

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 9, 2019

**TO:** UA Faculty, Academic Advisors and Student Support Personnel

**FROM:** Neel Ghosh, Chair, Undergraduate Council  
Abbie Sorg, Senior Program Manager, Curricular Affairs

**RE:** **Updates to Undergraduate Certificate Definition, Procedures, and Policies**

In August 2017 the Undergraduate Council (UGC) received a proposal from the Certificate Task Force to update the definition, procedures, and policies for Undergraduate Certificates. In response to feedback from multiple committees as well as academic and non-academic units, the policy proposal was revised. The revised version was approved by the UGC on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and by the Faculty Senate on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019. **The new policy lifts the current moratorium on new Undergraduate Certificates, and is effective immediately for all new Undergraduate Certificates and students enrolled in them.**

Approved [Undergraduate Certificate Definition, Procedures, and Policies](#) (replacing the previous Undergraduate Certificate Definition and Guidelines):

### **Certificate Definition**

An undergraduate certificate is a focused, structured and interrelated set of courses that enhances the undergraduate experience in an emerging academic area, addresses a professional development need, or provides “step-up” preparation for a degree program.

### **Admission to Certificates**

1. Undergraduate certificates and advanced undergraduate certificates are available to degree seeking or non-degree seeking students (1) at the UA main campus, branch campuses, and domestic locations, (2) in degree seeking programs at international universities where UA has approved international partnerships, and (3) at approved UA global locations.
2. Certificate applicants must meet UA Undergraduate Admission requirements.
3. Students enrolled in an undergraduate degree program may add a certificate before completing their degree requirements by contacting the offering unit and satisfying the admission requirements for the certificate.

### **Certificate Approval and Modification Procedures**

1. Sufficient resources must exist to support the certificate without penalizing existing academic programs, including subplans/options and minors.
2. Certificates may be offered by an academic unit that does not currently offer a related degree program. Non-academic units may create certificates that are sponsored by an academic unit that undergoes an academic program review.
3. Each certificate must have an oversight committee (such as a curriculum committee). The oversight committee shall consist of a minimum of 3 members, 2 of which are faculty and at least one of the 2 is participating faculty in the certificate program. The oversight committee is responsible for:
  1. qualifications of participating faculty,
  2. coordination of admission recommendations with the Office of Admissions, and
  3. curricular changes.
4. Departments must have support staff for the program to advise students on their status, financial aid eligibility, and curricular offerings.

5. Any change in the originally approved certificate shall be approved by Curricular Affairs, Undergraduate Council (UGC), and College Academic Administrators Council (CAAC) prior to implementation.
6. Certificates must be included in the unit's academic program review (APR) process.
7. Undergraduate certificates that do not have a total of 9 completions over a 3-year period will be subject to disestablishment. Units offering certificates that fall below this threshold must submit documentation justifying continuation of the program. Requests for continuation will be reviewed by Academic Administration and may be added as consent agenda items for the UGC's Academic Programs Subcommittee.
8. Certificate programs may be disestablished at any time by the offering academic unit with approval from Curricular Affairs. Students currently enrolled should be accommodated until completion of their certificate program.

### **Certificate Policies**

1. Certificates may be structured either as discipline-specific or cross-disciplinary. Academic units applying for certificates must consult with and obtain support from related programs and departments to ensure availability of required courses that are offered by another department, and to avoid duplication of content. Evidence of support from these departments should be included with the certificate proposal.
2. Certificates may be stand-alone or linked to an existing degree program.
3. Emphases, focal areas, tracks, sub-specializations, or subplans are not permitted in an undergraduate certificate.
4. Minimum number of units:
  1. An undergraduate certificate must consist of at least twelve (12) units of credit, regardless of a student's status when the credits were earned (current degree seeking or prior non-degree-seeking).\*
  2. At least six (6) units of credit must be upper division UA course work.
  3. No more than six (6) units of credit used to complete the certificate can also be used for a current degree requirement (i.e., major, minor, or General Education) or second certificate.\*\*
5. The maximum duplicate units from a current or previously awarded degree program or certificate applicable to a certificate is six (6) units.
6. Offering units may determine whether course work taken at another institution may be applied to a certificate. A minimum of six (6) units used to complete the certificate must be University credit.
7. Course work completed more than four (4) years before admission to a certificate may not be applied unless approved through an appeals process with the offering unit.
8. Completed approved certificates will be noted on the student's official academic record.
9. All University policies apply, including academic, grading, admission, retention, contact hours, and faculty eligibility to teach.
10. These certificate policies cannot be petitioned.

\*Previously approved certificates with fewer units would not be subject to these requirements, unless the offering unit proposes a modification to the certificate, at which point all current unit requirements and policies must be met.

\*\*This double-use policy would not impact students enrolled in previously approved certificates who may be double-dipping more than 6 units.

**Implementation and Management of the Policy:**

- a) The Undergraduate Council (UGC), with support from Curricular Affairs, will resume the review and approval process for any Undergraduate Certificate proposals that were submitted prior to the start of the moratorium.
- b) Academic units may submit proposals for new Undergraduate Certificates using the UAccess UA Plan Management Workflow. More information on this process can be found on the [Undergraduate Proposal Approval Table](#).

**Questions about the Undergraduate Certificate Definition, Procedures, and Policies** should be addressed to **Martin Marquez**, Interim Director, Curricular Affairs, at 621-0378, or [martinmarquez@email.arizona.edu](mailto:martinmarquez@email.arizona.edu).