



Effective Date Friday, May 1, 2015

Status Final

Policy Type [Executive Vice President & Provost](#)

Contact Office

[Executive Vice President and Provost \(Office of the\)](#)

Oversight Executive

[Executive Vice President and Provost](#)

Applies To

Academic Division

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Reason for Policy

Certificate programs provide a means for improving and increasing skills in a particular area or exploring a career in a different field. Criteria have been established that govern credit and non-credit certificate programs at the University of Virginia.

Definition of Terms

Certificate–Seeking Student

A student who is enrolled in a credit or non-credit certificate program at the University.

Credit Certificate Program

An academic program offered by one of the University's schools in which all instruction is offered on a for-credit basis and which culminates in the conferral of a certificate by the University. There are three types of credit certificate programs:

- **Undergraduate:** Curriculum is composed of undergraduate-level courses and is typically pursued by students who do not possess an undergraduate degree.
- **Post-Baccalaureate:** Curriculum is composed of undergraduate-level courses and is pursued by students who already possess an undergraduate degree.
- **Graduate:** Curriculum is composed of graduate-level courses and is typically pursued by students who already possess an undergraduate degree. This includes post-master's certificates which require a master's degree as a criterion for admission.

Professional (Non–Credit) Certificate Program

A professional certification credential offered by one of the University's schools in which all instruction is offered on a non-credit basis and which culminates in the conferral of a professional certificate by the University and recognized by a relevant professional organization.

Policy Statement

A certificate program at the University must meet the criteria as established below and receive all required approvals as noted.

1. Certificate Program Criteria:

A *credit* certificate program at the University meets the following criteria:

- All instruction is offered on a for-credit basis.
- The program culminates in a certificate that credentials the student in a discipline or professional field.
- The program requires a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 24 credits. Exceptions may be granted in the case of curricular requirements established by a licensing board, state agency, or other oversight entity.
- The program has received the approvals required by this policy and has been created in the Student Information System before students are admitted to the program.

A *professional (non-credit)* certificate program at the University meets the following criteria:

- All instruction is offered on a non-credit basis.
- The program is recognized by an external professional organization as a qualifying credential for practice or advancement in that field.
- The program has received the approvals required by this policy and has been created in the Student Information System before students are admitted to the program.

2. Certificate Program Required Approvals:

A *credit* certificate program must be approved by the school's faculty (according to the established academic review procedures of the school), the school's dean, the Faculty Senate, and the executive vice president and provost. In addition, sufficient advance notification of the initiation of the certificate program must be provided to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV). In some cases, as determined by the provost's office, additional approvals may be required from SCHEV and/or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), the University's accrediting agency. *Credit* certificate programs offered through distance education or at locations away from Grounds (e.g., employer facilities, etc.) may require additional approvals beyond those noted above.

A *professional (non-credit)* certificate program must be approved by the school's faculty (according to the established academic review procedures of the school), the school's dean, and the executive vice president and provost. *Professional (non-credit)* certificate programs offered through distance education or at locations away from Grounds (e.g., employer facilities, etc.) may require additional approvals beyond those noted above.

Certificate programs do not require the approval of the University's Board of Visitors.

Procedures

[Review and Approval Processes Related to Academic Programs and Academic Organization](#)

Related Information

[PROV-011: Student Enrollment](#)

[PROV-012: Financial Aid to Non-Degree-Seeking Students](#)

Policy Background

This is the first version of this policy.

Major Category [Executive Vice President & Provost Policies](#)

Next Scheduled Review Sunday, May 6, 2018

Applies To Text

Academic Division

Last modified February 5, 2024 - 3:11pm

Approved By Executive Vice President and Provost

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