

Title: Certificate Programs

Category: Academic Affairs

Responsible Cabinet Member: Provost

Scope

This policy governs the development, approval and administration of undergraduate, graduate and professional certificate programs at the University. It establishes the framework for ensuring that all certificate programs maintain academic rigor, integrity and alignment with the University's mission to advance learning, professional development and workforce readiness. The policy applies under the authority of the Office of the Provost and ensures consistency in the creation, assessment and recognition of certificate programs across all colleges and academic units.

Applicability: Faculty

Policy Statement: The University authorizes the establishment of certificate programs as structured academic credentials that recognize the attainment of focused knowledge, competencies or professional preparation beyond traditional degree programs. Certificates may be offered at the undergraduate, graduate or professional level and must adhere to the academic standards, approval processes and administrative oversight outlined in this policy.

Undergraduate Certificate

An undergraduate certificate must be a minimum of 12 credit hours, all at the 200 level or above, with a minimum of six (6) credit hours at or above the 300 level. The certificate must have a three-credit (3) breadth component, requiring the student to take courses in at least two (2) disciplines, with a minimum of three (3) credits to be completed in a second discipline.

- Undergraduate certificate programs shall be reviewed through the University curriculum approval process and follow the same approval path as degree programs.
- A student must earn a "C" or better, or a passing grade in a Pass/Fail course, in each course used to satisfy a certificate requirement.
- Award of an undergraduate certificate shall be noted on a student's transcript upon successful completion of the certificate requirements.
- Undergraduate certificate programs are open to those who are enrolled as (a) undergraduate students, (b) postbaccalaureate (non-degree) students or (c) graduate or professional students. Individual undergraduate certificate programs may set reasonable admissions requirements or restrictions. These requirements may include completion of an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution prior to admission into the program.

Graduate Certificate

A graduate certificate must be a minimum of nine (9) credit hours but must not exceed 18 credit hours. All coursework for a graduate certificate must be at the graduate level.

- Graduate certificate programs shall be reviewed and approved through the University curriculum approval process and follow the same approval path as degree programs.
- To earn a graduate certificate, a student must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0 in each course used to satisfy a certificate requirement.
- Award of a graduate certificate shall be noted on the student's transcript upon successful completion of the certificate requirements.

- Unless otherwise stated when a certificate is established, graduate certificate programs are open to any student who holds a bachelor's degree. Individual graduate certificate programs may be limited to current graduate students, or to current graduate students in a particular degree program. Admissions requirements for a certificate program may include prior completion of a master's or doctoral degree from an accredited institution, but in no case will the admissions requirements for a graduate certificate be less than the requirements for postbaccalaureate admissions to the Graduate School.

Professional Certificate

A professional certificate typically consists of 12 credit hours to 21 credit hours and is a postbaccalaureate or postgraduate academic credential designed to provide advanced, concentrated training in a specific discipline or area of professional practice. Professional certificates may include clinical, applied or interdisciplinary components. The content is typically designed in collaboration with employers, professional associations or licensing bodies, and should align with institutional, state or national workforce priorities. Professional certificates may prepare individuals for board eligibility, licensure, or meet clearly defined workforce needs in specialized or emerging fields, developed to meet employer-driven demands in high-skill, non-licensure areas.

- Professional certificate programs shall be reviewed and approved through the University curriculum approval process and follow the same approval path as degree programs.
- Award of a professional certificate shall be noted on the student's transcript upon successful completion of the certificate requirements.
- Professional certificate programs are intended for individuals who already hold a bachelor's, graduate, doctoral or professional degree (e.g., D.M.D., M.D., J.D., Ph.D.).