The Associate of Arts degree represents the completion of the first two years of most bachelor's degree programs in the College of Arts and Sciences at New Mexico State University. Among the degrees that the Associate of Arts prepares the student for are: Anthropology, Communication Studies, English, History, Languages, Math, Music, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Theater, and Women Studies.

In addition, the New Mexico Common Core requirements, which is the heart of the Associate of Arts degree, is required for all bachelor's degrees at New Mexico State University and other public universities and colleges in the state.

The degree provides students with a strong foundation in quantitative reasoning, oral and written communication, lab science, humanities and the arts, and the social and behavioral sciences. Two semesters of a second language are also highly recommended. With that strong foundation, students are well-prepared to transfer to a four-year college.