

Noncredit Categories

Noncredit courses are classified into ten legislated instructional areas (nine defined in Ed. Code § 84757 and the tenth is defined in Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 55151). The placement of a course in a given instructional area is driven by the course objectives and target population to be served. Courses in an instructional area marked with an * can be designated as Career Development Career Preparation (CDCP) if they are a part of a non-credit certificate.

1) English as A Second Language (ESL)*

Courses provide instruction in the English language to adult, non-native English speakers with varied academic, career technical, and personal goals. ESL courses include, but are not limited to: skills or competencies needed to live in society; skills and competencies needed to succeed in an academic program; preparation for students to enter career and technical programs at the community colleges; programs focusing on skills parents need to help their children learn to read and succeed in society; skills needed to fully participate in the United States civic society or to fulfill naturalization requirements; ESL-based skills and competencies in computer software, hardware, and other digital information resources; and functional language skills (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(3)).

2) Immigrant

Courses are designed for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation courses in the basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem-solving skills, and other classes required for preparation to participate in job-specific technical writing. Instructional courses and programs should support the intent of the Immigrant Workforce Preparation Act (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(4)).

3) Elementary and Secondary Basic Skills*

Includes basic skills academic courses in reading, mathematics, and language arts. Basic skills courses provide instruction for individuals in elementary and secondary-level reading, writing, computation and problem-solving skills in order to assist them in achieving their academic, career, and personal goals. Elementary-level coursework addresses the content and proficiencies at levels through the eighth grade. Secondary-level coursework focuses on the content and proficiencies at levels through the twelfth grade and may incorporate the high school diploma (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(2)).

4) Health and Safety

Courses focus on lifelong education to promote health, safety, and the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Courses and programs in health and safety provide colleges with the opportunities to network or partner with other public welfare and health organizations (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(9)).

5) Substantial Disabilities

Courses are designed to provide individuals with life-skill proficiencies essential to the fulfillment of academic, career technical, and personal goals. A student with a disability is a person who has a verified disability which limits one or more major life activities, as defined in 28 Code of Federal Regulations section 35.104, resulting in an educational limitation as defined in title 5, section 56001. Courses for students with substantial disabilities are an "assistance class" according to provisions of title 5, section 56028, and Education Code section 84757(a)(5). Educational Assistance classes are instructional activities designed to address the educational limitations of students with disabilities who would be unable to substantially benefit from regular college classes even with appropriate support services or accommodations. Such classes generate revenue based on the number of full-time equivalent students (FTES) enrolled in the classes. Such classes shall be open to enrollment of students who do not have disabilities; however, to qualify as a special class, a majority of those enrolled in the class must be students with disabilities.

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6) Parenting

Includes courses and programs specifically designed to offer lifelong education in parenting, child development, and family relations in order to enhance the quality of home, family, career, and community life. Instructional areas may include, but are not limited to, the following: ages and stages of child growth and development; family systems; health nutrition and safety; family resources and roles; family literacy; fostering and assisting with children's education; guiding and supporting children; and court-ordered parenting education (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(1)).

7) Home Economics or Family and Consumer Sciences

Includes courses and programs designed to offer lifelong education to enhance the quality of home, family, and career and community life. This area of instruction provides educational opportunities that respond to human needs in preparing individuals for employment, advanced study, consumer decision making, and lifelong learning. Instruction in family and consumer sciences emphasizes the value of homemaking. The focus of the categories of coursework includes, but is not limited to, child development, family studies and gerontology, fashion, textiles, interior design and merchandising, life management, nutrition and foods, and hospitality and culinary arts (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(8)).

8) Older Adults

Courses offer lifelong education that provides opportunities for personal growth and development, community involvement, skills for mental and physical well-being, and economic self-sufficiency. Courses in the category of noncredit instruction for older adults may include, but are not limited to, health courses focusing on physical and mental processes of aging, changes that occur later in life, and steps to be taken to maintain independence in daily activities; consumer resources, self-management and entitlement; creative expression and communication; or family, community, and global involvement (Ed. Code § 84757(a)(7)).

9) Short-term Vocational*

Programs are designed for high employment potential that lead to a career-technical objective, or a certificate or award directly related to employment. Short-term vocational programs should be designed to: improve employability; provide job placement opportunities; or prepare students for college-level coursework or transfer to a four-year degree program. They shall also be mission appropriate (Ed. Code § 66010.4(a)(1)), meet a documented labor market demand, ensure there is no unnecessary duplication of other employment training programs in the region, demonstrate effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of students, and be reviewed in the institution's program review process every two years (Ed. Code, §§ 78015, 78016, and 84757(a)(6)).

10) Workforce Preparation*

Courses provide instruction for speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics, decision-making and problem-solving skills that are necessary to participate in job-specific technical training (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 5, § 55151). In addition to the ten eligible areas, title 5, sections 58168-58172 authorize community colleges to claim apportionment for supervised tutoring and learning assistance under noncredit. Apportionment for supplemental learning assistance may be claimed for credit supplemental courses in support of primary/parent credit courses, or for noncredit supplemental courses (in any of the ten noncredit eligible areas outlined in Ed. Code, § 84757) in support of primary/parent noncredit courses. Only in limited circumstances, such as ESL and basic skills, may colleges offer noncredit supplemental learning assistance courses in support of credit courses. Also, in occupational areas, colleges may establish supplemental noncredit short-term vocational courses in support of credit occupational courses.