



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

Section 2.3:	Academic Programs	
Title:	New Certificate Program	
Number (Current Format)	Number (Prior Format)	Date Last Revised
2.3.2.2.C	II.C.3.g, 2.7	10/2018
Reference:	BOR Policy 2.3.2 – New Programs, Program Modifications, and Inactivation/ Termination	
Related Form(s):	AAC Form – New Certificate Form (<i>Credentials Required</i>)	

Approval Summary Quick View

New Certificate ► CAO ► AAC Program Tracker ► Univ. Website ► AAC ► BOR

1. A **certificate program** is a sequence, pattern, or group of academic credit courses that focus upon an area of specialized knowledge or information and develop a specific skill set. A certificate may include either undergraduate and/or graduate courses and include courses offered collaboratively with another Regental university. Completion of a certificate appears on student transcripts.
2. Certificates typically serve one of three purposes: serving as a standalone education credential option for students not seeking additional credentials (i.e., bachelor’s or master’s degree), serving as a value added credential that supplements a student’s major field of study, or serving as a stackable credential with credits that apply to a higher level credential (i.e., associate, bachelor’s, or master’s degree). Standalone certificates typically address areas of high workforce demand or a specialized body of knowledge. Such certificates require well-defined learning outcomes that provide clear pathways to further education and employment. Proposals for new certificates must identify one or more of these three purposes as justification for authorization of the credential.
3. Certificate programs are typically a subset of the curriculum offered in degree programs and include previously approved courses.
4. Certificate programs by design are limited in the number of credit hours required for completion. Certificate programs consist of nine (9) to twelve (12) credit hours, including prerequisite courses. Proposals to establish new certificates as well as proposals to modify existing certificates must recognize and address this limit.

Example:

Required Certificate Courses (Courses A and B)

Course A (3 credits) / Prerequisite Course C (3 credits)

Course B (3 credits) / Prerequisite Course D (3 credits)

Total Certificate Credits: 12

In rare cases, unique circumstances or standards for licensure will state requirements leading to certificate programs approved for more than twelve (12) credit hours.

5. Deviations from the provisions of this guideline require justification from the university and approval from the system Chief Academic Officer (CAO). This includes deviations from the established credit hour threshold as well as the addition of new courses in order to offer a certificate.
6. Board of Regents (BOR) action is required to establish a new certificate program.
7. The university Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will review the new certificate request with the system Chief Academic Officer (CAO). The notification to the system CAO shall occur at least one AAC meeting prior to the initial posting of the new certificate proposal. If the proposal involves new courses for the university, the notification to the system CAO shall include a brief justification for the new certificate and evidence that the program does not duplicate existing programming within the Regental system (or that the duplication is justified).
8. Executive Director grants formal approval to move forward with the new certificate request and for posting on the [AAC Program Tracking Dashboard](#).
9. Program development notifications will be posted to the [AAC Program Tracking Dashboard](#), and institutions shall have the opportunity prior to the next AAC meeting to make formal inquiries with the posting institutions about the intent and nature of the program. Such inquiries shall be made directly with the provost/VPAA at the posting institution and should include both the system CAO and the system Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs.
10. The system CAO and the Executive Director may approve, deny, or send the proposal form back to the campus for revisions. The Executive Director has final authority for advancing a new certificate request forward for AAC review and to the Board of Regents. Final recommendations to the Board may outline Board staff or institutional concerns for the requested certificate in the “Impact and Recommendation” section of the Board cover sheet.
11. The system CAO will place the request on the AAC agenda.
12. Proposals approved by the AAC move to the BOR agenda for review and approval.

SOURCE:

AAC May 2018; October 2018 (Clerical).