

Policy on Post-Master's Certificate Programs

(Revisions Approved by Graduate Council on January 18, 2023)

1. ROLE OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS AT TWU

Post-Master's certificate programs should go beyond existing master's degrees in a way that will make TWU a center of life-long graduate education for the citizens of Texas. The Graduate School should not offer any certificate program which could serve as either a substitute for an existing master's program or that duplicates an existing program. Certificate programs must also be consistent with the mission of the academic unit offering the program.

2. ADMISSION STANDARDS

The locus of control for establishing admission standards will be placed with the sponsoring academic unit, subject to the following guidelines:

- A. Candidates must have completed a master's degree in a pre-specified (listed) field(s). In most instances, the master's degree should be related to the certificate program.
- B. Exceptions to the admission standards listed in the Graduate Catalog must be approved by both the admitting academic unit and the Graduate School.

3. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

- A. A minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate work.
- B. In general, post-master's certificate programs should not exceed 18 semester hours at the 6000-level. Certificate programs which exceed 30 semester hours will be approved only under unusual circumstances.
- C. The course work comprising the certificate program must be an integrated and organized sequence of study.
- D. With the exception of internship, practicum, independent projects or clinical work, all courses for certificates will be letter graded.

- E. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all certificate course work. Only three semester hours with a grade of "C" will count towards a certificate. A maximum of three semester hours of failed course work may be repeated. Specific programs may set stricter grade requirements.
- F. Normally, semester hours from a prior master's degree may not apply toward a graduate certificate. A maximum of three semester hours may be waived by the admitting academic unit. If more than three semester hours are found to duplicate the course work in a certificate program, the student must take additional coursework with the approval of the certificate advisor for the academic unit.
- G. Course work taken as part of a certificate program may be counted toward a graduate degree at TWU with the approval of the degree-granting department or division.

4. ADMINISTRATION OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- A. All units developing certificate programs must seek consultation from the Office of Academic Assessment and Accreditation and the Office of Faculty Success to ensure proposed certificates requiring notification or approval with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) obtain the necessary notifications or approvals.
- B. The program, wherever it may be administratively housed, must be clearly identified and labeled as a certificate program. The intent of the program must be specified in the institution's literature.
- C. A faculty director will be appointed for each certificate program. The director will be responsible for certifying the successful completion of the program's academic requirements. The Graduate School will arrange for the recording of the completed certificate on the student's transcript.
- D. All units developing certificate programs must seek consultation from the "related" programs, departments, Schools, and Colleges; and all requests must be approved by the unit's appropriate curriculum committee(s), the Dean of the College, and the Dean of the Graduate School. All changes to approved certificates must be sent through the same channels for approval.
- E. Admission of students into certificate programs will be for Certification-Only through the Graduate School.

5. ASSESSMENT OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- A. All proposed certificate programs must state *at least one* measurable and meaningful program-level student learning outcome that indicates what students should know and/or be able to do by the end of/completion of the certificate program.
- B. All certificate programs must include at least two (2) assessment measures to assess student performance specific to the learning outcome(s), one of which must be a direct assessment of student learning.
- C. All certificate programs will prepare an annual Academic Institutional Improvement Report according to TWU institutional improvement guidelines.
- D. All certificate programs will review their certificate as an addendum to their periodic graduate program review every 7 years. The schedule of graduate program reviews is found in the Graduate Council Policy on Periodic Graduate Program Review.
- E. Accredited programs for which accreditation specifically includes the certificate program(s) must submit the accreditation review in place of the review described in (D).