

## **Program Review**

### **Associate in Arts Degree (CIP: 24.0101)**

#### **Program Purpose**

<b>What is the purpose/mission of the program?</b>
The purpose of the Associate in Arts Program is to prepare students for transfer, ideally at the junior level, into four-year or baccalaureate programs.
<b>How does the program's purpose/mission fit into the overall mission of the college?</b>
This purpose reflects consistency with the college's mission, specifically mission goal two, to provide "available, accessible, and affordable courses that provide quality instruction in general education at the freshman and sophomore levels that lead to the attainment of specified learning outcomes, associate degrees, and transfer to senior institutions."

## Program Learning Outcomes

### What are the general education outcomes?

Northeast Alabama Community College General Education Student Learning Outcomes	
General Education Outcomes	A.A., A.S., and A.A.S. Degree Outcomes
<p>Communication—Students will communicate effectively through</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writing</li> <li>2. Reading</li> <li>3. Speaking</li> <li>4. Listening</li> <li>5. Electronic Medium</li> </ol>	<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing-show purpose, organization, expression of ideas, feelings, exhibit creative ability, defend conclusions</li> <li>• Reading-comprehend college-level text, interpret literature, read critically and analytically</li> <li>• Speaking-demonstrate oral competence in language use in social situations and before groups</li> <li>• Listening-exhibit active listening skills to comprehend and analyze others' speech</li> <li>• Electronic medium-effectively communicate via computer</li> </ul>
<p>Cognition—Students will think logically and analytically, demonstrating the use of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creative thinking</li> <li>2. Critical thinking</li> <li>3. Quantitative reasoning</li> <li>4. Problem solving</li> <li>5. Synthesis of knowledge and skills</li> </ol>	<p>Cognition—creative and critical thinking, inductive and deductive problem solving, ability to synthesize information to find solutions, think quantitatively</p>
<p>Information Literacy—Students will locate, analyze, and evaluate information through</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research</li> <li>2. Application of technology</li> </ol>	<p>Information Literacy—successfully retrieve and manage information through traditional means, efficient use of technology, computer literacy, demonstrate use of a variety of learning resources to accomplish goals.</p>
<p>Interpersonal Skills—Students will interact effectively with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individuals</li> <li>2. Groups</li> </ol>	<p>Interpersonal Skills—work with a team, committee or group to achieve a common goal. Interact with individuals, showing awareness and respect for other opinions and values. Demonstrate understanding of the interdependent nature of societal institutions.</p>
<p>Aesthetic Sensitivity—Students will demonstrate an appreciation of artistic and creative endeavor through</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production</li> <li>2. Response</li> </ol>	<p>Aesthetic Sensitivity—adequate knowledge of artistic work in literature, music, visual art, or theatre to produce or critique selected samples</p>
<p>Personal Responsibility—Students will acquire decision-making skills that lead to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-regulation</li> <li>2. Respect for diversity</li> </ol>	<p>Personal Responsibility—set goals and self-monitor behavior toward goals. Demonstrate understanding and respect for richness in diversity.</p>

Source: 2013-2014 Catalog/Student Handbook, p. 35.

### How are the general education learning outcomes assessed?

Direct responsibility for assessing general education learning outcomes lies with the academic division director, who ensures that each course within his or her division addresses one or more of the general education outcomes. The assessment is achieved through the completion of a form for each course every five years. The form requires the

instructor to provide the course outline as distributed to the class, an explanation of how each general education outcome was evaluated, the percentage of students earning a "C" or better who demonstrated attainment of the outcome, and how these results will be used to improve the course to ensure student attainment of the stated outcomes. The division director then compiles the information from all instructors of the course and completes another form which evaluates the method of evaluating the general education outcomes, results of the evaluation, and how the results are being used to improve instruction. The division director submits this information to the director of the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment, who then submits the documents to the Student Learning Outcomes Committee for approval.

**What can students do with the knowledge they have after completing the program?**

Students completing the Associate in Arts degree use this knowledge to transfer into four-year or baccalaureate programs. By completing the two-year A.A. degree, the student will also have additional job opportunities unavailable to students with a high school education.

**Assessed Needs and Assumptions**

**What is the outlook for the continued need of the program within the mission of the college?**

The General A.A. Program dates from the college's inception in 1965 and continues to be an important offering to individuals in the institution's service area. In Fall 2013, 15.2% of all students were enrolled in the General A.A. Program. Enhanced course transferability through STARS agreements with Alabama public four-year colleges and universities, reasonable tuition rates well below those of four-year schools, the increasing popularity of dual-enrollment courses in area high schools, increased course offerings and improved scheduling, and the variety of specific fields encompassed in the general associate program's offerings contribute to the General A.A. Program's viability for another four decades and beyond.

## Structure

### What are the requirements for the Associate in Arts degree?

<b>Associate in Arts Degree Requirements</b>
<b>Area I: Written Composition (6 hours total)</b>
ENG 101—English Composition I (3 hours)
ENG 102—English Composition II (3 hours)
<b>Area II: Humanities and Fine Arts (12 hours total)</b>
Must complete 3 semester hours in Literature
Must complete 3 semester hours in the Arts
Remaining semester hours to be selected from humanities and/or fine arts
<b>Area III: Natural Science and Mathematics (11 hours total)</b>
Must complete 3 semester hours in mathematics at the pre-calculus algebra or finite math level or higher
Must complete 8 semester hours in the natural sciences which must include laboratory experiences
<b>Area IV: History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences (12 hours total)</b>
Must complete 3 semester hours in history
Must complete at least 6 semester hours from among other disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences
<b>Area V: Pre-Professional, Major, and Elective Courses (19-23 hours total)</b>
Courses appropriate to the transfer major of the individual student and electives
<b>Total Hours Required for Degree: 60-64</b>

### How often are the requirements for the degree reviewed?

Requirements for the degree are reviewed every five years.

## Accreditation

### What is the institutional accreditation for the program?

The Associate in Arts Degree Program is within the institutional accreditation granted by the SACS Commission on Colleges and reaffirmed in 2005.

## Instructors

### How many instructors currently teach in the program, and what are their credentials?

A total of 31 full-time instructors are employed in offering courses in the A.A. Program, and 77 part-time instructors taught one or more courses in the program during the Fall Semester 2013-2014. All instructors, whether full-time or adjunct, meet SACS Commission on Colleges requirements for employment to teach in a two-year institution (i.e., a Master's Degree and competency in subject area--usually at least eighteen semester hours in the teaching field.)

### How have the instructors in the program developed professionally over the past two years?

Professional development activities encompassing such topics as academic advisement, computer literacy, creation and evaluation of student learning outcomes, use of AS 400, and improvement of course delivery are offered on campus during professional development/in-service days. These activities are required of all full-time faculty, with many adjunct instructors participating as well. A sampling of other professional development activities during the 2013-2014 academic year included attendance at relevant meetings and conventions (e.g., SACSCOC annual meeting, the National Association for Developmental Education annual conference, the Southeastern Theatre Conference, Southern Festival of Books, Jazz Educators Network Conference), workshops and seminars (e.g., a workshop designed to teach instructors the use of Blackboard for the traditional and online classroom), and publishing company representatives' presentations of software usage to complement course textbooks.

### What are any planned professional development activities for instructors in the program?

Web-ex workshops are planned to assist instructors in using new software. Other professional development possibilities may include workshops on "Flipping the Classroom" and "Dealing with Diverse Student Populations in the Classroom." Faculty members also plan to attend subject-area conferences and conventions.

### Are any additional instructors anticipated within the next five years? If so, please explain.

No additional full-time instructors are anticipated within the next five years. The Music Department is currently researching the possibility of adding a certificate program in Church Music which would require the addition of at least one adjunct instructor.

## Instructional Quality and Enhancements/Curriculum Design

<p><b>Are all course syllabi in place and current? Explain.</b></p>
<p>Course syllabi are reviewed each summer semester by faculty within the division and appropriate changes are made. The division director then submits the revised syllabi each fall semester to be published on the college website.</p>
<p><b>How is the program's curriculum evaluated to ensure it is relevant and current? Examples include advisory committee suggestions, student learning outcome evaluations, student evaluations, etc.</b></p>
<p>The program's curriculum is evaluated through student learning outcome evaluations which are submitted to the Student Learning Outcomes committee for approval. The Evaluation of Instruction is held each fall semester to ensure that the program's curriculum is relevant and current. Suggestions made by students on these fall evaluations are examined and appropriate changes are considered and implemented. Student comments are distributed to faculty members for self-evaluation of their instructional methods.</p>
<p><b>Describe changes that have been made in the program over the last five years that improve student learning.</b></p>
<p>Based on faculty evaluation of courses through the forms that evaluate Student Learning Outcomes, courses have been modified to improve student attainment of General Education Outcomes. These modifications include such things as course delivery as well as means of evaluation of outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Are courses in the program scheduled to maintain availability and accessibility in accordance with the college's mission? Explain.</b></p>
<p>Improvements in course scheduling over recent semesters, including additional course offerings through distance learning, have been accommodated students, enabling students to schedule full academic loads more easily (e.g., five or six classes two days per week). Semester schedules are subjected to intense analysis by the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment, division directors, and the administration. More courses are being offered at a greater variety of times, and through the Student Evaluation of Campus Services and Facilities, student input about course scheduling is solicited.</p>

## Program Resources

### **Describe the physical facilities and resources, including any laboratories, used in the program.**

The Art Department uses one classroom for art appreciation which has recently been updated with modern technological equipment. The Sculpture and Design classroom recently moved into a renovated and remodeled studio with new, state-of-the-art equipment. A new pottery class will be offered in a remodeled section of the HFA building with an area large enough to accommodate several pottery wheels and a kiln.

The Music Department uses one classroom for music appreciation which has recently been updated with new technology. The Class Piano/Theory Lab is located in HFA 108 and has recently been updated with new computers and software. The lab is also used as a practice room for private and class piano students and theory and basic musicianship classes. The Music Auditorium was recently renovated with additional length added to the existing stage. New seating and a state of the art sound system were also installed. Chorus, ENCORE!, Jazz Band, and Mustang Combo rehearse in various rooms in the HFA Building and a mirrored dance floor is available for choreography.

The Theater Department is located in the Tom Bevill Lyceum which includes a theatre that seats 700 people. Classrooms, various labs, and areas for construction and storage are located in the lyceum as well. The Tom Bevill Lyceum hosts three major theatre productions per year as well as numerous other cultural and community programs.

The construction of the Math, Science, and Engineering Technology Building, completed in May 2014, reflects a continued expansion of the college's physical facilities. In addition to the resources in this new building, across campus, classrooms with state-of-the-art technology is utilized by all academic divisions.

### **Are the physical facilities and resources adequate? Explain.**

The physical facilities and resources are adequate to accommodate the curriculum within the A.A. program.

### **Are there any plans for expansion or upgrade of facilities or replacement/expansion of equipment? Explain the rationale and include projected costs.**

It is imperative to maintain updated technology and software to ensure that all Student Learning Outcomes are addressed. With the addition of a course in pottery through the art program, a laboratory providing a kiln is planned at a cost of \$5,000-\$10,000.

### **Describe the technological resources used in the program.**

Within the last two years, smart classrooms have been made available for all classes. Additionally, the computers within the Writing Lab have been upgraded.

### **Are the technological resources adequate? Explain.**

Technological resources are adequate; however, adding additional computer lab classrooms would be very helpful in several courses which fall within the A.A. program.

### **Are there any plans for expansion or upgrade of technological resources? Explain the rationale and include projected costs.**

The completion of the new Math and Science building will provide technological expansion. Campus resources have been upgraded since the building is equipped with

state-of-the-art technology. Within the A.A. program, the various departments will keep abreast of new software and address the issue as needed.

**Describe the library resources that are used in the program.**

Library resources include approximately 63,000 print volumes/books and 900 audiovisual materials. In addition, the library has 110 print subscriptions to periodicals. Online resources include 47,000 electronic books, the Auto-Graphics VERSO integrated library system, the America's News from Newsbank database, and the Alabama Virtual Library, which contains 49 online databases.

**Are the library resources adequate? Explain.**

The library resources are adequate as indicated by the library usage that has continued to increase over the last three academic years. Book and eBook circulation has increased from 9,111 in 2010 to 9,774 in 2013. Also, the library's budget includes 69% for library collections. Based on the annual survey of satisfaction completed in 2013, 100% of employees, 97.9% of students, and 100% of community patrons indicated satisfaction with the overall library collection.

**Are there any plans for expansion or upgrade of library resources? Explain the rationale and include projected costs.**

There are no plans for expansion or upgrade of library resources.



## Enrollment and Completions

### What are the enrollment trends in the program over the last five years?

#### Number of Students Enrolled in the Associate in Arts Program Fall 2009-Fall 2013

Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
361	446	475	446	362

Source: Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. NACC ACCESS/400 database system.  
January 16, 2014.

### What are the enrollment trends in the program over the last five years by gender?

#### Number of Students Enrolled in the Associate in Arts Program by Gender Fall 2009-Fall 2013

	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
<b>Male</b>	137	153	186	162	145
<b>Female</b>	225	293	289	284	217
<b>Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>362</b>

Source: Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. NACC ACCESS/400 database system.  
January 22, 2014

### What are the enrollment trends in the program over the last five years by race/ethnicity?

#### Number of Students Enrolled in the Associate in Arts Program by Race/Ethnicity Fall 2009-Fall 2013

	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
<b>African American</b>	7	6	9	7	6
<b>Asian</b>	1	1	--	3	3
<b>Hispanic</b>	9	11	18	20	17
<b>Native American</b>	10	15	11	18	18
<b>Other</b>	--	2	3	3	2
<b>White</b>	335	411	434	396	316
<b>Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>362</b>

Source: Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. NACC ACCESS/400 database system.  
January 22, 2014.

**What are the retention rates in the program over the last five academic years?**

**Student Retention and Completion\***  
**Associate in Arts Program**  
**Fall Cohorts 2008-2012**

Fall 2008- Fall 2009	Fall 2009- Fall 2010	Fall 2010- Fall 2011	Fall 2011- Fall 2012	Fall 2012- Fall 2013
57.1%	42.8%	45.1%	48.4%	47.5%

Source: Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. NACC ACCESS/400 database system. January 22, 2014.

\* Retention and completion refers to the percent of students who were enrolled in the program during one fall semester and either completed an associate degree or were enrolled at NACC the following fall semester.

**What does the data indicate about student retention in the program?**

Although the retention rate for students in the A.A. Program has dropped since 2008-2009, it has increased since 2009-2011. Also the rate of 47.5% indicates the program is important in offering quality instruction in core classes required in various types of transfer programs as well as freshman and sophomore course in specific majors. Obviously more students should be encouraged to complete the degree at Northeast before transferring since the rate of earning awards or degrees is fairly low.

**How many credentials have been awarded by the program in the last five academic years?**

**Associate in Arts Degrees Conferred**  
**Academic Years 2008-2009 through 2012-2013**

2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
36	35	25	45	27

Source: NACC Fact Books 2011-2012 and 2012-2013; Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment. January 22, 2014

**What are the plans for increasing the retention and completion rates in the program?**

Advisors within the program are fulfilling division unit goals by placing greater emphasis on working with advisees to better prepare them for completion of degrees. A retention specialist has been hired to work with faculty in contacting students in an effort to retain those at-risk students. Faculty are encouraged to submit forms notifying the Retention Specialist at the beginning of the semester and then again at midterm of potential at-risk students.

As plans for the new advising program, MAPS, are completed, this issue will be addressed campus wide not only for the A.A. program but for all students. NACC students entering college as undecided majors could possibly be steered toward the A.A. in General Studies degree to ensure that they have a degree plan to follow. These students will be making progress toward degree completion and have an opportunity to

take a variety of classes to enhance their decision. This degree plan also allows these students to work toward the Community College Completion Challenge which is an integral part of the college mission. Participation in various classes, ensembles, and theatre productions offered as part of the A.A. curriculum often keep students interested and in school even if they are not A.A. majors.

## Student Follow-Up Reports

<b>Is student satisfaction with the program assessed? If so, are students in the program satisfied with the program?</b>
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The Student Evaluation of Campus Services and Facilities conducted Spring 2013 indicates that 98% of students are satisfied with the academic support services provided by the college.
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<b>Is alumni satisfaction with the program assessed? If so, are alumni of the program satisfied with the program?</b>
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Alumni Surveys collected and compiled during the past three years consistently indicate that a majority of transfer students who earned the General A.A. Degree feel they were more than adequately prepared for continued education in academic work at four-year institutions. In 2013 Alumni Survey findings, 79.2% of transfers reported a current grade point average of 3.0 or above at the transfer institution. A majority of alumni felt their experiences at Northeast contributed to their growth in the general education outcomes referenced earlier in this program review.
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### Findings of Review

<b>What are the strengths of the program?</b>
This program offers quality instruction in core courses required in various types of transfer programs as well as freshman and sophomore courses in specific majors.
<b>What are recommendations for improvement?</b>
Students should be encouraged to complete the degree at Northeast before transferring.
<b>Please provide any other findings that are pertinent to the review.</b>
N/A

### Report Affirmed by:

<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Joan Reeves, English and Fine Arts Division Director and English Instructor</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Kathy Adkins, Music Instructor</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Dr. Joe Burke, Vice President/Dean of Instruction</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Rodney Land, Chemistry Instructor and Chair of the Curriculum Committee</b>	