

**CHAPTER 6: Educational Program  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 6.14.1 (AP 4260)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE  
San Mateo County Community College District**

**Subject:** 6.14.1 Prerequisites and Co-requisites  
**Adoption Date:** 04/13  
**References:** Title 5 Sections 55000 et seq.

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Prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations are necessary to ensure that students succeed in their coursework and have access to the courses they require. It is important to have prerequisites in place where they are a vital factor in maintaining academic standards. It is also necessary to ensure that prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations do not constitute unjustifiable obstacles to student access and success. Therefore, to foster the appropriate balance between these two concerns, the Education Code requires that prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories, and limitations be established based solely on content review or content review with statistical validation.

1. Information in the Catalog and Schedule of Courses.  
The college shall provide the following explanations both in the college catalog and in the schedule of courses:
  - A. Definitions of prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment including the differences among them and the specific prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment that have been established.
  - B. Procedures for a student to challenge prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to make such a challenge. The information about challenges must include, at a minimum, the specific process including any deadlines, the various types of challenge that are established in law, and any additional types of challenge permitted by the college.
  - C. Definitions of advisories on recommended preparation, the right of a student to choose to take a course without meeting the advisory, and circumstances under which a student is encouraged to exercise that right.
  - D. Definitions of contract course, co-requisite, noncredit basic skills course, non-degree-applicable basic skills courses, prerequisite and satisfactory grade.
2. Challenge Process
  - A. Any student who does not meet a prerequisite or co-requisite or who is not permitted to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment but who provides satisfactory evidence may seek entry into the course as follows:
    1. If space is available in a course when a student files a challenge to the prerequisite or co-requisite, the District shall reserve a seat for the student and resolve the challenge within five (5) working days. If the challenge is upheld or the District fails to resolve the challenge within the five (5) working-day period, the student shall be allowed to enroll in the course.
    2. If no space is available in the course when a challenge is filed, the challenge shall be resolved prior to the beginning of registration for the next term and, if the challenge is upheld, the student shall be permitted to enroll if space is available when the students registers for that subsequent term.

#### 6.14.1 Prerequisites and Co-requisites (continued)

##### B. Grounds for challenge shall include the following:

1. Those grounds for challenge specified in Title 5 Section 55201(f).
2. The student seeks to enroll and has not been allowed to enroll due to a limitation on enrollment established for a course that involves intercollegiate competition or public performance, or one or more of the courses for which enrollment has been limited to a cohort of students. The student shall be allowed to enroll in such a course if otherwise he or she would be delayed by a semester or more in attaining the degree or certificate specified in his or her educational plan.
3. The student seeks to enroll in a course that has a prerequisite established to protect health and safety, and the student demonstrates that he/she does not pose a threat to himself/herself or others.
4. The student has the obligation to provide satisfactory evidence that the challenge should be upheld. However, where facts essential to a determination of whether the student's challenge should be upheld are or ought to be in the college's own records, then the college has the obligation to produce that information.

##### C. Curriculum Review Process

The curriculum review process shall at a minimum be in accordance with all of the following:

1. Establish a curriculum committee and its membership in a manner that is mutually agreeable to the college administration and the academic senate.
2. Establish prerequisites, co-requisites, and advisories on recommended preparation (advisories) only upon the recommendation of the academic senate except that the academic senate may delegate this task to the curriculum committee without forfeiting its rights or responsibilities under Title 5 Sections 53200-53204 and within the limits set forth in Title 5 Section 55003. Certain limitations on enrollment must be established in the same manner.
3. Establish prerequisites, co-requisites, advisories on recommended preparation, and limitations on enrollment only if:
  - a) The faculty in the discipline or, if the college has no faculty member in the discipline, the faculty in the department do all of the following:
    - (1) Approve the course; and,
    - (2) As a separate action, approve any prerequisite or co-requisite, only if:
      - (a) The prerequisite or co-requisite is an appropriate and rational measure of a student's readiness to enter the course or program as demonstrated by a content review including, at a minimum, all of the following:
        - (i) involvement of faculty with appropriate expertise;
        - (ii) consideration of course objectives set by relevant department(s).  
The curriculum review process should be done in a manner that is in accordance with accreditation standards.
        - (iii) be based on a detailed course syllabus and outline of record, tests, related instructional materials, course format, type and number of examinations, and grading criteria;
        - (iv) specification of the body of knowledge and/or skills which are deemed necessary at entry and/or concurrent with enrollment;
        - (v) identification and review of the prerequisite or co-requisite which develops the body of knowledge and/or measures skills identified under iv.
        - (vi) matching of the knowledge and skills in the targeted course (identified under iv.) and those developed or measured by the prerequisite or co-requisite (i.e., the course or assessment identified under v.); and
        - (vii) maintain documentation that the above steps were taken.

#### 6.14.1 Prerequisites and Co-requisites (continued)

- (3) Approve any limitation on enrollment that is being established for an honors course or section, for a course that includes intercollegiate competition or public performance, or so that a cohort of students will be enrolled in two or more courses, and, in a separate action, specify which.
    - (4) Approve that the course meets the academic standards required for degree applicable courses, non-degree applicable courses, non-credit courses, or community service respectively.
    - (5) Review the course outline to determine if a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student had knowledge or skills not taught in the course. If the student would need knowledge or skills not taught in the course itself, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements for establishing the appropriate prerequisite have been met excepting only approval by the curriculum committee.
    - (6) Review the course outline to determine whether receiving a satisfactory grade is dependent on skills in communication or computation. If receiving a satisfactory grade is sufficiently dependent on such skills, then the course may be approved for degree applicable credit only if all requirements have been met for establishing a prerequisite or co-requisite of not less than eligibility for enrollment to a degree-applicable course in English or mathematics, respectively.
  - b) A course which should have a prerequisite or co-requisite as provided in (5) or (6) but for which one or more of the requirements for establishing a prerequisite have not been met may only:
    - (1) Be reviewed and approved pursuant to the standards for non-degree applicable credit, non-credit, or community service; or
    - (2) Be revised and reviewed as required to meet the criteria for establishing the necessary prerequisites or co-requisites.
  - c) The curriculum committee also reviews the course and prerequisite in a manner that meets each of the requirements specified above.
  - d) If the District chooses to use content review as defined in Title 5 of the Code of California Regulations section 55000(c) to define prerequisites and co-requisites in reading, written expression, or mathematics for courses that are degree applicable and are not in a sequence, it must adopt a plan consistent with Title 5 of the Code of California Regulations section 55003(c).
4. Program Review. As a regular part of the program review process or at least every six years, except that the prerequisites and co-requisites for vocational courses or programs shall be reviewed every two years, the college shall review each prerequisite, co-requisite, or advisory to establish that each is still supported by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee and is still in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law. Any prerequisite or co-requisite that is still supported shall be reviewed promptly thereafter to assure that it is in compliance with all other provisions of this policy and with the law.
5. Implementing Prerequisites, Co-requisites, and Limitations on Enrollment. Implementation of prerequisites, co-requisites, and limitations on enrollment must be done in a consistent manner and not left exclusively to the classroom instructor. Every attempt shall be made to enforce all conditions a student must meet to be enrolled in the course through the registration process so that a student is not permitted to enroll unless he/she has met all the conditions or has met all except those for which he/she has a pending challenge or for which further

#### 6.14.1 Prerequisites and Co-requisites (continued)

information is needed before final determination is possible of whether the student has met the condition.

6. Instructor's Formal Agreement to Teach the Course as Described. Each college shall establish a procedure so that courses for which prerequisites or co-requisites are established will be taught in accordance with the course outline, particularly those aspects of the course outline that are the basis for justifying the establishment of the prerequisite or co-requisite. The process shall be established by consulting collegially with the local academic senate and, if appropriate, the local bargaining unit.

#### **Review of Individual Courses**

If the student's enrollment in a course or program is to be contingent on his or her having met the proposed prerequisite(s) or co-requisite(s), then such a prerequisite or co-requisite must be established as follows. If enrollment is not blocked, then what is being established is not a prerequisite or co-requisite but, rather, an advisory on recommended preparation and must be identified as such in the schedule and catalog. Establishing advisories does not require all the following steps.

#### **1. Advisories on Recommended Preparation**

The college may recommend that a student meet a standard of readiness at entry only if recommended by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided in above. This process is required whether the college used to describe such recommendations in its catalog or schedule as "prerequisites," or "recommended," or by any other term.

#### **2. Limitations on Enrollment**

The types of limitation on enrollment specified below may only be established through the curriculum review process by the discipline or department faculty and the curriculum committee specified above including the requirement to review them again at least every six years; for example, as part of program review. The following requirements must also be met in order to establish these particular limitations on enrollment.

A. Performance Courses. The college may establish audition or try-out as a limitation on enrollment for courses that include public performance or intercollegiate competition such as but not limited to band, orchestra, theater, competitive speech, chorus, journalism, dance, and intercollegiate athletics provided that:

1. For any certificate or associate degree requirement which can be met by taking this course, there is another course or courses which satisfy the same requirement; and
2. The college includes in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course or courses which meet the same requirement.

Limitations on enrollment established as provided for performance courses shall be reviewed during program review or at least every six years to determine whether the audition or try-out process is having a disproportionate impact on any historically under-represented group and, if so, a plan shall be adopted to seek to remedy the disproportionate impact. If disproportionate impact has been found, the limitation on enrollment may not be printed in subsequent catalogs or schedules nor enforced in any subsequent term until such a plan has been endorsed by the department and the college administration and put into effect.

B. Honors Courses. A limitation on enrollment for an honors course or an honors section of a course may be established if, in addition to the review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, there is another section or another course or

#### 6.14.1 Prerequisites and Co-requisites (continued)

courses at the college which satisfy the same requirements. If the limitation is for an honors course and not only for an honors section, the college must also include in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course or courses which meet the same associate degree or certificate requirement.

**Blocks of Courses or Sections.** Blocks of courses or blocks of sections of courses are two or more courses or sections for which enrollment is limited in order to create a cohort of students. Such a limitation on enrollment may be established if, in addition to review by the faculty in the discipline or department and by the curriculum committee as provided above, there is another section or another course or courses that satisfy the same requirement. If the cohort is created through limitations on enrollment in the courses rather than limitations on specific sections of courses, then the college must include in the course outline of record a list of each certificate or associate degree requirement that the course meets and of the other course or courses which satisfy the same associate degree or certificate requirement.