

TWU UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS POLICY GUIDELINES

As Approved by the Undergraduate Council March 31, 2014

I. RATIONALE: Undergraduate certificate programs are intended to provide additional opportunities to benefit TWU students. Certificate programs are independent and distinct from regular degree programs. A certificate program should be an integrated group of courses that meet a clearly defined need, such as (1) meeting specific work force needs with skills and knowledge, (2) providing continuing education or accreditation for a particular profession, or (3) providing basic competency in an emerging area of interdisciplinary study.

II. POLICY STATEMENT: Undergraduate certificate programs may be created that provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to complement their majors with additional training and/or leadership experience. Certificate programs must be independent and distinct from regular academic degree programs. Each certificate program must be comprised of an integrated group of courses that meet a clearly defined need, such as (1) meeting specific work force needs with skills and knowledge or (2) providing basic competency in an emerging area of interdisciplinary study. All certificate programs will be assessed through student learning outcomes assessment and periodic program review.

III. GUIDELINES:

1. ADMISSION STANDARDS: The locus of control for establishing admissions standards resides with the sponsoring academic unit, subject to the requirement that candidates be enrolled in a degree-seeking undergraduate program at TWU.

2. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS: All certificate programs must adhere to the following guidelines:

A. The certificate program must not duplicate courses required for students major and minor degree programs except in instances where certificates are granted for specialized professional preparation within a major.

B. Certificate programs must include 12 to 18 semester credit hours, at least 12 of which must be at the 3000 or 4000 level.

C. The course work comprising the certificate program must be an integrated and organized sequence of study. A project or practicum component is encouraged but not required.

D. With the exception of internship, practicum, independent projects or clinical work, all courses for certificates must be letter graded.

E. Students must attain a grade of C or better in all certificate course work. Individual programs may set higher standards for completion.

F. Students are responsible for all prerequisites specified in course requirements.

G. Course work taken as part of a certificate program may be counted toward the core curriculum at TWU.

H. Degree-granting departments can determine whether certificate courses can also count as electives toward a major or minor.

3. ADMINISTRATION OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:

A. 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 Undergraduate catalog.

B. A faculty certificate program coordinator is appointed for each certificate program. The certificate program coordinator will be responsible for certifying that a student has successfully completed the program's academic requirements. The Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Partnerships will arrange for recording the completed certificate on the student's transcript.

C. All units developing certificate programs must seek consultation and approval from related academic components.

D. Proposals for certificate programs are submitted to the Office of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Partnerships. Upon initial review, proposals are referred to the Office of Academic Assessment and then to the Program Review Committee of the Undergraduate Council. Next, the recommendations of the Program Review Committee are presented to the Undergraduate Council for action. Approved proposals are then forwarded to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Partnerships, and then to the Provost for final approval. The new certificate program becomes effective once final approval is granted.

E. All changes to approved certificate programs must be sent through the same channels for approval, as described in Item 3.D. above.

F. Upon final approval, notification of all additions, status changes, and certificate program deletions are submitted to Institutional Research and Data Management (IRDM), to the TWU SACS liaison for review and determination of Substantive Change implications, and to the Office of Academic Assessment.

4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:

A. All proposed certificate programs must submit an Academic Institutional Improvement Assessment Plan – Certificate Programs (AIIAP-CP) as part of the certificate program approval process at time of application.

- 1) The assessment plan must state *at least one* measurable and meaningful program-level student learning outcome that indicates what students will be able to do by the end of/completion of the certificate program.
- 2) Each certificate program assessment plan 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.

B. All certificate program coordinators will prepare an annual Academic Institutional Improvement Report according to TWU Academic Institutional Improvement guidelines.

C. All certificate program coordinators will review the certificate program as an addendum to their periodic undergraduate program review every 5 years. The schedule of undergraduate program reviews is found in the POLICY on PERIODIC UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEWS.

D. Accredited programs for which accreditation specifically includes the certificate program(s) must submit the accreditation review in place of the review described in (C).