obstacles for students transferring from an Oregon community college to an OUS institution. Variation in the requirements to earn AAOT degrees at different community colleges was not a problem because all of the degrees transferred smoothly to OUS. Increasingly, however, the degree has been used by students transferring among community colleges, and in these cases, distinctive requirements sometimes reduced transferability. Recognizing the fundamental purpose of the degree, community colleges agreed in 2008 to standardize their AAOT degree requirements so as to maximize the efficient transfer of credit for students. The requirements of the revised, freely-transferrable degree are listed below, but past experience suggests the utility of some additional explanation of what the degree can and cannot provide. Students and advisors should be aware of the opportunities created by the AAOT, but should also be mindful of its limitations, as summarized in the explanatory notes that follow the description of the degree itself.

Any student having the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT) degree recognized on an official college transcript will have met the lower division general education requirements of baccalaureate degree programs of any institution in the Oregon University System.

Students transferring under this agreement will have junior status for registration purposes. Course, class standing, or GPA requirements for specific majors, departments or schools are not necessarily satisfied by an AAOT degree.

Every Oregon community college offering an AAOT degree will meet these guidelines beginning Fall term 2010.

GUIDELINES

A student must complete a total of 90 quarter credits to be awarded the AAOT.

All courses should be aligned with the student's intended program of study and the degree requirements of the baccalaureate institution to which the student plans to transfer. A student is encouraged to work with an advisor in the selection of courses.

All Foundational Requirements and Discipline Studies courses must be a minimum of 3 credits, except for Health/Wellness/Fitness courses, which may be any number of credits. All Elective courses may be any number of credits.

All courses must be passed with a grade of "C-" or better. Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 at the time the AAOT is awarded.

FOUNDATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

► **Writing:** Students taking writing classes of three credits each must take WR 121, 122, and either WR 123 or 227. Students taking writing classes of 4 credits each must take WR 121 and either WR 122 or 227. A student must have 8 credits of Writing.

► Information Literacy will be included in the Writing Requirement

► **Oral Communication:** One course in the fundamentals of speech or communication designated by the college as meeting the statewide criteria for speech communication.

► **Mathematics:** One course in college-level mathematics, for which Intermediate Algebra is a prerequisite.

- ▶ *Health/Wellness/Fitness*: One or more courses totaling at least three credits.

DISCIPLINE STUDIES

- ▶ *Cultural Literacy*: Students must select one course from any of the discipline studies that is designated as meeting the statewide criteria for cultural literacy.
- ▶ *Arts and Letters*: Three courses chosen from two or more disciplines.
- ▶ *Social Sciences*: Four courses chosen from two or more disciplines.
- ▶ *Science/Math/Computer Science*: Four courses from at least two disciplines including at least three laboratory courses in biological and/or physical science.

ELECTIVES

- ▶ Any college-level course that would bring total credits to 90 quarter hours including up to 12 credits of Career and Technical Education courses, designated by the college as acceptable.

NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS

[The following notes are not intended to be part of the "Guidelines" (above), but rather serve to clarify them for participating institutions.]

1. Community colleges may not add requirements at the local level. The total credits should not exceed the number required to meet these course requirements within the college's credit structure.
2. Writing courses must meet the specific course outcomes as identified by Oregon Writing and English Advisory Council. In addition, the group of courses that is sufficient for meeting this requirement must, together, provide all of the content recommended by the Oregon Writing and English Advisory Committee (OWEAC), including a research component. Further information can be found at [OWEAC](#).
3. Although they are important in terms of preparation, courses that are developmental in nature are designed to prepare students for college-level work and are not counted in the 90 quarter hours required for the AAOT.
4. The "Foundational Requirements" above represent minimal skill competencies. As such, they may be open to demonstration of competency. Each community college is encouraged to establish how students may demonstrate competency in lieu of completing the course(s).
5. Computer Science courses used in the Science/Math/Computer Science area must meet Oregon Council of Computer Chairs criteria for a science course. See list of courses at ([Oregon Council of Computer Chairs](#)). Math courses listed in the Science/Math/Computer Science area must meet the outcomes and criteria for Mathematics. These can be found at ([list website here](#)).
6. All Foundational Requirement courses and Discipline Studies courses must meet the statewide outcomes and criteria for the specific area. These can be found at ([list website here](#)).
7. The second year of a foreign language, but not the first year, may be included among courses that count toward the Arts and Letters requirement. American Sign Language (ASL) is considered a foreign language.
8. WR 115 may be included in the AAOT degree as an elective providing that the WR 115 course at the community college has been approved by the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development as meeting statewide learning outcomes for the course.
9. The principal advantage of the AAOT is that it fulfills the lower division (freshman/sophomore) General Education requirements for Baccalaureate degrees at all OUS institutions. It does not necessarily meet all of the degree requirements that an OUS institution might have beyond the requirements for majors. The AAOT guarantees that all general education credits that a student earned will be accepted as the general education requirements at the receiving institution.
10. In some cases, students may also be able to use AAOT General Education courses to meet certain lower-division requirements in their intended majors. Here, caution is required, however, since the AAOT degree was not intended for this purpose. Students who have a major in mind, and also want to maximize the amount of AAOT coursework that will count toward it, should work closely with an academic adviser and make use of the ATLAS system when designing their AAOT degrees. For students intending to become teachers, specific recommendations on structuring their AAOT degrees are given at: [How to become an Oregon Teacher](#). General transfer information is available at: <http://www.ous.edu/stucoun/prospstu/transfer.php>

11. Because the amount of coursework required for an AAOT degree corresponds to 2 academic years, degree recipients are considered juniors for purposes of registration at an Oregon University System institution. Students should keep in mind, however, that the AAOT does not guarantee that 2 additional years will suffice to earn a Baccalaureate degree. That is because the AAOT does not give students junior standing in their majors. Neither does it guarantee entrance into a competitive major. Students may need to take additional introductory work to prepare for certain majors and should check with an advisor regarding availability at their local community colleges. In addition, it's not uncommon for students to change their majors and find that they must go back and take introductory work in the new area.
12. Students and academic advisers should recognize that although the AAOT provides an excellent structure for many students -- particularly, those who are unsure of their primary academic focus -- it is not ideal for everyone. In particular, it does not articulate well with certain majors such as engineering, biological and physical sciences, and the fine and performing arts. Students contemplating these majors cannot easily accommodate their highly-specific pre-requisite coursework into the AAOT framework. In general, an AAOT recipient who is pursuing any course of study that is credit-heavy at the major lower division level may have to take additional lower-division coursework, specifically for the major, after transfer. Students contemplating such majors should consult closely with an advisor.