

How To Compare Associate Degree With Baccalaureate Degree Programs

Associate in Arts (AA)

The Associate in Arts (AA) degree looks a lot like a typical Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree's freshman and sophomore years. The major and the electives are very small components of the AA degree. The AA degree is largely comprised of general education courses. This design fits nicely with most four-year degree plans. Most four-year college academic advisors recommend students take their required general education course work early in their college career; specifically during their first two years. The AA degree does exactly that, preparing the student to enter a four-year institution at junior level.

Associate in Science (AS)

The Associate in Science (AS) degree is parallel to the Bachelor of Science (BS) degree. It contains major courses that a student would take in the first two years of a BS degree. Related majors are in engineering, science, business and other pre-professional area of study in a four- year institution. Students will select mathematics, science and general education courses of equal level and content to those required during the first two years in a four-year college degree program. AS degree holders are well prepared to begin at junior level at competitive four- year colleges and universities.

Associate in Applied Science (AAS)

Many students want to prepare for a career requiring just two years of college. The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) fills this need. The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree is made up mostly of major courses which offer an excellent and efficient way to get necessary career-related studies. The student can enter the job market with the entry level skills employers insist upon. Applied Science degree programs, thought primarily designed for the job market, do also include courses which can be transferable to a four-year college program. While some of the technical courses may not be transferred, the general education and other liberal arts courses are usually well received.

Comparison of the Associate -vs.- the Baccalaureate Components of a Typical Undergraduate Degree					
Components	Degrees*				
	<u>Associate</u>			<u>Baccalaureate</u>	
	AAS	AS	AA	BA	BS
A. General Education: Communications Humanities Social Science Mathematics Science/Computer Science General Education Electives	20	30	45	60	48
B. Major: Major Core Major Major Electives	40	31	13	40	60
C. Free Electives:	4	3	6	20	20
Minimum Total for the Degree	64	64	64	120	128
* AA (Associate in Arts), AS (Associate in Science), and AAS (Associate in Applied Science) degrees vary from 60 - 70 total credits.					
* BA (Bachelor of Arts), and BS (Bachelor of Science), degrees vary from 120 - 132 total credits. Some special degrees (e.g. Architecture, Engineering or Fine Arts) will require more credits due to studio, internship, or other specialized course requirements.					

It is not wise to self advise !

It is very important, when planning your curriculum, to choose the right courses.
Seek advice at the Department of Counseling & Career Services, The Transfer Center,
The Academic Advising Center, and / or from your Department Chairperson.