Standards and Procedures for Certificate Programs

This document outlines minimum standards for certificate programs and the procedures for submitting a proposal for campus approval of a certificate program. See Campus Certificate Policy 200-023 for definitions and policy guidelines.

A. General Requirements for Certificates for Academic Credit (GE, CoS, NN)

1. The certificate must require a minimum of 12 credit hours. An undergraduate certificate program will typically be fewer credits than what is needed for a minor but endorsement and professional certificates may require more credit hours.

2. The certificate program must have a named director or academic advisor who handles admission and exit processes, monitors students' progress and does the appropriate reporting.

3. All for-credit courses required for the certificate may be applied to a degree program, as determined by the program, if the student meets the requirements for regular admission to the program and follows campus, college, and department rules for applying non-degree credits to a degree program.

4. Each program must have formal admission and exit processes for the certificate program.

5. Programs must follow requirements of Admissions and Records for reporting who is admitted to a certificate program.

6. Programs must follow requirements of Admissions and Records for reporting who completes a certificate program (for all certificates except NN certificates).

7. Upon receipt of notification of completion or dismissal, Student Records will notate completion on the student transcript and inactivate or discontinue the certificate career for the student.

8. Any relevant fees (e.g., program, course, application) must be approved by the appropriate units and follow campus rules and guidelines (see Final Institutional fee Plan maintained by Resource Management office). Appropriate offices (i.e., bursar or CWES) must be informed about fees, as all fees must be collected by these offices (i.e., programs may not collect fees directly).

9. A maximum of two courses taken as a non-degree seeking student prior to admission to the certificate program may be applied to a certificate program if the program allows it. Students who took courses while admitted to a degree-seeking program may apply multiple courses to a certificate program as allowed by the department/program.

10. Students may complete a certificate as a non-degree seeking student or as a student in a degree-seeking program. Students may complete multiple certificate programs.

11. Certificates that are jointly administered by multiple institutions may be offered. The role of each institution, including who confers the certificate, should be clearly delineated.

B. Minimum Admission Standards for Undergraduate and Graduate Certificates for Academic Credit
1. General Standards
   a. The following are the minimum requirements for the creation of a certificate program. Individual programs or colleges may adopt additional or higher-level requirements.
   b. To apply students must
      ▪ follow the program's application process;
      ▪ be admitted as a non-degree seeking student or in a degree-seeking program;
      ▪ pay any necessary application fee to the bursar's office.

2. Academic Undergraduate Certificate Standards
   a. Minimum admission criteria
      ▪ High school diploma or equivalency certificate

        AND

      ▪ Meet standards for a non-degree seeking student.

        AND

      ▪ Meet any additional standards set by the program

   b. Students are required to maintain a 2.0 GPA once admitted to the certificate program in all courses taken for the certificate program. Students falling below a 2.00 GPA will be placed on probation or removed from the program following the program's policy.

3. Academic Graduate Certificate Standards
   a. Minimum admission criteria
      ▪ A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution

        AND

      ▪ Meet standards for a non-degree seeking student.

        AND

      ▪ Meet any additional standards set by the program

   b. Students are required to maintain a 3.00 GPA once admitted to the certificate program. Students falling below a 3.00 GPA will be placed on probation or removed from the program following the program's policy.

C. General Requirements for Noncredit Professional Development (PD) Certificates
1. These programs have a specified purpose to meet professional development goals; they may include only one course or a set of courses.

2. Each program sets admission criteria that delineate the needed background for participation in the certificate program. Each program must have formal admission and exit processes for the certificate program.

3. Each PD program must be linked to an academic department and receive approval from that department; although Office of Online and Academic Outreach may have administrative oversight.

4. Programs must follow requirements of CWES for reporting who is admitted to a certificate program.

5. Programs must follow requirements of CWES for reporting who completes a PD certificate program.

6. Upon receipt of notification of completion or dismissal, Student Records will notate completion on the non-credit student transcript and inactivate or discontinue the certificate career for the student.

D. Procedures for Campus Review and Approval

1. Departments, centers, institutes, colleges or schools may start the certificate process by completing the *certificate form* (see below) and getting the appropriate approvals. Part I and all relevant signatures need to be completed for all certificates. Part II needs to be completed for Gainful Employment (GE) certificate programs only.

2. Each certificate should be approved by the appropriate academic units following the department, college, school, or institute processes for certificate approval. It is important that faculty members are involved in the approval process. Certificates proposed by academic centers must be approved by the college or institute that houses the center. If multiple colleges are involved, each relevant college must approve the certificate.

3. Send the proposal to the appropriate campus committee
   a. Undergraduate academic certificates are sent to the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs.
   b. Graduate academic certificates are sent to the Dean of the Graduate School.

4. Proposals are reviewed by the appropriate campus committees/units.
   a. Undergraduate academic certificates (GE, CoS, NN) are reviewed by the Council on Undergraduate Education, which makes a recommendation to approve or not approve the certificate. The committee may send the proposal back to the originating unit for further information.
   b. Graduate academic certificates (GE, CoS, NN) are reviewed by the Graduate Executive Committee, which makes a recommendation to approve or not approve the certificate. The committee may send the proposal back to the originating unit for further information.
   c. Professional development (noncredit) certificates must be sent to Office for Online and Academic Outreach (OOAO) for notification and to work out any administrative duties that they may have. Following department and college approval and OOAO input, the Sponsoring Liaison will send the certificate proposal to the Campus Certificate Implementation Committee.
   d. The Campus Certificate Implementation Committee consists of representatives from Institutional Research, Financial Aid, and Admissions and Records. This committee reviews documentation for appropriateness for GE classification and any broad campus concerns (e.g. regarding transcript notation, financial aid eligibility). Concerns and suggested changes will be given to the Sponsoring Liaison who will contact the Sponsoring Department to communicate the concerns.

5. Following review by the appropriate committees, the proposal is sent to the Provost for approval.

6. Following approval by the Provost, the proposal is distributed to appropriate offices (e.g., A&R, Financial Aid, IR, CWES, Bursar) in order to implement the certificate. The Sponsoring Department is informed of the decision/outcome and timeline for implementation (e.g., admitting students).

Certificate Approval Form

In order for a certificate program to be reviewed, please fill out the form below and submit to the appropriate college and campus committees. Please plan on at least six months after submission before offering a certificate. Complete information in Part I for all requests. Part II needs to be completed by those seeking approval for Gainful Employment (GE) certificates with financial aid eligibility for non-degree seeking students. All appropriate signatures should be obtained.

PART I

1. Name of Certificate: _____

2. Department(s):_____

3. College(s)/Institutions: _____

4. Faculty Director/Advisor: _____

5. Type of Certificate:

   ☐ Gainful Employment

   ☐ Course of Study

   ☐ Professional Development

   ☐ Non-notated

6. Expected start date (semester and year): _____

7. Number of required credit hours: _____

8. Anticipated length of the program in semesters including summer (e.g., 2 years = 6 semesters):
   _____

9. Describe the certificate program. Include in your description the following information:

   a. How the certificate program fits the unit's role and mission. If applicable, explain the specific roles of each institution if there are multiple institutions involved.
   b. Courses and requirements (e.g., minimum grades) to complete the certificate.
   c. Admission criteria (at a minimum must follow criteria delineated in policy but program may have higher standards)
   d. The exit process (include requirements for finishing, any forms that must be completed stating who completes these forms—student, faculty director, etc.; who will provide a list of completers to A&R so that a person's transcript may be changed).
   e. Costs of offering the certificate program.
   f. Expected benefits, income, return on investment.
   g. If applicable, describe any fees (e.g., program, course, application) that you will charge. (Note: You will need to follow campus procedures for fees.)
   h. If you are proposing a non-notated certificate, please explain why this is the best type of certificate and why you are not using a CoS or PD certificate. Please submit a plan for how you will inform students that the certificate will not be notated on official university transcripts.

PART II (for GE Certificates)

1. Program website URL for certificate program:

    _____

2. Provide a narrative description of how the institution determined the need for the program. Describe what need this program will address and how the institution became aware of that need. If the program will be offered in connection with, or in response to, an initiative by a governmental entity, provide details of that initiative.

3. Provide a narrative description of how the program was designed to meet local market needs, or for an online program, regional or national market needs. For example, indicate if Bureau of Labor Statistics data or state labor data systems information was used, and/or if state, regional, or local workforce agencies were consulted. Include how the course content, program length, academic level, admission requirements, and prerequisites were decided; including information received from potential employers about course content; and information regarding the target students and employers.

4. Provide a narrative description of any wage analysis the institution may have performed, including any consideration of Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data related to the new program.

5. Was the program reviewed and approved by any external groups such as:

    ☐   Business advisory committee

    ☐   Program integrity board

    ☐   Oversight/regulatory agencies (other than CDHE or accrediting agencies)

    ☐   Business that would likely employ graduates of the program

6. Provide a narrative description of how the program was reviewed or approved by, or developed in conjunction with, the entities selected in #5. For example, describe the steps taken to develop the program, identify when and with whom discussions were held, provide relevant details of any proposals or correspondence generated, and/or describe any process used to evaluate the program. The institution must retain, for review and submission to the appropriate federal agencies upon request, copies of meeting minutes, correspondence, proposals, or other documentation to support the development, review, and/or approval of the program.

7. Describe how you will determine the on-time completion rate, job placement rate, and median loan debt in order to disclose the information on the departmental website.

8. When do you intend to begin disbursing Title IV funds to students: _____

9. Estimate the cost of the program (you may change table as needed for your certificate and whether the program is online or in-person but make sure you include all information needed for GE designation):

	Per Term	Annual
Tuition and fees		
Room and board		
Books and supplies		

Additional explanation of costs, if necessary (e.g., cost per credit hour):

10. Using the Standard Occupational Classifications http://www.bls.gov/soc ,

    a. Select the primary occupational group for which the Gainful Employment Program will train the student:
    _____

    b. List all six-digit codes that reflect occupations in which the graduates of the proposed program will be trained for employment: _____

11. Have you read the Gainful Employment regulations posted at http://www.ifap.ed.gov/GainfulEmploymentInfo/index.html and are you aware that failure to comply and failure to meet "gainfulness" could make your program ineligible for the Title IV financial aid on an annual basis? _____ Yes _____ No

    Have you reviewed the regulations for any further requirements in the application?

    _____ Yes _____ No

Required Signatures
Additional names and signature lines may be added as necessary (e.g., center directors)

Requested by:

_____   _____   _____
Faculty: Name   Signature   Date

Approvals:

_____   _____   _____
Department Chair: Name   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
College Dean: Name   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Campus Committee Chair: Name   Signature   Date
Graduate School Dean or Vice Provost of Academic Affairs

_____   _____   _____
Campus Certificate Implementation   Signature   Date
Committee Chair: Name

_____   _____   _____
Provost: Name   Signature   Date

To be completed by the Campus Certificate Implementation Committee:

CIP Code: _____   Plan Code: _____

Career Code: _____   Subplan Code: _____

Program Code: _____ Effective Date: _____

Date Assigned: _____

Meets all federal Gainful Employment Certificate Requirements?: Yes   No
If no, what requirements are missing?