PROCEDURE

Award Standards: A.S. Degrees

Associate in Science (A.S. Degrees) are awarded after the successful completion of a program in a designated area which transfers to a baccalaureate major in a related scientific, technical, or non-liberal arts professional field. An A.S. degree may also prepare students for employment. Students who have a strong academic background and an interest in pursuing a technical career which typically requires baccalaureate degree completion are very well suited for an A.S. degree major. Students who intend to continue their education beyond the A.S. degree will readily transfer credits to a four-year college or university where an articulation agreement exists.

A.S. Degree Format Standards

Broad Field A.S. Degree: A broad field associate in science degree transfers to all system universities offering related baccalaureate programs through a statewide articulation agreement. Broad fields may include such areas as (1) agriculture, (2) business, (3) computer and information sciences, (4) education, (5) engineering, (6) engineering technologies, (7) environmental sciences, (8) health sciences, and (9) natural sciences.

Specific Field A.S. Degree: A specific field associate in science degree may be designed for both transfer and employment. A specific field associate in science degree requires at least one articulation agreement between a community college, community and technical college, or technical college and a system university awarding a baccalaureate degree in a related discipline, unless the MnSCU System Office grants an exception.

Award Credits: Programs may submit A.S. degree proposals for 60 credits unless colleges and universities agree to the transfer of a greater number of credits through an articulation agreement. A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits (see criteria and process for granting waivers).

General Education: The associate in science degree requires a minimum of 30 general education credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum with the exception of the Computer Literacy designated courses.

A.S. Degree Description and Employment Opportunities: Every A.S. degree shall have a description that describes the nature of the degree and transfer opportunities. Descriptions are especially critical for programs that offer multiple awards. Each description should clearly describe the unique characteristics

of the degree in relation to the other awards offered by the program. In addition to transfer opportunities, the A.S. degree may include job opportunities if appropriate to the A.S. degree.

College Outcomes: As an award being conferred by HTC, all degrees should integrate the HTC Learner Outcomes into the curriculum. Proficiency in the Learner Outcomes can be demonstrated through goals and activities completed in technical coursework, general education coursework, prerequisites or a combination thereof. Ideally, the demonstration of HTC Learner Outcomes in a degree will be mutually reinforced through technical and general education coursework and the setting of appropriate prerequisites.

Award Standards: A.A.S. Degrees

Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S. Degrees) are awarded after the successful completion of a program that is intended to prepare students for employment. Students who have a strong academic background and an interest in pursuing a technical career are very well suited for an A.A.S. degree major. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in demand for A.A.S. degree by students and industry. Students who intend to continue their education at a four-year college or university find it easier to transfer credits earned through an A.A.S. degree than those earned through a diploma.

A.A.S. Degree Format Standards

Award Credits: Program may submit AAS degree proposals up to 60 semester credits. AAS degree proposals that exceed 60 credits shall require authorization from MnSCU System Office pursuant to MnSCU 3.36 and 3.36.1 Academic Programs.

General Education: The associate in applied science degree requires a minimum of 15 general education credits. -To support HTC's Learner Outcomes, of these 15 credits:

- One course must come from Goal 1 of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC).
- One course must come from Goal 2 of the MnTC
- One course must come from either Goal 3, Goal 4, or Goal 5 of the MnTC
- The remaining courses needed to meet the 15 credit minimum can be selected from any of the 10 MnTC goal areas depending upon the general skills necessary for the program

A.A.S. Degree Description and Employment Opportunities: Every A.A.S. degree shall have a description that describes the nature of the degree and related job opportunities. Descriptions are especially critical for programs that offer multiple awards. Each description should clearly describe the unique characteristics of the degree in relation to the other awards offered by the program.

College Outcomes: As an award being conferred by HTC, all degrees should integrate the HTC Learner Outcomes into the curriculum. Proficiency in the Learner Outcomes can be demonstrated through goals and activities completed in technical coursework, general education coursework, prerequisites or a combination thereof. Ideally, the demonstration of HTC Learner Outcomes in a degree will be mutually reinforced through technical and general education coursework and the setting of appropriate prerequisites.

Award Standards: Diplomas

The primary purpose of a diploma program is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to secure entry-level employment. Diplomas can also be designed to provide students with upgraded knowledge and skills necessary to obtain more advanced-level employment.

Diploma Format Standards

Award Credits: Programs may submit Diploma proposals for 31 to 72 credits. The HTC recommendation is to keep diploma programs at a maximum of 64 credits. Students may not be able to complete diploma programs of more than 64 credits in 4 semesters. A minimum of 24 credits shall be in occupational or technical courses. A stand-alone (with no A.A.S. degree) diploma of more than 72 credits in length may be approved by the HTC Academic Affairs and Standards Council and the MnSCU System Office when the academic program prepares an individual for employment and the length is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) based on a formal task analysis conducted within the previous three years and the results endorsed by an advisory committee.

The credit length of diplomas shall be reviewed when affected by statute (136F.32 Degrees; diplomas; Certificates) that directs that all vocational and technical credits earned for a diploma or certificate be applicable toward any available degree in the same program.

General Education and Technical Electives: Diplomas of 45 total credits or below require a minimum of four credits of non-transferable or transferable general education credits. Diplomas over 45 total credits require a minimum of six non-transferable or transferable general education credits. General education credits may either be student choice or required.

It is recommended that program faculty collaborate with their advisory committee members, industry partners and other stakeholders to determine general skills that are in alignment and responsive to their

industry needs and with General Education faculty to see how and which general education options might best meet these needs.

Diploma Description and Employment Opportunities: Every diploma shall have a description that describes the nature of the diploma and related job opportunities. Descriptions are especially critical for programs that offer multiple awards. Each description should clearly describe the unique characteristics of the diploma in relation to the other awards offered by the program.

Diploma Prerequisites: Diplomas that are designed for advanced level employment shall include appropriate prerequisite requirements. Prerequisites are an important part of preparing students for success within and throughout the program. Appropriate prerequisites should be set for courses within the diploma that require prior knowledge or basic skills. Prerequisites may also be used to establish proficiency in industry required non-technical skills.

College Outcomes: As an award being conferred by HTC, all diplomas should integrate the HTC Learner Outcomes into the curriculum. Proficiency in the Learner Outcomes can be demonstrated through goals and activities completed in technical coursework, general education coursework, prerequisites or a combination thereof. Ideally, the demonstration of HTC Learner Outcomes in a diploma will be mutually reinforced through technical and general education coursework and the setting of appropriate prerequisites.

Award Standards: Undergraduate Certificate

An undergraduate certificate may have an occupational outcome or address a focused area of study. An undergraduate certificate shall not have emphases.

Undergraduate Certificate Format Standards

Undergraduate Certificate Purposes: An acceptable undergraduate certificate program is designed for one or more of the following purposes:

- Prepare individuals for employment in an occupation (e.g.,Carpentry Assistant)
- Enhance general workplace skills (e.g., Supervisory Leadership)
- Provide depth, which provides advanced knowledge or skills in a specific discipline, field of study, or occupation (e.g., Dental Assistant Expanded Functions) or,
- Study a topic from an interdisciplinary perspective (e.g., American Indian Studies)

Award Credits: Programs may submit undergraduate certificate proposals for 9 to 30 credits. An undergraduate certificate may have an occupational outcome or address a focused area of study. An undergraduate certificate shall not have emphases.

General Education: An undergraduate certificate may not include general education electives. A certificate may include restricted electives, such as a choice between two or three courses related to the undergraduate certificate outcomes.

Undergraduate Certificate Description and Employment Opportunities: Every Undergraduate Certificate shall have a description that describes the nature of the certificate and related job opportunities. Descriptions are especially critical for programs that offer multiple awards. Each description should clearly describe the unique characteristics of the undergraduate certificate in relation to the other awards offered by the program.

Proposals that will not be approved: Approval will not be granted if the primary purpose of the undergraduate certificate is to:

- Explore careers
- Introduce a discipline, field of study, occupation or industry
- Meet general education requirements
- Qualify graduates for entry into another program
- Prepare individuals for entry into a baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate professional program or,
- Displace existing program requirements

NOTE: These guidelines for certificates at a range of levels, including advanced levels, without creating a special category of "advanced certificates". Admission requirements to some certificates may include an expectation – but not a requirement- of previous knowledge, a previous award, work experience or its equivalent.

Career and Technical Course Curriculum Process:

- Review the Award and Course Outline Standards found online under Academic Affairs then Curriculum and Scheduling Documents then under either Award or Course Information.
- Review your course titles, descriptions, prerequisites, goals and number of credits.-Course Outlines can be reviewed either on the HTC Website or by requesting a copy of your complete Course Outlines from the Curriculum Support Specialist.

- If you plan to make changes to the course title, description, prerequisites or course goals, make your changes, follow the AASC Curriculum Process found online under Academic Affairs then Curriculum and Scheduling Documents then Curriculum Process Instructions and Form.
- Review each of your degrees, diplomas and certificates. If necessary, revise the following elements of the awards: overview, career opportunities and course requirements.
- Make sure that the course numbers, titles and credits are identical on all curriculum materials: course outlines, award pages, academic planning guides and course schedules.