

## Credit Programs and Awards

The college offers programs of instruction designed to meet a variety of educational and occupational needs of students. Students who wish to earn a baccalaureate degree may complete the freshman and sophomore years and then transfer to a senior institution. The college also offers programs that lead to immediate employment. It supplies background courses essential to the up-grading of occupational/technical skills and provides general education courses to broaden one's knowledge beyond the confines of a particular occupational specialty.

Courses are offered in the day and evening and online using the Internet during the academic year and in summer sessions. Students may enroll online on a part-time or full-time basis. Rotation of evening offerings enables students to earn degrees by attending evening sessions on only a part-time basis.

### COLLEGE-WIDE LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### Student Assessment

Learning outcomes assessment is a process by which SouthArk formally and systematically measure and review student learning. The results of the process are used to improve academic programs and academic support services. Learning outcomes assessment is conducted both quantitatively and qualitatively within courses, programs, and through college-wide assessment measures. Faculty are responsible for the identification of course level outcomes and program directors work with the guidance of accrediting bodies and advisory committees to develop and validate program level outcomes.

SouthArk's college-wide student learner outcomes of Communication, Critical Thinking, and Responsibility were identified by the college's Assessment Committee and adopted by the college as a whole. These college-wide student learner outcomes are integrated into the curriculum and assessed in all technical certificate and associate degree programs.

### GRADUATION AWARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

#### Associate of Arts Degree

The Associate of Arts degree is designed to transfer to four-year colleges and forms the foundation for a variety of bachelor's degree programs. The courses required for this program are freshman and sophomore courses at a four-year college. Information regarding the general education requirements for these degrees may be found in the section entitled "Liberal Arts."

The college offers a number of programs that prepare students for further course work toward a baccalaureate degree in professional areas, such as pre-medicine and pre-law. Students should meet with a student advising coach or counselor who will assist them in selecting the program best suited to their career goals. Students should be aware of the requirements selected by the institution to which they will transfer and should meet with a student advising coach well versed in these requirements.

In order to qualify for the Associate of Arts degree, the student must:

1. Meet basic studies requirements.
2. Complete 60 semester credits applicable to a baccalaureate degree with a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA). Under certain circumstances, 14 hours of elective credit from occupational courses may apply toward the Associate of Arts degree.
3. Have a minimum of a 2.00 GPA on all courses completed at SouthArk and a minimum 2.00 GPA on those courses applicable to the Associate of Arts degree.

### Associate of Applied Science Degree

The AAS degree is the highest occupational degree offered by the college. It is an integrated sequence of classroom and laboratory courses. Instruction in technical/occupational courses emphasizes principles involved in analyzing and solving problems and design within the area of study. The normal range of credit for the degree is 60-72 semester credits. In order to qualify for the Associate of Applied Science degree, the student must:

1. Meet basic studies requirements.
2. Complete the following general education requirements:

English/Writing.....	6 credits
Computer Science.....	3 credits
Social Science.....	3 credits
Mathematics.....	3 credits
TOTAL.....	15 semester credits

3. Complete respective degree requirements listed in the General Catalog with a 2.00 cumulative GPA. Students who wish to earn an AAS degree must have a grade of "C" or better in ENGL 1113, Composition I.
4. Have a minimum cumulative of a 2.00 GPA on all courses completed at SouthArk and a minimum 2.00 GPA on those courses applicable to the Associate of Applied Science degree.
5. Apply for graduation through the student advising coaches.
6. Meet residency requirements.

The **Technical Certificate** is a planned program of classroom and laboratory work at the collegiate level. It recognizes the acquisition of a specified level of competency in an occupational field and in communications and mathematics. The normal range of credit is 24-42 semester credits. Students in this program must demonstrate basic studies requirements. In order to qualify for a technical certificate, the student must:

1. Meet basic studies requirements appropriate to the certificate.
2. Complete respective certificate requirements listed in the general catalog.
3. Have a 2.00 GPA on all courses completed at SouthArk.
4. Apply for graduation through the student advising coaches.
5. Meet residency requirements.

The **Certificate of Proficiency** is awarded to students who have demonstrated their mastery of skills or knowledge with specified performance standards. Typically, a registry or competency examination is required of the student. The length of this program is one semester or less. The normal range of credits is 7-15 semester credits. Basic studies requirements are those appropriate to the area of study and are listed with the course requirements. In order to qualify for a certificate of proficiency, the student must:

1. If applicable, have met all entrance requirements for the program.
2. Meet basic studies requirements to the program.
3. Complete respective course requirements listed in the general catalog.
4. Have a 2.00 GPA on the course or courses required for the certificate.
5. Apply for graduation through the student advising coaches.
6. Meet residency requirements.

### General Education

General education is that common core of learning experiences of value to each person regardless of occupation or profession. Act 98 of the 1989 Arkansas General Assembly provided for the establishment

of a 35-credit minimum core of courses that applies toward the general education curriculum requirements at state-supported institutions of higher education. With few exceptions, as they relate to specific majors, the courses in the core are fully transferable between state institutions. SouthArk's associate of arts degree contains this core. For more information, the student should check with his/her student advising coach.

### **Residency Requirements**

Students attending or having attended other colleges can meet residency requirements for a degree by completing the last 25 percent of course work at SouthArk or by completing any 50 percent of course work at SouthArk.

### **Explanation of Credit Hours**

The unit of credit for work at the college is the semester hour. To earn a semester hour of credit, a student must spend 750 minutes per lecture hour (approximately one hour per week in fall and spring semesters or the equivalent time in summer/shortened semesters) plus the final exam. In laboratory or activity courses, a student may be required to spend more than one hour per week in order to earn a semester hour of credit. In most cases the last digit of the course number indicates the number of semester credits to be earned in the course. There are minimum numbers of credits required for completion of the various certificate and degree programs. Students should consult the catalog for the credit-hour requirements for completion of programs.

### **Choice of Catalog**

Students may meet the graduation requirements listed in the catalog in effect at the time they enter the institution, or they may meet the graduation requirements listed in any later catalog. The catalog used for graduation requirements cannot be more than three years old. In some occupational programs, external accrediting agencies and/or advisory committees may suggest or require program changes that might alter a program listed in the catalog that is in effect for some students. Students who wish to initiate an appeal should refer to the academic appeals process here [Academic Appeals](#)

### **Honors Program**

SouthArk offers eligible students the opportunity to become members of an honors program. The goal of the honors program is to encourage critical thinking, academic excellence, and academic and cultural enrichment.

#### ***Benefits***

- Affiliation with students of like abilities in enriched honors courses as well as co-curricular activities
- Small classes with more personalized and individual mentoring of honors faculty
- Guaranteed acceptance into the honors college at Southern Arkansas University upon completion of the program, or a letter of recommendation to other transfer institutions or employers if students should choose another route
- Notation on the SouthArk transcript of honors program completion

***Eligibility:*** The honors program is open to all recent high school graduates or returning adults meeting appropriate academic requirements. Eligible students must have a 23 or higher composite score on the ACT (or equivalent score on the SAT or COMPASS)

***Requirements:*** Completion of at least 12 credit hours of honors courses while finishing a certificate or degree at SouthArk. Honors program participants' efforts will be reviewed each term to determine continuance in the program. All students in the program must be in good standing, academically and otherwise. Interested students should contact the Vice President for Student Services or the Vice President for Learning for more information.

## College Partnerships and Articulation Agreements

An articulation agreement is designed to build strong partnerships and coordination between schools to aid in smooth transition for students. By identifying comparable coursework, degree requirements can be met at one institution and transferred to another institution, reducing cost and time to degree completion for students. SouthArk offers a variety of opportunities for students pursuing transfer and additional degree completion. Interested students should contact the appropriate division dean and/or Transfer Advisor for details.

Information on College Partnerships and Articulation Agreements can be found here [Transfer Information](#)