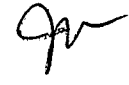


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**Policy for Graduate Certifications****Rationale:**

The University of Houston encourages the use of graduate certifications to provide additional professional education in our academic marketplace. These guidelines and the brief approval process will provide the campus with current up-to-date information on graduate certificate offerings, formal recognition by the University of Houston and a means of reporting these programs to our public and eventually the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

**Definition of Graduate Certifications:**

According to the THECB, a certificate program is defined as:

"Any grouping of subject-matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a student, shall entitle him to a certificate or documentary evidence, other than a degree, of completion of a post-secondary course of study at a university or health-related institution."

**Examples of Graduate Certifications:**

University of Houston Graduate Certificates can be used in graduate education for a variety of purposes. One overriding purpose is to offer a vehicle by which academic work (less substantial than that required for a degree) can be formally recognized. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Interdisciplinary work completed in a set of predefined areas and across academic units in conjunction with or in addition to the graduate degree.
2. Direct entry for students with no intention of earning a graduate degree but who seek some graduate level work to enhance their knowledge and skills in a particular area.
3. Specialization of a particular area within a degree program.

Graduate Certificate Programs do NOT include programs offered through the Department of Continuing Education instead of Academic Units. These courses may carry CEUs as appropriate, but are not considered Graduate Certificates.

**Approval Procedure:**

1. Interdisciplinary certificates are those that require cooperation among academic units. Because this is the case, these certificates would bear the name of the University. These certificates must be approved by the Deans or Administrators of the units offering the certificate, as well as by the Graduate and Professional Studies Council (GPSC), the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, the Provost and the
2. Chancellor and President of the University of Houston.

3. Direct entry certifications usually require additional resources. For this reason, the certificate must also be approved by the Dean or administrator of the unit offering the certificate, as well as the GPSC, the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, the Provost, and the Chancellor and President of the University of Houston.
4. Certificates that show specialization within a particular degree program require the approval by the Dean or administrator of the unit offering the certificate, as well as the GPSC, and the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies.
5. Certificates that are solely for continuing education and do not require any graduate courses do not need approval beyond the Dean or administrator of the unit offering the continuing education certifications. The Dean should submit the offerings as an information piece to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies so that this office is informed of graduate education opportunities on the campus.

#### **Approval Procedure Guidelines**

1. For examples 1, 2, and 3, the following materials must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies for consideration by GPSC, et.al:
2. An abstract summarizing the proposal including the name and type of certification
3. A statement demonstrating the need for the certification including other
4. institutions that have similar certifications and their success.
5. An overview of the certification including:
  - a. The academic unit administering the certification
  - b. The proposed timeframe for initiation of the certification and estimated timeframe for completion of certification
  - c. The intended student body ( academic background, and expected number of participants)
  - d. Titles of those administering the certification
  - e. Admission requirements
  - f. Number of faculty ( including tenured, tenure-track, adjunct, clinical and visiting faculty) involved in the certification
  - g. Curriculum
  - h. Certification location and delivery (on-campus, off-campus, study abroad, distance education, etc)
  - i. Whether accreditation is to be obtained by outside body ( including the name of the accreditation body)
  - j. Whether professional associations are involved with the certification including name and involvement
  - k. Whether transcript of the certificate to student records ( transcripts) is requested
  - l. Any other relevant information

Note: Certificates requiring approvals beyond the college level should require a minimum of 9 semester hours for completion. A continuing education certification requires a memorandum signed by the Dean of the College or Administrator showing approval of the certification and should be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies for informational purposes only.

In addition we are recommending that the office of the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies provide a template on the graduate website for submission of both the Approved Procedure Guidelines and the Annual Reporting form. The marketing of the campus certifications on the Graduate website could provide graduate students with additional options .

### Annual Reporting

All graduate and or professional certification directors or administrators should provide an annual report to the Dean(s) or administrators involved which is then forwarded to the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies. This report can be a copy of a form already submitted annually to other entities such as the Dean or administrator or an outside accreditation body or professional association. If no other reporting is generally required, then the report (included on the website- (web address) should include the following information for the previous year:

1. Department and College or unit administering the certification
2. Name and type of certificate
3. Location of the certification
4. Number of students participating and completing the certification
5. Number, name and type of faculty participating in the certification
6. Areas of concern and areas for improvement from previous year and current plans
7. Plans to continue, change, or cancel the certification
8. Other relevant information

Signature denotes approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Senior Vice President and Provost      Date

### Changes

1. Added rationale section
2. Changed specialization to require approval
3. Added continuing education certifications as information pieces only

4. Added definitions of continuing education certifications plus CEU.
5. References to programs throughout the document changed to certifications.
6. Included specialization in required approvals with continuing education as information pieces
7. Added plans to continue, change or delete the certification to the annual reporting list plus professional associations.
8. In the overview section added clinical faculty, collapsed some sections into one( like participating and completing)
9. Recommend Office of Graduate and Professional Studies design a template for approval of certifications and annual reporting and reference web address in this document and consider marketing the campus certifications and place on graduate website.