

Title 5 – new mathematics and English graduation requirements

This is the link:

<http://government.westlaw.com/linkedslice/search/default.asp?RS=GVT1.0&VR=2.0&SP=CCR-1000&tempinfo=FIN>

Then enter **5** and **55806** in the two boxes to get the actual language and amendment history.

The legal writings from the state site given above:

Effective for all students admitted to a community college for the Fall 2009 term or any term thereafter, competence in mathematics shall be demonstrated by obtaining a satisfactory grade in a mathematics course at the level of the course typically known as intermediate algebra (either intermediate algebra or another mathematics course at the same level, with the same rigor and with elementary algebra as a prerequisite, approved locally) or by completing an assessment conducted pursuant to subchapter 6 of this chapter (commencing with section 55500) and achieving a score determined to be comparable to satisfactory completion of the specified mathematics course. Satisfactory completion of a mathematics course at the level of intermediate algebra shall satisfy both this competency requirement and the coursework requirement set forth in subdivision (b)(1)(D)(ii) of this section. The competency requirements for written expression and mathematics may also be met by obtaining a satisfactory grade in courses in English and mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments and which, as determined by the local governing board, require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for English 1A and intermediate algebra respectively. Requirements for demonstrating competency in reading shall be locally determined.

Below are two common situations affecting our community college students. It's very important that our students be counseled to distinguish between them - and that all our faculty are poised to help with the decision.

1) A student says "I want to transfer" or "I might possibly want to transfer" or even "I don't have a clue."

The math courses that transfer are controlled by UC and CSU and in general, the specific course of traditional intermediate algebra must be a prerequisite for the one that transfers. Nothing has changed there. It seems unlikely to me that CSU and UC will accept any different prerequisite in the near future. So the default, safe bet is to take intermediate algebra.

2) A student says "I do not want to transfer but I want an associate degree."

That's where the answer is changing.

Traditional intermediate algebra will satisfy the graduation requirement.

But according to the new language in Title 5, 55806, so will "another mathematics course at the same level, with the same rigor and with elementary algebra as a prerequisite, approved locally."

The college can create four options for a student to demonstrate competency in math:

- 1) they can offer only intermediate algebra;
- 2) they can offer alternative courses taught by the math department;
(there's no mandate to do this but the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has encouraged it - and has examples available - because many colleges have large groups of students who stand to benefit from this alternative)
- 3) they can offer alternative courses taught by another department;
- 4) they can use the existing matriculation language to create a testing option.

... And incidentally, if the student says "I don't want a degree - I want a certificate", then the recent changes do not apply to them at all.

There are a few separate issues.

1. CSU and UC REQUIRE that any math course that transfers MUST have Intermediate Algebra as the prerequisite. So, any alternate course the Mathematics Department develops may not serve as a prerequisite to Statistics and other transfer level courses. If a college did allow the other course as a prerequisite, then CSU and UC would "unarticulate" the mathematics transfer courses for that college, even for the students who take Intermediate Algebra.

2. Some colleges are bringing back Geometry to satisfy their graduation requirement. It will need to have Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite. This is a good alternative to Intermediate Algebra.

3. If another department develops a course to meet the graduation requirements, that course must have Elementary Algebra as a prerequisite for ALL students.

4. A college may have higher standards than what Title 5 requires, but not lower standards. That means, that if a college already has English 1A and Intermediate Algebra as its graduation requirement and there is no push for alternate courses, the college does not need to develop one. In essence, the change in Title 5 does not affect the college.

5. Some colleges are developing "themed" sections of English 1A and Intermediate Algebra. The course outlines remain the same; there is no distinction on the transcript; the readings and applications are what vary from section to section.

For more information, go to:

http://faculty.rcc.edu/mahon/English_Math.html