

CERTIFICATES

PURPOSE: To establish policy on the definition and awarding of CSN certificates in credit and non-credit programs, to describe the kinds of certificate programs offered, their minimum requirements, and the procedures for proposing and reviewing certificates.

POLICY:

I. Definitions and Descriptions

A. CSN awards the following Certificates:

1. Certificate of Achievement (Credit-based), minimum of 30 semester credit hours, awarded by the institution including nine (9) semester hours of general education that includes three (3) semester hours in Communications from the approved list.
2. Certificate of Completion (Credit-based), minimum of 12 semester credit hours, awarded by an academic department. Criteria and rigor to be determined by individual departments.
3. Certificate of Training Completion (Non-credit based) awarded by DWED

B. Credit-based certificates are earned by completing academic courses that carry credit toward an undergraduate degree, Non-credit certificates are offered through the Division of Workforce and Economic Development (DWED) earned by completing courses that (for the most part) do not carry degree credit. Credit certificates are developed by academic programs. Non-credit certificates are developed by DWED, in consultation with college-based programs, as needed.

C. Certificate programs are not intended to supplant or compete with traditional Majors or Emphases of study; rather, their purpose is to serve a variety of student audiences whose educational objectives would be better met through the pursuit of more focused and specialized programs of study. This policy establishes criteria and guidelines for the development, review, and approval of certificate programs, to ensure that these programs will serve their intended function.

II. Certificate Programs at CSN

Certificate programs are designed for a variety of purposes: to offer integrated programs of study in the context of continuing education, to offer programs of study that increase and certify the student's competency in a specialized technical or professional skill or area of study, to offer paraprofessional training, in a particular career field, or to offer a focused program of study in an academic area not otherwise addressed in the curriculum. Certificates may be pre- or post-degree awards.

The time to completion, requirements, and prerequisites of Certificate programs vary with the kind of Certificate the student pursues. Certificates may be awarded for short- or longer-term courses of study, depending upon the breadth and depth of training and competency to be gained through completion of the certificate. Classes taken as part of a certificate program may or may not carry academic credit toward undergraduate degrees. Certificates may be awarded to students upon completion of the Certificate program, or in some cases, at the student's completion of other program requirements.

Credit certificate programs consist entirely of classes that carry credit toward an undergraduate degree. Credit certificates are developed by programs, subject to Curriculum Committee review and approval. Two kinds of credit certificates are distinguished, one offered at the institutional level, Certificate of Achievement, and another at the departmental level, Certificate of Completion.

Non-credit certificate programs are offered through DWED and consist of classes and activities that (for the most part) do not carry degree credit. Non-credit certificate programs may combine credit and noncredit classes and activities, subject to consultation between college-based programs and DWED. Two kinds of non-credit certificates are distinguished, reflecting distinct purposes of such programs and different expectations of student learning outcomes to be demonstrated upon completion of the programs.

III. Certificate Programs: Minimum Requirements *

A. DWED certificates will include the name of the certificate, the training program and its contact hours, and that it is non-credit training. Curriculum supporting this completion are designed for individuals who participate in an organized and integrated program of study but who are not (for the most part) matriculated students of CSN.

1. The Workforce Competency or Work Keys Certificate of Training Completion is awarded for successfully completing a planned educational experience (workshop, conference, short course, seminar, or series of courses and seminars) designed for specific academic and/or professional training objectives. Individual classes and activities composing these certificates carry no degree credit.
2. The Certificate of Training Completion is awarded (a) for successfully completing a planned educational experience (workshop, conference, short course, seminar, or series of courses and seminars) designed for specific academic and/or professional training objectives; and (b) for successfully demonstrating the acquisition of desired skills and/or mastery of a body of knowledge, upon completion of the program of study. Classes and activities composing this certificate may or may not carry College degree credit. Where degree credit classes are included in a program of study, students who are not matriculated students of CSN can enroll in classes through CSN's admissions process.

B. Credit-based Certificates are open only to matriculated students of CSN.

1. The CSN Certificate of Achievement is awarded to students for (a) successfully completing a structured program of educational experiences, determined in advance by a program, department, or school, geared toward a focused academic field of study or a specialized professional or vocational area of competency; and (b) successfully demonstrating, the acquisition of desired skills and/or mastery of a body of knowledge, upon completion of the program of study (e.g., instructional technology for teachers). These classes carry academic credit toward completion of a degree.

2. The CSN Certificate of Completion is awarded to students in various academic departments for successfully completing a structured program of educational experiences prescribed by the department. Where applicable, these classes carry academic credit toward completion of a Certificate of Achievement or an Associate's degree.

IV. Guidelines for Proposal and Review of Credit Certificates *

A. Credit certificate programs should attract students whose needs are better served by more focused and specialized programs of study. Proposals for credit certificate programs should identify precisely the technical/professional/vocational skill(s) or the academic specialty whose study is facilitated by the development of the program and how the program will be assessed. Proposals should also explain the distinction between the certificate and any related majors or emphases, as well as why the academic objectives served by the certificate are not sufficiently served through existing, academic programs.

B. Oversight for credit certificate programs is provided by the academic department and the CSN curriculum committee.

C. Courses associated with credit certificate programs can be offered in instructional-based and DWED settings, as courses in the fall and spring semesters, in the Summer, or in other possible settings, subject to arrangements agreed upon by programs offering the certificate and DWED.

D. Criteria for Certificates of Achievement

1. Certificates of Achievement must include a minimum of 30 semester credit hours of coursework including nine (9) semester hours of general education that includes three (3) semester hours in Communications from the approved list. Either embedded or explicit in the curriculum will be communication, computation and human behavior components that can be clearly identified.

2. All courses required for a certificate must meet catalog grade requirements for relevant academic areas; higher standards may be imposed within a particular certificate program.

V. Procedure for Submitting Proposals for New Certificates

Each new certificate for credit is subject to review and approval by the relevant school curriculum committee and the College Curriculum Committee. Requests for approval of a Certificate should be submitted according to the timeline of the appropriate curriculum committee and should follow formats it requires.

** CSN cannot guarantee that any student will pass a certification or licensing exam. Our requisite coursework is designed to assist the students in understanding the material sufficiently to provide a firm foundation for their studies as they prepare for a certification exam or receive a training certificate.*

To Senate 3/08