

# New Jersey Commission on Higher Education

## Degree Program Criteria

*Title 9A-Higher Education, Associate degree programs 9A:1-2.3. Revised and adopted by the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education, effective March 7, 2022.*

Each educational program leading to an associate degree shall consist of college courses totaling at least 60 but not more than 66 semester credit hours or the equivalent in quarter hours, courses or other measurement used by the institution. The 66-credit-hour maximum may be exceeded when required for licensure or accreditation by a recognized agency or for student transfer to full junior status.

### Associate in Arts – A.A. Degree

The associate in arts (A.A.) degree nomenclature is appropriate for programs in the liberal arts, humanities, or fine and performing arts; such programs are transfer-oriented. For A.A. degrees, general education courses should total no fewer than 33 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

### Associate in Science – A.S. Degree

The associate in science (A.S.) degree nomenclature is appropriate for programs in mathematics, the sciences, business, or in allied health fields if the program is intended as prebaccalaureate work; such programs are transfer-oriented. General education courses for the A.S. degree should total no fewer than 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

### Associate in Applied Science – A.A.S. Degree

The associate in applied science (A.A.S.) degree nomenclature is appropriate for programs that emphasize career preparation in the applied arts and sciences, typically at the technical or semiprofessional level. Such programs are designed to prepare students for job entry at completion of the program, notwithstanding any articulation agreements with four-year programs that may be in effect for a particular A.A.S. program. General education courses shall total no fewer than 20 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

### Associate in Fine Arts – A.F.A. Degree

Specialized associate degree programs, such as Associate in Fine Arts (A.F.A.), shall normally require no fewer than 20 semester credit hours or the equivalent in general education courses.