

Wright State University Policy for Undergraduate Educational Certificate Programs

Approved UAPC, 2014 September;

Certificate Programs

An educational certificate is regarded nationally as a “credential awarded by a training provider or educational institution based on completion of all requirements for a program of study, including coursework and test or other performance evaluations. Certificates, as an academic award, are not time limited and do not need to be renewed. Most educational certificates are awarded at the sub-baccalaureate level, but a small number are awarded after the completion of a postsecondary degree. Certificates of attendance or participation in a short-term training are not in the definitional scope for educational certificates.”¹

Undergraduate certificates at Wright State University are credentials awarded at the end of a clearly defined program of study. An undergraduate educational certificate program at Wright State University should include between 12 and 21 semester hours.² A minimum of 12 semester credit hours must be 2000+ level standard academic letter grade coursework.

As with two and four-year degree programs, certificate programs at Wright State University are expected to have specific and measurable program educational objectives and student learning objectives. The certificate program of study should measurably engender achievement of these objectives. Certificate programs are designed and approved by academic units using the faculty governance mechanisms that approve and oversee degree programs of study. Similarly, certificate programs are subject to the same internal and external oversight and approval mechanisms used to approve and update associate and baccalaureate programs of study. Successful completion of a certificate program of study will be noted on the permanent record.

Students must apply and be accepted to undergraduate certificate programs of study in much the same way that they are expected to apply for associate and baccalaureate degree programs of study. Each certificate program must specify any formal requirements for admission. A student may pursue an undergraduate certificate as (A) an exclusive non-degree program of study, (B) a dual program of study in conjunction with an associate or baccalaureate degree, or (C) a non-degree program of study taken after the awarding of a previous associate or baccalaureate degree. In each case, the certificate credential is awarded on the completion of the certificate program of study.

Courses taken in a certificate program of study are subject to the same regulations on course grade replacement, probation, dismissal, etc. as courses taken in a degree program of study. If not otherwise prohibited, courses taken in a certificate program may be applied (double-counted) to a subsequent or concurrently awarded degree program of study without penalty. Conversely, courses taken as part of a completed two or four-year program may be counted towards an undergraduate certificate program of

¹ S. Bielick, S. Cronen, C. Stone, J. Montaquila, and S. Roth, *The Adult Training and Education Survey (ATES) Pilot Study: Technical Report (NCES 2013-190)*, p. 4, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, 2013, retrieved March 31, 2014, from <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013190.pdf>>.

² This limitation is consistent with the requirement that graduate certificate programs of 21 semester hours or more be approved by the Ohio Board of Regents. Although no such regulations exist for undergraduate certificate programs, this limitation suggests a reasonable cap on undergraduate certificate programs.

study, within the limitations of the certificate residency requirement.

Residency requirement for earning an undergraduate educational certificate: A minimum of 9 semester credit hours must be earned at Wright State University in a program of study approved by the department/unit overseeing the certificate. Credit by evaluation or transfer credit will not be considered as residency credit. Credits earned prior to the awarding of a previous degree, including degrees earned at Wright State, will not be considered as residency credit. Credits earned as part of a concurrently awarded degree may be considered as residency credit.

Procedures and Guidelines for Preparing Certificate Program Proposals

Before approving or revising a certificate program, the proposal must be reviewed by all departments and program units that may be affected by the proposed program. In cases where a certificate is significantly similar to existing programs, scheduling/faculty/resource implications must be specifically addressed. Programs that require new resources/staff or significant utilization of existing resources/staff must address sustainability and resource impact of the proposed program.

The requirements for certificate programs may vary considerably across departments or program units. In order to ensure consistency from program to program, those preparing and approving proposals for a new program must observe the following format and guidelines:

I. *Title.* Title of Program and college or school and department responsible for administering the program.

II. *Description.* Proposals must include an undergraduate catalog description of the certificate program.

III. *Objectives.* Proposals must provide a clear statement of the objectives and student learning outcomes of the program and the method by which the achievement of the learning outcomes is assessed.

IV. *Admission Requirements.* Proposals must clearly indicate requirements for admission from the program, including (as appropriate) required prerequisite coursework, GPA requirements, etc.

V. *Program Requirements.* Proposals must specify the program of study, including course requirements, any electives/options, and total credit hours required. Certificate programs that require a summative evaluation (such as a comprehensive examination or portfolio review) must make clearly specific the evaluation requirements and procedure.

VI. *Program Quality.* Proposals must address how the proposed program of study and evaluation mechanisms meet and ensure successful completion of program objectives. The faculty body responsible for overseeing the quality of the program must be explicitly identified. Proposals must indicate any requirements for maintaining the quality of student performance and continuation in the program for successful completion of the certificate. This should include the following:

- Student GPA and/or performance in a specific course or set of course required to continue/progress in program
- Time limits for completion, including need for continuous registration
- Criteria for reapplying if necessary
- Acceptance of previous experience, including Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) or credit by examination (e.g., CLEP)

Procedures for non-standard or previously existing certificate programs

Undergraduate educational certificate programs approved by the University Curriculum Committee and approved by HLC will be noted on the permanent record. Non-educational certificates or educational certificates that have not been approved by UCC and HLC will not be noted on the permanent record.