11.10.99.C0.02 Development of Certificate Programs

Revised: October 6, 2025
Next Scheduled Review: December 12, 2029
Revision History

Procedure Summary

Development of a new certificate program may be implemented at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) following review/approval by the appropriate university advisory groups. In some cases, certificates will also require the approval and/or acknowledgment of President's Cabinet, the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and the Department of Education (DOE). The procedure outlines the development and approval process for creating certificate programs, as well as the responsibilities of involved parties.

Procedure

1. GENERAL

   A certificate is considered new when it currently does not exist at the university.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

   2.1. Before beginning proposals for new certificate programs, support for the development of the program must be secured from the department chair, academic unit (e.g., college, school) dean/director, and Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost).

   2.2. After receiving approval to develop the proposal, the developers of the certificate will follow the review process as outlined in section 4 of this procedure.

   2.3. System Policy *11.10, Academic Program Requests* explains the system's guiding principles for academic program requests. Further information on criteria, standards, and processes for approval can be found on the TAMUS website under the Office of Academic Affairs.

   2.4. Requests for new certificate programs will be developed according to the

rules of the THECB. Certificate programs can be developed as part of the normal catalog process, but external approval for implementation the next fall cannot be guaranteed.

2.5. For the purpose of officially recording the successfully completed certificate on the student's transcript, the certificate must meet the minimum credit hour thresholds as established by the university and be approved by the DOE for financial aid eligibility. The minimums are 15 semester credit hours for an undergraduate certificate and 12 semester credit hours for a graduate certificate. The Office of the University Registrar will record the certificate into the student's academic record after the academic unit has certified the successful completion of the certificate. Certificates will be recorded at the end of the term the certificate is completed.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CURRICULUM REVIEW PROCESS

3.1. The faculty originators are responsible for:

(a) Obtaining initial support from the department chair(s), academic unit dean/director, and the Office of the Provost.

(b) Presenting the supported idea to the department faculty for a vote.

3.2. Department chairs are responsible for:

(a) Ensuring that proposals are properly prepared and all necessary forms are completed, including attachments (e.g., syllabi, letters of support or votes from affected departments or committees).

(b) Ensuring that all information being entered into the approved university catalog database is correct.

(c) Alerting other department chairs if the curriculum will involve their departments; supporting documentation from the affected departments must be included in the proposal.

(d) Monitoring the proposed certificate for quality and compliance with the standards of the university, TAMUS, THECB, and SACSCOC.

(e) Documenting the departmental faculty vote.

(f) Routing the complete proposal to the academic unit curriculum committee.

3.3. The academic unit curriculum committees, whose makeup is defined by the academic unit, are responsible for:

(a) Reviewing the materials for quality, integrity, academic rigor, and purpose.

(b) Considering if the changes support the university's mission.

(c) Checking for potential duplication between disciplines within the academic unit.

(d) Reaching out to the faculty originators and the department chair(s) should anything need clarification.

(e) Routing recommendations to the respective academic unit dean/director.

3.4. Academic unit dean/directors and their designated staff are responsible for:

(a) Ensuring that the faculty on academic unit curriculum committees are knowledgeable about the process and the standards for certificates.

(b) Working with the departments and programs to ensure that any changes requested by the majority of the academic unit curriculum committee are addressed.

(c) Holding a vote of the academic unit faculty if required by the academic unit's faculty handbook.

(d) Assuming responsibility for the completeness of materials, copy editing, and compliance with THECB policies.

(e) Having final approval of expedited review items.

(f) Evaluating the viability of the proposals, including faculty workload, financial sustainability, availability of resources, and market demand.

(g) Routing to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC).

3.5. The UCC will be chaired by the chair of the Faculty Advisory Council's Academic Affairs Committee. Details on the committee membership can be found on TAMU-CC's official Committee and Councils webpage. The UCC is responsible for:

(a) Reviewing the materials for quality, integrity, academic rigor, and purpose.

(b) Evaluating proposals to ensure that they support the university's mission.

(c) Identifying unnecessary duplication of certificates and conflicts of interest with other existing certificates.

(d) Ensuring that the proposals meet the quality standards set forth by the university, TAMUS, THECB, and SACSCOC.

(e) Holding meetings as required in the published catalog review schedule.

(f) Routing recommendations to Academic Affairs.

4. INTERNAL REVIEW OF NEW CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

4.1. The originator secures the support of the department chair(s), academic unit dean/director, and Office of the Provost.

4.2. The appropriate forms must be completed in the approved university catalog database. Requested syllabi must include the course number, the name of the course, a course description, student learning outcomes, major assignments, required readings, grading criteria, and a course schedule.

4.3. According to the SACSOC Resource Manual, curriculum approval will begin at the department or program level and be controlled by the faculty. Therefore, the certificate proposal must be reviewed and voted on by departmental faculty first and entered in the university's catalog software no later than the deadlines on the published catalog review schedule. The academic unit's curriculum committee will review and submit to the academic unit dean/director's office according to the published deadlines. It is encouraged to note the academic unit's curriculum committee's meeting schedule to prevent possible delays.

4.4. The academic unit dean/director's office will work with the originator and the department chair(s) to ensure that any changes requested by the majority of the academic unit committee are made in the approved university catalog database. If the department faculty disagree with the changes requested, an explanation of the disagreement must be noted and forwarded with the proposal. If the academic unit's faculty handbook calls for it, an all-faculty vote must be taken before the academic unit dean/director's recommendation is forwarded. The academic unit dean/director's office will submit according to the published deadlines.

4.5. Materials will be forwarded to the UCC according to the published deadlines. Prior to the committees' meeting(s), members will share proposals with their constituencies in order to solicit feedback to bring to the committee meetings. An agenda must be sent to the academic unit dean/director's office

at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting. In order to facilitate the necessary discussion, meetings will be conducted in a medium to encourage synchronous interactions (e.g., face-to-face, web conferencing, conference call). Anyone in the university community is welcome to attend UCC meetings but will need to be recognized by the chair for speaking privileges.

4.6. Materials will be forwarded to the Division of Academic Affairs. A representative from the Division of Academic Affairs will contact originators and department chairs regarding any changes recommended by the UCC. If there is a difference of opinion regarding changes, then the Division of Academic Affairs will facilitate conversations to collaboratively find solutions. The President has the authority to make a final decision.

4.7. The Division of Academic Affairs will help determine if the proposal needs to go before President's Cabinet and out for external review. They will also assist with any necessary notification to SACSCOC. All certificates that meet the qualifications for a substantive change require a prospectus be submitted to SACSCOC. Information on substantive changes can be found in university procedure *11.10.99.C0.05, Substantive Change* and from the university's SACSCOC liaison. The SACSCOC liaison will submit the prospectus to SACSCOC and all other notifications.

4.7.1. Certificate proposals that meet the following criteria must be reviewed by President's Cabinet, TAMUS, and THECB:

(a) Upper-level undergraduate certificates of 21-36 hours or in a discipline where the institution does not have a degree program.

(b) Graduate-level and professional certificates of 16-29 hours or in a discipline where the institution does not have a degree program.

4.7.2. Certificate programs that meet the following criteria and want to be considered for federal financial aid must be reviewed by President's Cabinet and the DOE.

(a) Undergraduate certificates of 15 semester credit hours that meet for a total of at least 15 weeks and prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

(b) Graduate certificates of 12 semester credit hours that meet for a total of at least 10 weeks and prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation but do not lead to a Post-Baccalaureate degree.

5. EXTERNAL REVIEW OF QUALIFIED NEW CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

5.1. Following President's Cabinet approval, the President's Office may submit proposals to TAMUS, in accordance with the process specified in system regulation *11.10, Academic Program Requests*.

5.2. The Office of the Provost will forward evidence of notification of the governing bodies to the Office of Student Financial Assistance for submission to DOE for approval of Title IV financial aid.

5.3. Once notice has been received by the DOE, certificate programs will be considered officially approved, and appropriate campus departments (University Registrar, Veterans Affairs, etc.) will be notified.

5.4. New certificate programs must not be advertised until the Provost or their designee informs the department that final approval is expected by a proposed date. Students cannot be recruited or promised enrollment in certificate programs until final approval is given and the university receives notice.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy *11.10, Academic Program Requests*
University Procedure *11.10.99.C0.01, Development of Academic Degree Programs*
University Procedure *11.10.99.C0.03, Development of Courses and Catalog Revisions*
University Procedure *11.10.99.C0.04, Distance Education Programs*
University Procedure *11.10.99.C0.05, Substantive Change*

Contact Office

Contact for clarification and interpretation:	Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs 361.825.2722