
University Guidelines for Certificate Programs

(Guidelines Based on Executive Order 806)

Types of Certificate Programs

San Diego State University offers two types of certificate programs:

- Academic certificate programs, and
- Professional certificate programs.

Academic certificate programs carry academic credit from SDSU and are offered at two levels: basic (undergraduate-level) and advanced (graduate-level).

Professional certificate programs do not carry academic credit from SDSU. However, some of these programs carry X-level professional development credit. Professional certificate programs are offered only through the College of Extended Studies, SDSU.

In addition, the university also offers cosponsored certificate programs, which may be either credit or non-credit bearing.

General Guidelines for All Certificate Programs

1. No certificates other than those described in this policy may be awarded at SDSU.
2. Self-supporting certificate programs, both basic and advanced, credit and non-credit, will be administered by the College of Extended Studies.
3. Unless otherwise stated, academic certificate programs are available to matriculated and nonmatriculated students. Students seeking a certificate must apply for admission according to the guidelines set forth by the individual certificate program. Non degree seeking students who meet departmental guidelines may earn a certificate through Open University.
4. The policies listed here do not apply to SDSU Certificates of Appreciation, Recognition, etc. For information on these certificates, please contact SDSU ReproGraphic Services.

Academic Certificate Programs

Basic Certificate Programs

Definition

Basic certificate programs provide individuals whose educational objectives do not require a full degree program the opportunity to participate in university academic activities designed to meet specific educational needs.

Jurisdiction

Basic certificate programs are under the jurisdiction of the Undergraduate Curriculum committee.

Specific Requirements

1. Basic certificate programs must include a minimum of 12 units of coursework.
2. Basic certificate programs may include courses numbered 100 through 599. No 600- or 700-level courses may be included in basic certificate programs.
3. A basic certificate program cannot substitute for an approved major, minor, or emphasis program.
4. Courses taken for a major or minor may not be applied to a basic certificate program unless otherwise specified in the catalog.
5. The grading option of credit/no credit is available for courses in basic certificate programs.
6. The adviser 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 (see page 132). 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.

Advanced Certificate Programs

Definition

An advanced certificate program offers post-baccalaureate students coursework leading to a specific applied goal. An advanced certificate program may be inter- or multidisciplinary and generally should have some professional application. It is the responsibility of the department offering an advanced certificate program to carefully evaluate the subjects to be studied and the job opportunities available to graduates to ensure that the program adequately addresses the professional needs of students and the requirements of the professional discipline or area.

Jurisdiction

Advanced certificate programs are under the jurisdiction of the Graduate Council.

Specific Requirements

1. Advanced certificate programs must include a minimum of 12 units of coursework.
2. Advanced certificate programs may only include courses numbered 500 through 799. At least half of the coursework must be at the 600 and 700 level.
3. Coursework for an advanced certificate must not duplicate in content and level the student's prior educational experience.
4. Clearly stated objectives must be included in the proposal.
5. With the approval of the department, units may be applied to both an advanced certificate program and a graduate degree program.
6. All coursework must be letter graded, except for courses that are offered only as credit/no credit.
7. 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.
8. The offering department should establish a minimum of one adviser for each advanced certificate program. In the case of interdepartmental certificate programs, each department involved must have a designated adviser.
9. The adviser 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 completed copy of the verification form to Graduate and Research Affairs (see page 133). Graduate and Research Affairs records the completion of the program on the student's transcript and forwards the signed certificate to the director for distribution to the student.
10. These guidelines constitute minimum standards for advanced certificate programs; departments may propose additional requirements for approval by the Graduate Council.

Admission

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 grade point average of at least 2.5 (where A=4) in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted. If the major is in a related field of study, the department offering the certificate may require the student, prior to admission, to take certain coursework with minimum specific standards of achievement to remove deficiencies. There is no conditional admission to advanced certificate programs. Departments offering advanced certificate programs may specify subject matter and/or coursework prerequisites for admission into the certificate program. Such prerequisites will be listed in the *Graduate Bulletin*. The candidate's record must demonstrate currency of bachelor-level major in terms of these prerequisite requirements. All portions found not to be current or relevant in terms of these requirements must be taken again (for a letter grade) or waived through examination (written or oral) prior to admission. 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 *Graduate Bulletin*.

Guidelines for Proposing and Reviewing Academic Certificate Programs

Academic certificate programs (either basic or advanced) may be proposed by individuals, departments, deans, or college curriculum committees. Proposals may be submitted, reviewed, and approved at any time during the academic year.

The process for proposing and reviewing academic certificate programs is as follows:

1. A proposal for a new academic certificate program is submitted to the appropriate department chair(s), the curriculum committee(s) of the college(s), and then to the college dean(s) for review and approval.
2. Proposals approved by the appropriate college curriculum committee(s) and college dean(s) are forwarded for initial review and dissemination to Curriculum Services with the following information submitted via CurricUNET:
 - a. Originator and title of program;
 - b. Justification for and objectives of the program;
 - c. Proposed clientele;
 - d. Curriculum outline and course descriptions;
 - e. Administration and logistical support plan;
 - f. Instructional resources;
 - g. Catalog copy, which includes the following:
 - brief statement of purpose,
 - admission requirements,
 - course requirements,
 - total number of units,
 - grade point average needed to receive certificate if other than 2.0 for basic certificates and 3.0 for advanced certificates,
 - program adviser or where to get additional information,
 - number of units applicable (if any) to a degree and/or major.
3. Information copies of the proposal are sent to academic deans with a time limit provided for review, questions, and comments. Copies of the proposal are also forwarded to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum Committee.
4. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Curriculum Committee are responsible for timely review and approval of academic certificate programs and for on-going evaluation of such programs. Specifically, the committees:

Review all proposals for the following:

- (1) Is the program adequately justified and does it have the necessary resources (faculty, space, equipment, material, etc.)?
- (2) Are the unit or units proposing to administer the program appropriate and has the proposal followed the established approval process?
- (3) Does the proposal duplicate or overlap with existing certificate programs, majors, minors, concentrations, or emphases?
- (4) Is there satisfactory evidence of coordination and consultation with all appropriate University units?
- (5) Does the proposal contain clear and realistic objectives?

Professional Certificate Programs

Definition

Professional certificate programs do not carry academic credit from SDSU. However, some carry X-level professional development credit; these programs use course numbers X001 – X075. All professional certificate programs are administered by the College of Extended Studies. For further information on these programs, contact the Dean of the College of Extended Studies or Curriculum Services.

Jurisdiction

The College of Extended Studies has jurisdiction over all professional certificate programs.

Specific Requirements

1. Professional certificate programs that carry professional development credit must include a minimum of the equivalent of 12 units of coursework.
2. The number of courses and contact hours required to earn a non-credit certificate is based on one or more of the following:
 - a. Recommendation by industry professionals,
 - b. Industry standards.
3. The College of Extended Studies maintains the records of enrollment and completion for all participants in professional certificate programs.
4. Upon petition and payment of fees by the student, the Dean of the College of Extended Studies will verify that the student has completed all requirements for the certificate.
5. Upon certification by the dean, the certificate will be awarded and a notation will be made in the student's file.

Guidelines for Designing, Proposing, and Reviewing Professional Certificate Programs

Professional certificate programs may be proposed by individuals, departments, and colleges. Proposals may be submitted at any time during the academic year.

1. The originator of a professional certificate program submits the following information to the Dean, College of Extended Studies:
 - a. Originator and title of the proposed program,
 - b. Justification for and objectives of the program,
 - c. Proposed clientele,
 - d. Curriculum outline and course or program description,
 - e. Administration and logistical support plan,
 - f. Program budget,
 - g. Instructional resources,
 - h. Evaluation mechanism.
2. Proposals for professional certificate programs that carry professional development credit must have the approval of a participating department, the dean of the participating college, and the Dean of the College of Extended Studies.
3. Proposals for non-credit certificate programs must have the approval of the Dean of the College of Extended Studies.

Cosponsored Certificate Programs

Cosponsored certificate programs are programs cosponsored by the university and an outside agency or organization, such as a professional association, hospital, international agency, or company. Cosponsored certificate programs may either carry academic credit or not (see appropriate guidelines for academic or professional certificate programs above). The program director is responsible for obtaining these specially prepared certificates from the Office of University Advancement and, in the case of academic credit-bearing cosponsored certificate programs, for ensuring that the Office of the Registrar receives a verification form in order to record the completion of the program on a student's transcript. (See page 135 for example of the acceptable format for a cosponsored certificate.)

Other Certificates

Certificates may also be presented for participation in College of Extended Studies courses, workshops, or seminars which have not formally been designated as certificate programs. Such certificates may be of two types:

- a. Certificate of Appreciation, Participation, or Recognition: used for an approved non-credit educational or training-related activity (such as a workshop or seminar) sponsored by the university (see page 138).
- b. Certificate of Completion: used for self-support, non-credit for continuing education units and extension credit through the College of Extended Studies for certificate programs such as Contract Management, Human Resource Management, Construction Supervisory Management, etc. Page 136 is extension credit, page 137 is non-credit.