STUDENT DEGREE LEVEL COMPETENCIES

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

The Arts and Humanities include the study of the arts, history and culture, language and literature, and values and the meaning of existence.

Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Understand the humanities as a collection of disciplines that study human nature, culture, attitudes, and accomplishments in relation to the universe.

2. Recognize the commonality, interrelatedness, tensions and affirmations of human existence.

3. Examine critically and appreciate the values and attitudes of one’s own culture and of other cultures.

4. Assume responsibility for one’s own creations, assertions, decisions and values.

5. Listen to and communicate with others and develop tolerance for opposing viewpoints.

6. Understand and participate in intellectual and aesthetic pursuits which encourage a creative and self-fulfilling existence.

7. Foster a spirit of continuous inquiry in the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom.

8. Appreciate the ambiguities and richness of human language beyond a basic proficiency in language.

9. Recognize the uses and limitations of applying analytical skills to the resolution of human problems and dilemmas.

10. Analyze and make decisions on problems that may not have simple or singular solutions.

11. Appreciate the importance of responding appropriately to change as an essential and necessary human activity.
12. Appreciate common human bonds that encourage a sense of civic purpose and responsible citizenship.

These competencies address all four "Themes of Common Learning."

**LANGUAGES**

The study of languages other than the student’s native language fosters awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity among the peoples of the world. Individuals who acquire skill in a second language can more readily appreciate the values and lifestyles of others. Knowledge of other languages also permits informal communication and facilitates the exchange of ideas and information in such areas as commerce, the arts, law, science, and technology.

All students should be encouraged to study another language while enrolled in a University of Hawaii community college. Students who plan to transfer to the University of Hawaii at Manoa and other baccalaureate institutions should be informed of the graduation requirements for languages and encouraged to complete at least one year of study prior to transfer.

Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree are not expected to attain a specific minimum competency in a second language at this time. However, as recommended by the PCC common expectations should be established for students who enroll in language study within the University of Hawaii Community Colleges. These are described in Appendix IV.

**MATHEMATICS AND LOGICAL REASONING**

In the course of their academic experiences, Associate in Arts degree students are expected to acquire an understanding of causal connections as well as the ability to manipulate symbols and apply abstract solutions to resolve tangible problems.

**Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate the ability to:**

1. Manipulate and use symbols within a logical system to express abstractions.

2. Choose and apply the techniques of inductive and deductive reasoning, and estimating derived from the study of mathematics (eg., arithmetic, geometry, algebra) and logic.

3. Use the problem solving process to analyze and organize given information; translate it into symbolic form; develop a solution in symbols; and
express and evaluate the solution within the framework of the original problem.

4. Undertake experimentation, take risks, and evaluate results in the context of understanding numbers and/or manipulating symbols, and solving problems.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 1: Thinking" and "Theme 4: Using."

NATURAL SCIENCES

Science attempts to create a sense of order in the universe and to provide mankind with an understanding of that order. A scientifically literate person should understand that scientific investigation involves the same creativity required for the success of art, music, literature, or business and that creativity in science must be blended with curiosity, rigorous objectivity and healthy skepticism. Such a person should also understand that science is both useful and rewarding in its own right and that technology, which has an important impact on society, grows from the pursuit of science for its own sake.

Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Understand basic, general scientific laws, theories and concepts from the biological and physical sciences, including:

   a. an understanding of how and in what context they were formulated and are applied; and

   b. an understanding of their universality (i.e., cutting across time and cultural boundaries).

   These competencies address all four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 1: Thinking," "Theme 2: Communicating," and "Theme 3: Knowing."

2. Understand the philosophy and history of science, including the concepts that:

   a. scientists use creativity, curiosity, objectivity, and skepticism to arrive at conclusions;
b. the free exchange of ideas and willingness to discard concepts which are no longer valid are central to the success of the scientific enterprise;

c. the theories, concepts and laws arising out of scientific investigation have limitations;

d. the experimental results used to support theories, concepts and laws must be repeatable;

e. the historical context of scientific ideas is important to their understanding;

f. the pervasive effect of science in society results from the powerful nature of scientific inquiry.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning: and are most closely related to "Theme 2: Communicating" and "Theme 3: Knowing."

3. Understand scientific laws, theories, concepts, and data sufficiently well to:

a. evaluate information presented in the media;

b. use and apply them appropriately and understand their limitations;

c. determine the validity of experimental procedures;

d. devise experiments to test hypotheses;

e. interpret data and the results of experimentation;

f. relate cause and effect and recognize when no such relationship exists.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 1: Thinking," "Theme 2: Communicating," and "Theme 3: Knowing."

4. Possess the knowledge and ability to use the tools of science, including:
a. the scientific method;

b. mathematics;

c. scientific terminology;

d. critical reading ability;

e. ability to write clearly and concisely.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 4: Using."

Since much that is important in science involves experimentation, it is expected that the student will gain many of these competencies through direct or simulated hands-on experience in laboratory courses.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Eligibility for the Associate in Arts degree is contingent upon the completion of general education requirements. General education requirements assure that students completing the Associate in Arts degree are prepared for specific careers or transfer programs and simultaneously prepared holistically to understand the complex web of cultures which surrounds them. These requirements also allow students to assume scientific, aesthetic, and philosophical perspectives; to reason critically and independently; to make mature social and emotional judgments; to develop sufficient empathy and tolerance to see several sides of issues; and to communicate effectively in written, verbal, nonverbal, numerical, and aesthetic modes.

The social sciences provide a unique and indispensable contribution to this general education process.

Curriculum Goals

Required involvement in a dynamic social science curriculum will insure that recipients of the Associate in Arts Degree:

1. Gain an appreciation for the role of culture and social institutions in the shaping of individual personality as well as the creation of social identities and life changes; and, conversely, for the effect of the individual upon cultures and institutions.
2. Comprehend the appropriate use of the social sciences and be able to approach human behavior and institutions from a variety of social science perspectives.

3. Develop the ability to independently gather and filter data; and then compose, refine, and discuss conclusions, solutions, and alternatives to societal issues, problems and concerns.

Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate the ability to understand:

1. At least three of the following units of analysis: social interactions, individuals, families, organizations, communities, spatial relations (geography), economies, governments, cultures, or societies.

2. The interdisciplinary nature of the social sciences.

3. The alternative theoretical frameworks used to offer meaningful explanation of social phenomena within a discipline.

4. Social scientific methods and quantitative/qualitative data collection and analysis.

5. Diverse social issues from the perspectives of alternative analytic models employed within social science disciplines.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning" in an integrated manner. Particular emphasis is given to "Element 2" of "Theme 3: Knowing," which states "students should develop an understanding of their individuality, acquire sensitivity to the diverse views and beliefs of others, and understand how our institutions and values shape our lives and views of the world."

**WORLD CIVILIZATIONS**

The study of world civilizations will provide the student with an analysis of the evolutionary nature of civilizations, a sense of historical development on a global scale, and a context for the understanding of the contemporary world and the development of global awareness.
Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate through writing, discussion and other means the ability to:

1. Distinguish the characteristics of the world’s major civilizations in their geographic settings.

2. Manifest a sense of historical time.

3. Describe the interactive roles that social, religious, political, economic, scientific and technological forces have played among the civilizations of the world.

4. Evaluate such historic theories as the "great person" in history or deterministic interpretations.

5. Trace the development of traditional civilizations and recognize their enduring influences.

6. Discuss the historical dimensions of contemporary world affairs and issues.

7. Describe global processes (e.g., agricultural and urban revolutions, emergence and growth of civilization, human migration, disease, ecological forces, imperialism, neo-imperialism, decolonization, industrialization, etc.).

8. Compare and contrast responses of the world’s peoples as a result of intercultural contacts and the diffusion of ideas, institutions and inventions.

9. Draw upon their knowledge of the varieties of human experiences, and their sympathetic understanding of cultures other than their own; to define their roles as citizens of the contemporary world.

10. Express informed judgments on the behavior of peoples and their institutions.

11. Analyze cause and effect relationships in history.

12. Discuss the major attempts to explore the ethical and fundamental questions of life posed throughout history.

These competencies address the four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 3: Knowing."
WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

The following assumptions underlie the competencies in written and oral communications (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) required for an Associate in Arts degree.

1. Written and oral communication skills are not learned in a sequence of discrete units; they develop through consistent practice in using language in varied situations and in increasingly complex ways.

2. Community colleges provide varied and demanding opportunities in many disciplines for students to practice and acquire complex communication skills.

3. Community college graduates must meet the expectations and requirements of the language communities they will encounter, including both work settings and upper division college programs for baccalaureate degrees.

4. Standard English (written and spoken) is used in most work and academic settings; other dialects are effectively employed in some situations.

Candidates for the Associate in Arts degree should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Think clearly, critically, and inventively.

2. Question, exchange, and evaluate ideas effectively.

3. Identify a writer's or speaker's inferential as well as literal meaning.

4. Separate one's personal opinions and assumptions from a writer's or speaker's.

5. Summarize, analyze, and evaluate written works and oral presentations.

6. Gather information purposefully; formulate, develop and support ideas.

7. Shape and present information and ideas in rhetorical forms appropriate to purpose and audience, including documentation when necessary.

8. Vary style (syntax, diction, tone) for different audiences and purposes.

9. Revise, edit, and proofread for correctness, clarity, and effectiveness.
Given the nature of written and oral communications, these competencies are related to all four "Themes of Common Learning" and are most closely related to "Theme 1: Thinking" and "Theme 2: Communicating."