

CAP/CSCC's Final Recommendation on Undergraduate Certificate Programs

Background

One of the major strategic initiatives announced by the President is the coordination of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in support of an "Integrated Transformation". To that end, a proposal to create a Leadership Development Certificate has been developed by an ad hoc committee composed of faculty, academic administrators and student affairs administrators. Because Undergraduate Certificate Programs are likely to be ones that go beyond the normal academic purview, we are asking that these questions be addressed jointly by CAP and CSCC and recommend that they do so by forming a subcommittee with representatives from both committees. This proposed Undergraduate Certificate Program contains both academic and experiential components and it raises the following questions that the Steering Committee believes need to be addressed through governance.

1. What is an appropriate definition of an Undergraduate Certificate Program? In developing a definition, Steering believes it could be helpful to CAP and CSCC to look at existing definitions of Academic Programs (majors, minors, etc.) <http://www.tcnj.edu/%7Eacademic/policy/Majors-typesof.htm>. Also helpful might be the example of the WILL program <http://will.pages.tcnj.edu/about/aboutwill/>
The definition should address these questions:
Should there be a maximum and minimum number of courses? Should there be a maximum and minimum of other learning experiences? What are the components of an Undergraduate Certificate? Should it always be a combination of coursework and experiential learning; or could it be wholly experiential or wholly academic?
2. What should the approval process for an Undergraduate Certificate Program be? In developing an approval process, Steering suggests that CAP and CSCC consider the existing procedure for approving a minor <http://www.tcnj.edu/%7Eacademic/policy/minors.html>. However, CAP and CSCC should also make sure that the approval process includes all elements of the college whose resources and expertise would be involved in a proposed Undergraduate Certificate Program.
3. What structure(s) should be involved in overseeing both development and administration of the Certificate? Should a certificate be housed in a specified administrative unit (e.g., a specific school), and how should this be determined?

The above referenced proposed Leadership Program/Certificate developed by the ad hoc committee could serve as a prototype for other Undergraduate Certificate Programs, and it is likely the first of many such integrated Programs to be developed. The Steering Committee therefore encourages CAP and CSCC to both look at the Proposed Leadership Program and any issues it may raise as they carry out this charge. Steering imagines that if the concept of an Undergraduate Certificate is approved and defined, this would be the first Undergraduate Certificate Program for which approval would be sought.

Charge

On November 21, 2011, Steering charged CAP and CSCC to consider various issues related to the creation of certificate programs at the College. Specifically, Steering asked CAP and CSCC to consider the following. First, how should a "certificate" program be defined in terms coursework and learning experiences that distinguishes it from other academic programs (such as a minor) offered at the College? Second, what would the approval process for a certificate program be? Third, who should oversee the administration of a proposed certificate and where could a certificate program be housed? For example, could a certificate be housed in a department, a school, or across departments and schools?

Testimony

CAP and CSCC worked independently and jointly on this charge. A preliminary recommendation approved by both committees was developed and then sent to the campus community for testimony. An open forum was held on May 2, 2013 to hear input on the preliminary recommendation. The main issue raised at the open forum was that the faculty felt strongly that any certificate requiring transcribed coursework must be approved by the faculty through CAP. Meetings between CAP and CSCC indicated that there could be no single policy for certificate programs and that different approval processes were required depending on the nature of the certificate and the specific components contained within it (for example, a certificate could be proposed consisting entirely of academic coursework, or a certificate could have no coursework and consist solely of outside learning experiences).

In November 2013, the Provost hosted a meeting with representatives from CAP, CSCC and the Office of Student Life to address types of certificate programs and approval processes for each type identified. A new preliminary recommendation was written which addressed the concerns raised at the May, 2013 meeting. This revised recommendation was disseminated to the TCNJ community and testimony was gathered via email, at the Faculty Senate meeting held on April 15th, 2015 and at an open forum held on April 29th, 2015

Final Recommendation

A certificate program may consist of a combination of co-curricular experiences and credit-bearing coursework, or be comprised solely of one or the other. An undergraduate certificate that appears on the academic transcript must consist of a minimum of three credit-bearing course units. Departments or programs who wish to propose a certificate that does not appear on the academic transcript may designate any combination of academic and/or co-curricular experiences as the requirements for that certificate. It is the responsibility of the department(s) and/or programs proposing a certificate to define the certificate requirements, specify eligibility requirements, and outline how the student application process will be managed. A certificate that contains both academic and co-curricular experiences must be approved by both CAP and CSCC concurrently, but a program that consists solely of credit-bearing coursework is reviewed by CAP alone, and a program that consists solely of co-curricular experiences is reviewed by CSCC alone.

The approval process for a certificate program that includes credit-bearing coursework is the same as for undergraduate minors.

Any certificate program that includes co-curricular experiences (or consists entirely of co-curricular experiences) beyond those integrated into courses must be reviewed by CSCC. The certificate proposal must address the Certificate Program Co-Curricular Competencies (see attached), which will be reviewed by CSCC.

Sponsors of a certificate program which consists solely of co-curricular experiences must designate a unit or program to act as the sponsor of the proposed program. The leader of the unit designated as the sponsor of the proposed program must sign off on the proposal and must agree to monitor student participation and program assessment. In addition, the unit sponsoring the proposed program must agree to coordinate and track required co-curricular experiences to determine student fulfillment of certificate requirements, student participation in co-curricular experiences, and student learning outcomes of the those experiences.

Additionally, the following guidelines apply to the certificate process.

- The policy of double counting courses or activities for a certificate is the same as that for minors.

- Certificates are awarded after the term in which program requirements are met and validated (after the fall, winter, spring, or summer terms). See existing college policies about the completion of degrees.

Committee on Student and Campus Community (CSCC)
Certificate Program Co-curricular Competencies

The Committee on Student and Campus Community (CSCC) will examine any co-curricular components in a certificate program proposal and any proposals that consists solely of co-curricular experiences. The purpose of this document is to enumerate the competencies that participants in the proposed certificate should acquire through the co-curricular element of the program. Procedures for submission, review and approval are explained elsewhere. The co-curricular component will be reviewed using the following criteria:

1. **Minimum requirements for participation.** The proposal must outline any minimum requirements for participation such as student status, grade point average, unit hours, etc.
2. **Learning Outcomes.** The proposal must include specific learning outcomes and address how each co-curricular learning outcome **contributes to**, or **qualifies as** one of the following Signature Experiences [<http://strategicplanning.pages.tcnj.edu/files/2014/01/Signature-Experiences-Final-Revised-1.29.14.pdf>]:
 - a. **Personalized, Collaborative, and Rigorous Education.** Students learn in small classes taught by faculty scholars who engage them in an intellectual community by fostering critical thinking and creativity, in a mentored progression, beginning with a living-learning first year experience and culminating in an enriching capstone course.
 - b. **Undergraduate Research, Mentored Internships, and Field Experiences.** Faculty and staff mentor students in intellectual and professional development opportunities through undergraduate research and collaboration, internships, and field experiences.
 - c. **Community Engaged Learning.** Through curricular and co-curricular activities, students extend themselves and learn by service to and engagement with diverse communities on and off campus.
 - d. **Global Engagement.** By studying away, domestically or abroad; through curricula that address global issues and perspectives; and by engaging with people from other cultures on and off campus; students forge international connections and build intercultural skills that prepare them to participate in the global community.
 - e. **Leadership Development.** Guided by faculty members, staff, and peers across campus, students learn to be dynamic and collaborative leaders in both curricular and co-curricular settings.
3. **Learning Activities.** The proposal must include an enumerated list of intended activities, experiences, and/or programs that connect to the specific expressed learning outcomes. In addition, the proposal should outline a defined time period for the required learning activities. Examples may include, but are not limited to community service, guest lectures, involvement within an organization, leadership programs, etc.
4. **Assessment.** The proposal must describe the methods for assessing students' experiences and how the achievement of desired learning outcomes will be determined. Such a plan must include the relevant learning outcomes, assessment methods, timing, and reporting mechanisms.
5. **Management/Oversight.** The proposal must provide the following:
 - a. **Coordination of programs, activities, and experiences.** How will the coordination of the program, activities and experiences be supported at the levels of department, school, and/or institution?
 - b. **Verification process.** How will participation in programs, activities or experiences be verified?

c. **Tracking mechanism.** How will the responsible office or department track the co-curricular element of the certificate?

Available and/or Needed Resources. What human, facility, or fiscal resources are available and/or needed to provide the management and oversight of the co-curricular aspect of the certificate as described in the proposal? The proposal should outline a plan to procure any outstanding needed resources

The College of New Jersey
Certificate Approval Form

Name of Certificate:

Term Effective Date:

Sponsoring Department/Unit:

Type of Certificate: (check all that apply)

Curricular only

Co-Curricular only

Combination of Curricular and Co-Curricular

Will the certificate appear on the academic transcript? (circle one) **YES** **NO**

Note that three courses are required for a certificate to appear on the academic transcript.

Cover Sheet

Please attach a cover sheet that describes the certificate and its requirements. For interdisciplinary or college-wide certificates, list other departments, units, and/or schools with courses included in the certificate. For certificates that include co-curricular experiences, please include a narrative that outlines how the "Certificate Program Co- curricular Competencies" are addressed.

Initial Approval

Signatures indicate that all affected units have reviewed the attached proposal, and that the attached proposal includes a detailed outline of the curriculum and needed resources such as: a. faculty and support of instruction for all units involved; b. library resources; c. equipment, laboratory support, and computer support; and d. facilities for all units involved. If the certificate does not involve courses outside the home department, the proposal is submitted to the Steering Committee after this step.

Department Chair /Administrative Unit Director

Date

School Curriculum Committee/Executive Officer
or Designee

Date

Please provide approvals from any additional school curriculum committees, College offices, and deans on an attached sheet.

College Governance

If recommended by the school curriculum committee(s), the proposal is submitted to the Steering Committee to be forwarded to the Committee on Academic Programs (CAP) and/or CSCC for review and recommendation.

Steering indicating review by CAP and/or CSCC

Date

Final Approval

Date

Provost

Date