



Academic Senate
for California Community Colleges

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Nuts and Bolts of Prerequisites and Corequisites

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Description

Prerequisites and co-requisites are intended to improve students' success in a given course or multiple courses through prior preparation or additional learning and application. They may also end up being a barrier to student progress and enrollment. This session will include an overview of regulations and requirements followed by dialogue about effectively using prerequisites and co-requisites in ways that support student success without adversely impacting student access.

Overview



- Regulations
- Prerequisites
 - Pros
 - Cons
 - Using prerequisites effectively
- Corequisites
 - Pros
 - Cons
 - Using corequisites effectively
- Advisories
- Considerations: impacts and avoiding unintentional outcomes

Let's start with a little quiz...

1. AB 705 required colleges to change prerequisites to corequisites.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. Once prerequisites or corequisites are established for a course, they remain on the course with no other actions necessary until rescinded by discipline faculty.
 - a. True
 - b. False

Regulation and Guidance

Regulation (Strength of Law)

- Title 5 §55002: Standards and Criteria for Courses
- Title 5 §55003: Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation
- Title 5 §55522: English and Mathematics Placement and Assessment

Chancellor's Office Guidance

- *Guidelines for Title 5 Regulations §55003 (2012)*

Prerequisites

- Conditions of enrollment that students are required to meet prior to enrollment in particular courses and programs.
- The assignment of a prerequisite to a course signifies that the course skills or body of knowledge described in the prerequisite are essential to the success of the student in that course.
- Also signify that it is highly unlikely that a student who has not met the prerequisite will receive a satisfactory grade in the course for which the prerequisite has been established.

Prerequisites

Purposes for which prerequisites and corequisites may be established:

- It is required or expressly authorized by statute or regulation;
- It will assure that a student has the skills, concepts, and/or information needed to succeed (receive a satisfactory grade) for the course it is established;
- It is needed to protect the health or safety of the student or others.

Prerequisites

Prerequisites and corequisites must be scrutinized using content review or content review with statistical validation, except when:

- it is required by statute or regulation;
- it is part of a closely-related lecture-laboratory course pairing within a discipline;
- it is required by four-year institutions;
- baccalaureate institutions will not grant credit for a course unless it has the particular communication or computation skill prerequisite; or
- it is a corequisite that has been recommended through placement guidelines approved by the Chancellor.

Pros - Prerequisites

- Students understand level, skills, and knowledge required for expected success in the course or subsequent course(s)
- Faculty have common expectation of entering skills/competencies/knowledge to inform the level upon which to teach the course
- Other institutions understand the level at which the course was taught
- Counselors can effectively advise students

If you have additional pros to consider for prerequisites, tell us in the chat!

Cons - Prerequisites

- Prerequisites may create unnecessary barriers, depending on how they are implemented.
- Prerequisites may adversely impact some students more than others, particularly marginalized student populations.
- Prerequisites may add time to completion of students' educational goals.

If you have additional cons to consider for prerequisites, tell us in the chat!

Using Prerequisites Effectively

- Students must be able to meet prerequisites using multiple measures.
- Consider various options in which students can gain the skills and knowledge expected for the destination course.
- Processes for challenging prerequisites must be clear to students, readily available, and timely.
- Depending on the course, consider advisories in lieu of prerequisites.
- Evaluate effectiveness and disproportionate impact.

Corequisites

- Signify that a body of knowledge or course skills is essential to the success of a student in a course.
- Different than prerequisites, the body of knowledge or course skills can be acquired or developed concomitantly with the primary course.
- A student is required to enroll in a corequisite simultaneously with (or, in some cases, may be allowed to enroll in the corequisite prior to) the primary course.

Pros - Corequisites

- Students can gain skills alongside a parent course, sometimes characterized as just in time skills.
- Students can shorten a sequence time to completion.
- Skills or knowledge in one course may be more relevant to students given content of second course.

If you have additional pros to consider for corequisites, tell us in the chat!

Cons - Corequisites

- Does not necessarily reduce student unit total or workload.
- Difficult to schedule and, sometimes, to teach especially when content directly supports second course.
- Content needs to be timed with connected course.
- Failure in one course could lead to failure in the other course.

If you have additional cons to consider for corequisites, tell us in the chat!

Using Corequisites Effectively

- Corequisite courses need to be carefully choreographed.
- Evaluate effectiveness and adjust as needed:
 - Consider disproportionate impact based on success rates in subsequent course;
 - Consider whether the corequisite is needed or could exist as an advisory instead.

Advisories

- Signify that acquisition of a body of knowledge or course skills will be of great advantage to a student prior to enrollment in a specific course.
- Unlike prerequisites and corequisites, enrollment in a course to acquire this knowledge or skills is not required, merely recommended.
- Unlike prerequisites and corequisites, advisories do not need to be scrutinized, but they should be periodically reviewed.

Additional Considerations

- Instituting prerequisites may inadvertently keep students from advancing toward their educational goals.
- Eliminating prerequisites may disadvantage students seeking preparatory skills.

It is imperative that prerequisites be monitored for disproportionate impact, as well as effectiveness:

- Prerequisites and corequisites must be reviewed at least every six years.
- Prerequisites and corequisites for CTE courses must be reviewed at least every two years.
- If a student group's access to a course is adversely impacted by a prerequisite,
 - Consider whether the prerequisite should be implemented;

Additional Considerations

- Use Multiple Measures for students to meet prerequisites or corequisites.

Sample language for COR:

Prerequisite: MATH 25, or equivalent, or by assessment through the college placement processes.

Corequisite: ENGL 36, or equivalent, or by assessment through the college placement process

Advisory: ENGL IA is highly recommended to increase the student's likelihood of success in this course.

Resources

- Guidelines for Title 5 Regulations Section 55003 Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation (2012)
- Title 5 §55002:Standards and Criteria for Courses
<https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I9D2D0137ACF049019AC07C153D823E3B?transitionType=Default&contextData=%28sc.Default%29>
- Title 5 §55003:Policies for Prerequisites, Corequisites, and Advisories on Recommended Preparation
[https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I021E71E71096404D9109DBA3BCE027BD?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)&bhcp=1](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I021E71E71096404D9109DBA3BCE027BD?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default)&bhcp=1)
- Title 5 §55522:English and Mathematics Placement and Assessment
<https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I3BBA08FE209543A9A8181F0BF33CD714?originationContext=document&transitionType=StatuteNavigator&needToInjectTerms=False&viewType=FullText&contextData=%28sc.Default%29>
- Good Practices for the Implementation of Prerequisites (ASCCC 1997)
 - Information is a little dated and in some cases refers to Title 5 practices that have since been revised, but good practices are still relevant



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Thank you!