



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**First California Community College Bachelor's Degree Programs Receive Initial Approval from Board of Governors**

***Pilot program is historic leap forward for college system; final approval in March***

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors, in a landmark move for public higher education, today gave initial [approval](#) to 15 colleges to develop bachelor's degree programs in fields such as respiratory therapy, dental hygiene, automotive technology and aerospace manufacturing technology as part of a pilot program approved by the Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown.

“These colleges are embarking on a new mission for the California Community Colleges that will expand opportunities in public higher education,” said California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris. “Students will have a range of programs from which to choose to earn high quality, affordable and in-demand degrees. California employers win too, as they will have improved access to highly qualified candidates in these fields.”

The programs selected will undergo additional review by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office as well as further consultation with the California State University and University of California before final approval is considered by the Board of Governors at its March meeting.

The bachelor's degree programs receiving initial approval are:

- Airframe Manufacturing Technology, Antelope Valley College
- Industrial Automation, Bakersfield College
- Emergency Services and Allied Health Systems, Crafton Hills College
- Mortuary Science, Cypress College
- Equine Industry, Feather River College
- Dental Hygiene, Foothill College and West Los Angeles College
- Bio-manufacturing, MiraCosta College
- Respiratory Care, Modesto Junior College and Skyline College
- Automotive Technology, Rio Hondo College

- Health Information Management, San Diego Mesa College
- Occupational Studies, Santa Ana College
- Interaction Design, Santa Monica College
- Health Information Management, Shasta College

The board action is in response to legislation sponsored by Sen. Marty Block (D-San Diego) and signed by the governor last year that allows up to 15 districts to establish a pilot baccalaureate degree program at one of their colleges in a field of study not offered by the California State University or University of California. Lower-division coursework would cost \$46 and upper-division coursework would cost \$84 under the new program, with an estimated total cost of about \$10,000 to obtain a bachelor's degree.

"SB 850 will expand opportunities for California students by increasing affordable and accessible paths to a four-year degree while also helping veterans and other nontraditional students," Block said. "This historic and landmark change will also help keep our state a global economy -- competitive and open for business."

The college districts that the board approved today were chosen from 34 applications. A team comprised of Chancellor's Office staff, reviewers from the University of California and California Department of Education, a member of the business and workforce community, and community college administrators, faculty and staff from districts that did not apply to host a program reviewed the applications.

Considerations for selecting a district included geographic distribution of the pilot programs, diversity of pilot programs, ability of the district to establish a rigorous program in their proposed field and that the proposed program will meet an unaddressed local or statewide workforce need.

Under the law the four-year degree programs must be up and running by at least the 2017-18 academic year, however, districts may start their programs by the fall 2015 semester. Districts must also seek approval from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges to start a program.

The legislation sunsets after the 2022-23 school year, after which the Legislature and governor may renew it pending two Legislative Analyst's Office reviews of the pilot program- one in 2018 and another in 2022.

The law was enacted to assist the state in meeting the need for individuals in high demand technical disciplines which are increasingly requiring baccalaureate degrees and to increase college participation rates and improve workforce training opportunities for local residents who are unable to relocate because of family or work commitments.

To see the list of the approved colleges and summaries of their programs, click [here](#).

*The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/CACommColleges>, or <https://twitter.com/CalCommColleges>.*