

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSE, CA 95192**

**S12-5, Policy Recommendation, Review and Approval  
Process for Academic Certificate Programs**

**Legislative History:**

At its meeting of May 7, 2012, the Academic Senate approved the following policy recommendation presented by Senator Bros-Seemann for the Curriculum and Research Committee.

**Action by University President: Approved by President Qayoumi  
on June 12, 2012**

**Policy Recommendation  
Review and Approval Process for Academic Certificate Programs**

**Whereas:** certificate programs provide a variety of educational benefits including ongoing professional development and access to desired skill sets; and

**Whereas:** a certificate should consist of a cohesive curriculum such that the combined learning outcomes meet a specific need that students have or might have; and

**Whereas:** establishing guidance and standards for those proposing and those reviewing certificates will improve the offering of appropriate certificates; and

**Whereas:** the creation of matriculated status for certificate programs ensures program oversight of appropriate entrance requirements; and

**Whereas:** program and student needs are different at the basic and advanced certificate level; and

**Whereas:** post-baccalaureate and post-master's certificate programs provide needed ongoing continuing education; and

**Whereas:** the accumulation of linked or "stackable" certificates potentially into a master's degree enables students to gain further education; and

**Whereas:** creation of a mechanism to denote "certificates" on a student's transcript is a benefit to students and programs; and

**Whereas:** Executive Order #806 from the Chancellor's office provided a framework for offering certificate programs and encouraged the development of such programs; and therefore be it

**Resolved:** that the following be adopted as policy; and be it further

**Resolved:** that all certificate programs at SJSU must be reviewed and approved under the process outlined in the attached guidelines; and be it further

**Resolved:** that, within two years, certificate programs that predate the adoption of this policy must be reviewed and approved under the attached guidelines; and be it further

**Resolved:** that only certificates from approved certificate programs can be awarded and posted on transcripts.

## **Certificate Guidelines**

### **Types of Certificate Programs**

- 1) Certificate programs are defined as any program in which some form of recognition from San Jose State University is awarded to participants. There are two basic kinds of certificate programs, Academic and Other (defined below) but only the former is the subject of this policy.
- 2) Academic certificate programs
  - a) **Definition:** Certificate programs are classified as "Academic" if students receive academic credit for any courses in the program.
  - b) Types of Academic certificate programs

- i) Basic (undergraduate level)
  - (1) **Definition:** Basic certificate programs provide opportunities for students to pursue specialized, often pre-professional, focused educational objectives that may be separate from a degree program.
  - (2) **Jurisdiction:** Basic certificate programs are under the jurisdiction of the Undergraduate Studies Committee and administered by the Office of Undergraduate Studies (UGS).
- ii) Advanced (graduate level)
  - (1) **Definition:** An advanced certificate program offers post-baccalaureate students coursework leading to a specific, applied, focused goal. An advanced certificate program may be interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary and generally should have some professional application. It is the responsibility of the responsible or governing unit (college, department, or school) offering an advanced certificate program to carefully evaluate the subjects to be studied and the job or career advancement opportunities available to certificate holders to ensure that the program adequately addresses the professional needs of students and the requirements of the professional discipline or area.
  - (2) **Jurisdiction:** Advanced certificate programs are under the jurisdiction of the Graduate Studies and Research Committee and administered by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research (GS&R).
  - (3) Types of Advanced Academic certificate programs
    - (a) Post-bachelor's level
    - (b) Post-master's level
- 3) Other certificate programs
  - a) **Definition:** Certificate programs are classified as "Other" if no academic credit or grade is awarded for completion of courses in the program.

### **General Guidelines for Academic Certificate Programs**

- 1) Self-supporting certificate programs, both basic and advanced, credit and non-credit, will be administered by International and Extended Studies, but curricular reviews will be overseen by either the Office of Undergraduate Studies or Office of Graduate Studies and Research, depending upon the curricular level of the program.
- 2) Academic certificate programs are available to matriculated (regular or special session status) and non-matriculated (Open University) students. Students seeking a certificate in matriculated status must apply for admission and will be evaluated at the university level with respect to the applicable (graduate or undergraduate standards) entrance requirements and then according to the approved requirements set forth by the individual certificate program. A department or program can propose more restrictive requirements subject to approval by UGS for basic or GS&R for advanced certificates.
- 3) Non-matriculated students: Non-degree-seeking students who meet departmental or school requirements may earn a certificate through Open University. Up to 20% (or 30% upon petition to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research) of a graduate

degree program may be transferred from an advanced certificate program taken in non-matriculated status with approval from the department or school.

- 4) Matriculated students: Alternately, if a student applies for and is admitted to a certificate program (in either regular or special session status) as a matriculated student, all approved courses may be transferred into the associated master's degree objective if applicable to the master's degree program and approved by the department or school. Graduate students may take basic certificate program courses and are eligible for the award of the basic certificate. Transfer of courses into the master's degree program, however, is limited to upper-division courses. In addition, the established limitations of the graduate school apply in the transfer process, including the number of units and the requirement for consent from the master's degree adviser.
- 5) Certificate programs that are classifiable as "Academic" that do not meet the criteria for this policy must be discontinued.

### **Specific to Academic Basic Certificate Programs**

#### **Requirements**

- 1) Basic certificate programs must include a minimum of 9 units of coursework. Programs may require that all pre-requisite coursework has been completed prior to enrolling in the basic certificate program.
- 2) Basic certificate programs may include lower-division and upper-division courses numbered 1 through 199.
- 3) A clearly stated assessment plan with learning outcomes must be included in the certificate proposal.
- 4) A basic certificate program cannot substitute for an approved major, minor, or emphasis program where one is required for the student's degree. Courses taken as part of an SJSU Academic certificate program cannot be applied to an approved major, minor, or emphasis program where one is required for the student's degree.
- 5) Courses taken for a major or minor may not be applied to a basic certificate program unless otherwise specified in the catalog.
- 6) The grading option of credit/no credit is available for courses in basic certificate programs consistent with university grade basis policies for the type of course.
- 7) The adviser for (or director of) the program is responsible for verifying a student's satisfactory completion of the academic requirements established for the program and for forwarding a copy of the verification form to the Office of the Registrar. The Office of the Registrar records the completion of the program on the student's transcript and forwards the signed certificate to the director for distribution to the student.

## Specific to Academic Advanced Certificate Programs

### Requirements

- 1) Advanced certificate programs must include a minimum of 9 units of coursework.
- 2) Advanced certificate programs must be comprised of courses numbered 100 through 296.
- 3) Coursework for an advanced certificate must not duplicate in content and level the student's prior educational experience (*i.e.*, undergraduate coursework).
- 4) A clearly stated assessment plan with learning outcomes must be included in the proposal.
- 5) With the approval of the department or school, units may be applied to both an advanced certificate program and a graduate degree program offered by the department.
- 6) All certificate programs must be constructed solely with courses taken through San José State University.
  - a) The choice of grading requirements may have implications for transferability to degree programs.
  - b) Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all advanced certificate coursework, with no less than the grade of "C" in any course. Only 3 units of coursework with a grade of "C" can count toward an advanced certificate. A maximum of 3 units of coursework may be repeated. The grade used for the GPA for the advanced certificate is the average of the initial grade and the grade upon repeating the course.
- 7) Units in charge of an Academic certificate program should establish at least one adviser to oversee certificate programs within the unit. One adviser should be assigned to oversee the program even if inter-departmental. The adviser for (or director of) the certificate program is responsible for verifying a student's satisfactory completion of the academic requirements established for the program and for forwarding a completed copy of the verification form to Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE). After review, GAPE notifies the Office of the Registrar which then records the completion of the program on the student's transcript and forwards the signed certificate to the adviser or director for distribution to the student.
- 8) These guidelines constitute minimum standards for advanced certificate programs; departments may propose additional requirements for approval by the Graduate Studies and Research Committee.
- 9) **Admission**
  - a) Admission to an advanced certificate program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, with a major in the appropriate field(s) of study, as well as a GPA of at least 2.5 (where A=4).

- b) There is no conditional admission to advanced certificate programs.
- c) The units offering advanced certificate programs may specify subject matter and/or coursework prerequisites for admission into the certificate program. Such prerequisites must be listed in the university catalog. Prerequisite courses or equivalent experience must demonstrate current and appropriate preparation as determined by the program. All portions found not to be current or relevant in terms of these requirements must be taken again (for a letter grade) prior to admission. All other grading regulations of the graduate school apply to the courses in the certificate programs, e.g., the prohibition against taking graded classes pass/fail.
- d) Where appropriate, some form of portfolio presentation, performance audition, or other evidence of specific competence may be required for admission. Such criteria will also be listed in the catalog.

### **Process for Proposing and Reviewing Academic Certificate Programs**

- 1) All courses in a certificate program must undergo the normal course approval process prior to approval of the certificate course package.
- 2) Proposal Content:
  - a) SJSU College Dean Curricular Proposal Approval Form(s)
  - b) Originator and title of program
  - c) Justification/need for the program
    - i) Professional and community need statement and evidence, including surveys, letters of support, media copy, and so forth.
  - d) Objectives of the program, including learning outcomes specific to the certificate program and a justification for the inclusion of each course in the certificate program.
    - i) Provide Curriculum outlines and course descriptions, including greensheets for each course.
  - e) An assessment plan for evaluating the student learning objectives defined in d) above.
  - f) Ability to offer the certificate program
    - i) Administration and logistical support plan
    - ii) Instructional resources, including SJSU Library evaluation, teaching plan, and space and equipment needs and availability, if applicable.
  - g) Statement of assurance that offering the certificate program will have a minimal effect of existing baccalaureate and master's programs.
  - h) Catalog copy, which includes the following:

- i) Brief statement of purpose.
  - ii) Admissions requirements.
  - iii) Course requirements.
  - iv) Total number of units.
  - v) GPA needed to receive the certificate if other than a minimum of 2.0 for basic certificates and 3.0 for advanced certificates.
  - vi) Program adviser or source of information about the program.
  - vii) Number of units applicable (if any) to a degree and/or major depending upon matriculation status (with the caveat that the units may not be uniformly applied but require adviser consent).
- 3) Submission process
- a) Academic certificate programs (either basic or advanced) may be proposed by department, school or college curriculum committees.
  - b) Proposals may be submitted, reviewed, and approved at any time during the academic year.
  - c) For entry into the catalog, the approval must be registered with the Office of Undergraduate Studies not later than Dec. 20 of the year prior to a Fall Semester implementation.
- 4) Review Process for new proposals- The reviewing bodies are responsible for timely review and approval of academic certificate programs
- a) Review criteria for all proposals
    - i) Are all courses in the certificate program approved?
    - ii) Is the program adequately justified?
      - (1) Is there a need for the program?
      - (2) Is there an adequate justification for the inclusion of each course in the program?
    - iii) Is the program feasible?
      - (1) Does it have the necessary resources (faculty, space, equipment, material, etc.)?
      - (2) Is the academic unit that will administer the program the appropriate unit?
      - (3) Has the proposal followed the established approval process?
    - iv) Does the proposal contain clear and measurable program level learning outcomes for students and an appropriate assessment plan for those outcomes?
    - v) Does the offering of the program produce a minimal effect on existing bachelor's and master's programs?

- b) Proposals from either department or college level curriculum committees are submitted to the appropriate department chair(s) or school director(s) for review.
  - c) Upon approval, the department or school reviews are then submitted with a copy of the proposal to the appropriate college dean(s) for review and approval.
  - d) Upon approval of the college deans, a copy of the proposal along with reviews from departmental/school and deans are submitted to the appropriate office.
    - i) If the program contains any 200 level courses, the materials are referred to the Graduate Studies and Research Committee for review.
    - ii) If the program does not contain any 200 level courses, the materials are referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for review.
  - e) Simultaneously, the proposals are sent to the Academic Senate - Curriculum and Research committee for review.
  - f) Recommendations from the committees are sent to the appropriate office to be forwarded to the Provost as a package.
    - i) If proposals contain any 200 level courses, the reviews are submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.
    - ii) If proposals do not contain any 200 level courses, the reviews are forwarded to the Office of Undergraduate Studies.
  - g) The Provost makes the final decision on the whether or not to approve the certificate program.
- 5) Review process for existing certificate programs
- a) Substitution, deletion, or addition of courses to the program requires a full review process as outlined in 4) above.
  - b) Reviews of existing certificate programs will be undertaken as part of the program planning process using the criteria outlined in 4) a) above.
  - c) Certificates involving multiple programs will be assigned to a home department under which to be reviewed.

Approved: 4/23/2012

Vote: 9 for, 0 against 0 abstentions

Present: Shannon Bros-Seemann (Chair), Peter Buzanski, , Jean-Luc Desalvo, Dennis Jaehne, Lori Salazar, Wynn Schultz-Krohn, Pamela Stacks, Patricia Swanson, David Terry.

Absent: Sutee Sujitparapitaya, Peggy Cabrera, Annette Nellen, Winncy Du.

Financial Impact: Certificate programs have the potential to increase revenue if students enroll through open university or special session.

Workload Impact if certificate programs are developed or adopted:

1. The development of certificate proposals will require one faculty member to oversee each program.
2. Proposals will increase the number of materials for review and approval for curriculum committees, Chairs/Directors, Deans, UGS or GS&R and the Curriculum and Research committee.
3. Faculty time will be required to review the existing certificate programs during program planning.
4. CMS and Enrollment Services need to establish a matriculation method for certificate students and need to develop a mechanism for reporting certificates on student transcripts.
5. There is a potential for an increase in workload distribution dealing with regular and special sessions impacting faculty, their chairs, and their departments.
6. As per executive order 1047, special session students cannot enroll in the same course or section as regular session students, additional courses will be required for special sessions; these courses may be taught as faculty overload or as bought out faculty time through special sessions.