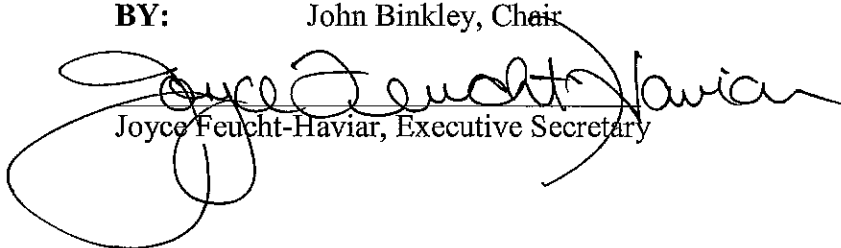


COMMITTEE REPORT OF ADOPTION OF POLICY RECOMMENDATION

DATE: 03/04/11
TO: Steven Stepanek, Faculty President
FROM: Faculty Senate Committee on Extended Learning
BY: John Binkley, Chair



Joyce Feucht-Haviar, Executive Secretary

Name of proposed policy:

At its meeting on 11/17/10, the Committee adopted a policy recommendation by passing the following motion:

John Binkley asked for a motion to endorse this university-level policy change. Tamarah Ashton made the motion and Pat Miller seconded the motion. John Binkley asked for a vote on the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

MSP:

The proposed change is to allow courses for credit to be part of course offerings that comprise the certificate.

Current policy or catalog copy:

The Current Status and the Proposed Change

The University has policies for offering three types of certificates:

1. **The University Certificate:** Must be a carefully planned and integrated curriculum made of five, three-unit courses or more. This type of certificate is designed to be a significant component of advanced (post-baccalaureate) study in a field. Such certificates can be components of masters degrees or post-degree (often post-masters) study options to add to professional credentials at a more rigorous level. This certificate is a formal University-level credential that is issued by the University with the certificate signed by the president. Both the courses and the award of the certificate appear on the student's transcript for this type of certificate.

2. **The Certificate of Advanced Professional Development:** The focus of this type of certificate is, as the name implies, professional development. It is “advanced” because the focus for CSUN is not on entry level programs that might be duplicative of what regional community colleges and occupational centers are offering. For this type of certificate there must be an organized and well planned curriculum with learning outcomes appropriate to the professional preparation goals of the program. The curriculum must be made up of 100 hours of study or more that maybe made up of a number of courses or modules. The program must be graded with grades focused on ensuring that students have the professional knowledge/skills/abilities specified in the learning goals of the program. The certificate cannot be awarded if a student fails any component of the program or falls below the required GPA overall. The courses and the grades that make up each program appear on the CSUN transcript, but the award of the certificate does not. The certificate is awarded for CSUN through the Tseng College with the certificate designed to specify the program content and learning goals.
3. **The Certificate of Participation:** Any CSUN college, department, or unit can issues this type of certificate in keeping with the CSUN policy on Certificates of Participation. It is, as the name suggests a certificate that merely verifies participating in a given program (usually a shorter format program such as a conference or a workshop) and does not attest to any particular educational attainment or demonstrated individual learning achievement.

The change propose (see the attached marked policy document) is to #2 above, The Certificate of Advanced Professional Development. Currently the wording in the policy indicates that the courses that make up the 100 hours of study needed to earn this certificate can only be noncredit (most often courses carrying Continuing Education Credit Units or CEUs – an national approach to measuring the number of hours of instruction in a professional development program). The proposed change would allow the courses that make up the 100 or more hours of carefully planned study with clear and specific professionally focused learning goals to be required to be academic credit course as well as noncredit (CEU) courses.

Nothing else would change. For example, credit course would have to be created and approved by departments and colleges in the standard way with approvals at all the levels needed to create any new credit course. Credit courses would appear on the CSUN credit transcript and noncredit courses on the CSUN noncredit transcript as they do now. Transfer of courses to any other CSUN program would be in keeping with CSUN current policies on transferring courses. The award of the certificate would still not appear on the CSUN credit transcript and would be as it is now.

Proposed policy or catalog copy:

CSUN Policy on the Certificate In Advanced Professional Development

Students may earn The Tseng College of Extended Learning Program Certificate in Advanced Professional Development in recognition of satisfactory completion of a planned sequence of ~~not-for-credit~~ courses and workshops designed and approved in accordance with the following:

- A. The program shall consist of at least one hundred hours of instruction (or the equivalent) specified for the program.
- B. All requirements for the certificate program shall be clearly identified and announced.
- C. Courses in the program shall be graded in the traditional manner (e.g., A through F).
Note: When the certificate comprises noncredit courses or modules, these cannot be transferred to graduate and credential programs.
- D. A 2.5 minimum overall GPA is required in the certificate program for an Advanced Professional Development program. However, certificate programs may set higher standards.
- E. Criteria for assessment of satisfactory performance in the program must be stipulated at the time program approval is sought.
- F. A time limit not to exceed five years shall exist for completion of all certificate requirements. Programs may set shorter time limits for completion.
- G. Programs may be proposed by departments, colleges, institutes, centers, or by the dean of The Tseng College of Extended Learning. When programs contain a distinct departmental orientation, the dean of The Tseng College of Extended Learning will consult with the department and college concerned. All proposals shall be reviewed by The Tseng College of Extended Learning Committee prior to approval by the dean of The Tseng College of Extended Learning.
- H. The dean of The Tseng College of Extended Learning shall designate an appropriate individual as coordinator of an approved program.
- I. The office of the provost and vice president of academic affairs working with The Tseng College of Extended Learning will review all certificate programs every five years or earlier if necessary.
- J. All literature published and circulated in connection with the program shall have the prior approval of the dean of The Tseng College of Extended Learning. Descriptions of approved programs are not authorized for inclusion in the University catalog, but may be announced in brochures or schedules prepared by The Tseng College of Extended Learning.

Learning. With the approval of the provost and vice president of academic affairs and the graduate studies committee, website links to such programs may be inserted in the electronic University catalog.

K. The Tseng College of Extended Learning shall develop and circulate procedures for processing applications for certificates and arranging for issuance.

Procedures (if applicable):

None.

Summary of Supporting Reasons:

Rationale for the Change

There is an increasing number of fields of professional practice that require a specific set of academic credit courses (often over and above a baccalaureate or master's degree) to achieve be prepared to qualify to take a particular professional licensure/certification exam, to apply for a particular state or national licensure/certification, or to add capabilities in a new area of practice in the field in question (such a green building practices in interior design in keeping with emerging state green building policies). It would be helpful to planning, tracking, and acknowledging that the University offers a specific planned study in the professional areas if the credit courses (when appropriate for the professional need in question) as well as noncredit (when appropriate for the professional need in question) could be components of a CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development Program. Additional examples that have emerged in recent months include a three course sequence required for nurses to gain professional standing as a nurse educator and the course work required to achieve different levels of professional standing in medical informatics.

Overall, as time has passed, much as a growing number of fields of professional practice that might have required a baccalaureate degree to practice a decade ago now require a masters (with some moving to require a professional doctorate), fields of professional practice that might have asked in past just for a short course to learn about a new area of practice now are looking for something more rigorous – two to four credit courses in an organized program of study focused on the area of professional practice in question. It is a professional advantage to have that program of study be a formal program and not just a series of courses. CSUN can easily respond to this changing need with the proposed change in the policy for the CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development.

In some fields, there is also a wish to have a pathway for moving to higher levels of professional practice. For example, a nurse with a baccalaureate degree that takes the three courses needed to be recognized as a nurse educator in the field may later wish to complete a more comprehensive five or six course University Certificate in nursing education that offered a more comprehensive few of instructional design, learning theory, and the like. Such a University Certificate could, in turn, be planned from the outset as an elective track in a CSUN masters of nursing program. In this way a practicing nurse returning to school and finding success in doing so might begin to set higher personal

learning goals because the pathway was well defined and carefully planned and each step along the way was a step forward to a higher educational goal. This kind of stepped or stackable curriculum is very much in keeping with how professional practice and professional education is taking shape.

The CSUN Faculty Senate Committee on Extended Learning would be responsible as they are now for judging if a particular professional need is appropriately addressed by CSUN and, if so, if the program of study proposed by the department/college in question is the best approach given the requirements of the field and the strength and sensibility of the curriculum in light of the professional education learning outcomes of the proposed program. The approval process would be in keeping with current policy.

History

The reason CSUN can respond to a changing need in professional education with such a small change in the policy for The Certificate of Advanced Professional Development is that CSUN through the Tseng College has over the years made several changes in this policy. The first was to ensure that all new certificates issued were able to verify specific learning outcomes by both incorporating those into the approach to program planning but also requiring that the courses or modules that the program comprised were graded and that grade requirements for earning the certificate were clear. This helped to ensure that the CSUN certificate was tied to measured learning achievements. This was and remains atypical for certificate programs of this sort offered by most other CSU campuses. The name of the certificate was changed and a noncredit transcript was developed by CSUN. The review and approval process was expanded to engage the Faculty Senate Committee on Extended Learning (few if any other CSU campuses have such a committee and those that have some form of it do not have the faculty much involved in the approval of programs that do not offer academic credit – but the Tseng College sought that additional review and guidance for the Certificates of Advanced Professional Development).

The noncredit terminology was not changed because for many years most of the CSUN self-support offerings for the working adult were noncredit. But, slowly over the years, what was at one point a portfolio of perhaps 30 or more certificate programs of this type was gradually changed. Many of these certificates were originally created when 20 or more years ago when it was possible to get a living wage position with a noncredit certificate in, for example, bookkeeping, or computer applications. But, that is no longer the case. In that light, those older certificate programs were slowly taught out and ended until at present CSUN offers only 4 or 5 certificates based on CEU courses and they are in more narrowly targeted fields with a more tightly designed curriculum.

It has only been within the last two years that there have been a growing number of CSUN departments and colleges that wish to offer a program to meet a particular professional need in the field in question that would be best met by a two to four course program of student that was made up of credit courses. The need to make the Certificate of Advanced Professional Development agile enough to respond to this emerging educational need seemed appropriate. Fortunately, because CSUN has kept pace with such changes over time, the needed change to work effectively with new professional education requirements in many fields is a very small one.