

1 **Guidelines: Technical college mission change, name change, and addition of**
2 **an Associate in Arts degree**

3 **Part 1. Purpose**

4 These guidelines identify requirements for a technical college to become a
5 comprehensive college through a change of mission that incorporates an associate in
6 arts degree as required by

- 7 a. Minnesota Statutes on missions (Minnesota Statutes, 2005 Chapter 135A.052,
8 Subdivision 1 (1), Statement of Missions),
- 9 b. Board of Trustees Policy 3.23 Naming Colleges and Universities,
- 10 c. Board of Trustees Policy 3.24 System and Institutional Missions, and Procedures
11 3.24.1
- 12 d. Academic Programs Policy 3.36 and Procedures 3.36.1.

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14 **Part 2. Definitions**

15 **Stakeholders** refers to groups that have a major interest in the college's
16 success, such as, students, both current and prospective; faculty, staff
17 and administrators; parents; alumni; advisory board members; local and
18 regional organizations such as chambers of commerce and service clubs;
19 local and regional community leaders such as mayors, city council
20 members and K-12 representatives such as school principals and
21 superintendents; other system colleges and universities; the office of the
22 chancellor, employers; legislators; and the Board of Trustees.

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24 **Student interest** refers to the number of prospective students who have
25 expressed a clear interest in specifically enrolling in an associate in arts
26 degree program at the college in the short term (1-2 years) and the
27 longer term (3-5 years).

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29 **Unnecessary duplication** refers to excess enrollment capacity in a
30 program when two or more colleges or universities provide the same
31 program in overlapping service areas. A service area is either within a
32 sixty-minute commute from a campus or is defined by the college or
33 university for the particular program.

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35 **Part 3. Scope of Requirements**

36 A technical college application to change the mission, name, and award an associate in
37 arts degree shall be submitted to the Office of the Chancellor, Academic Programs unit.
38 The application must address stakeholder perspectives, planning processes, needs
39 assessment, and organizational capacity.

1 To receive authority to deliver the associate in arts degree, the college must
2 demonstrate a commitment to the liberal arts and sciences and to general education.¹
3 To receive approval to award associate in arts degrees a technical college must adopt
4 the traditional mission of a community college:² the delivery of general education
5 (including the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum), transferable education, and occupational
6 education.

7 **Part 4. Documentation Requirements**

9 **Mission Review and Name Change**

10 The mission statement should be a strong platform for offering the associate in arts
11 degree which is designed for study and transfer in liberal arts disciplines. The mission
12 statement should be revised to express a commitment specifically to the liberal arts, as
13 well as technical education.

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- 15 a. Describe and critique any efforts to develop a partnership with other system
16 colleges or universities for the provision of programs and services.
- 17 b. Describe and document the comprehensive planning process undertaken to
18 address the need and implications for the mission, name, curricular and
19 degree changes proposed.
- 20 c. Report and discuss findings from the planning process, including market
21 research and stakeholder involvement. If some stakeholders are not
22 supportive, explain why the college is proceeding with the mission change.
- 23 d. Describe how the new mission, vision, and purposes support the mission and
24 vision of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.
- 25 e. Describe who is to be served with the associate of arts degree, by the
26 institution broadly, and with what outcomes?
- 27 f. Elaborate on relationship of the vision to the ideal future envisioned by the
28 institution, including what will be different and distinctive.
- 29 g. Provide a rationale for the name change and discuss how the name change
30 would reflect the mission of the institution.
- 31 h. Explain how an associate in arts degree program supports the proposed
32 mission, vision and purpose statements. Commitment to the liberal arts
33 should be reflected in the mission, vision and purpose.

34 **Associate in Arts Degree Program**

35 Submit an application for a new Associate in Arts degree program. Complete the New
36 Program application and provide the additional information requested below:

37 Additional needs assessment information

- 38 a. demographics/characteristics of prospective student population,

¹ The approved degree within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is an Associate in Arts degree, not an Associate in General Education.

² as described by American Association of Community Colleges in the *AACC Position Statement on the Associate Degree* (1998)

- b. area census data for the college age population with estimated participation rates,
- c. FYE enrollment trends in liberal arts and science courses for the past five years,
- d. student's place of residence for students enrolled in existing programs (GIS data),
- e. identification of the service area,
- f. identification of public and private colleges and universities in the service area that offer the same program, and
- g. estimate of the impact of the new program on student enrollment at other system colleges and universities in your service area.

Institutional Readiness—General

- a. Discuss leadership, administrative and governance capacity to deliver the liberal arts curriculum.
- b. Describe how the college will meet regional accreditation requirements under the new mission,
- c. Describe how the institution will apply quality assurance and program review processes to the associate in arts degree program,
- d. Analyze how the change in institutional type and programming will be supported by the institution. Include
 - an analysis of potential problem areas,
 - minimum class sizes for fiscal sustainability,
 - assurances that even though class sizes may be too small, students will be able to complete their degree within two years,
 - impact on enrollment in other courses and programs at the college, and
 - plans to resolve these problems.

Institutional Readiness—Faculty and Staff

- a. Discuss the capacity to staff the range of disciplines needed to deliver an associate in arts degree within the next three years.
- b. Describe the role of the faculty in curriculum oversight, learning outcomes assessment, governance structures, and professional development.
- c. Determine how many new administrators will be needed to offer the new degree.
- d. Describe the academic leadership team that will manage implementation of the associate in arts degree, with particular attention to professional experience or professional development to administer the new mission.
- e. Describe the additional student services staff that will be necessary to provide support to the new degree.

- f. Explain how the college will recruit and fund any new faculty, staff or academic administrative positions that will be needed to support the new degree.
- g. Provide an organizational chart that identifies faculty, administrators and staff that will be added over the next five years.

Institutional Readiness—Curriculum Development

- a. Describe the academic plan that will be used to deliver the breadth and depth of curriculum needed to offer the associate in arts degree. Identify the critical mass of liberal arts and sciences courses the institution will offer over the first three years of operation. Include course titles and descriptions by discipline and the year/term each course will be offered, demonstrating that students can complete the associate in arts degree within two years whether they enter fall or spring semester. [NOTE: Review Higher Learning Commission accreditation expectations; address rationale for selection of courses]
- b. Describe plans for long term curriculum evaluation and development,
- c. Describe how the proposed curriculum can prepare students for at least one system university baccalaureate major in three of the four following areas: humanities, social science, natural science/math, and arts within two years following program approval. The college must verify communication with system universities acknowledging the transferability of liberal arts and sciences and general education courses.
- d. Discuss the relationship of the college’s general education curriculum to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. The college must demonstrate how the entire MN Transfer Curriculum [all ten goal areas] will be in place by the second year following approval of the Associate in Arts degree.

Part 5: System Approval Process

Submit the application requesting a mission change, name change and approval to offer the associate in arts degree program to the Office of the Chancellor, Academic Programs unit, for review. The review includes the following steps:

1. Posting of an announcement to the Academic Programs listserv for system review and comment,
2. Review by Academic Programs Unit with recommendation to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs,
3. Recommendation to the Chancellor by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs,
4. If approved by the Chancellor, the proposal is submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval of the mission and name change.

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Part 6: Accreditation-related Issues

After receiving approval from the Office of the Chancellor, submit the Higher Learning Commission’s Institutional Change request pursuant to Higher Learning Commission policy (as reflected in the *Handbook of Accreditation, Third Edition*, chapter 7.2 – Seeking Approval of Proposed Changes).