

## **Policy on Non-Credit Certificates**

(Approved 9/22/2022)

The primary responsibility of the University is to provide educational experiences leading to a baccalaureate, master's or doctoral degree. It also provides education for professional licenses or credentials offered by off-campus authorities.

In addition, the University offers coursework which serves a more specialized purpose, which is of significant value to individuals across the span of their professional, community and personal life, which can be done through focused non-credit programs. Offering non-credit programs can help the University provide short programs that meet the needs of employers and offer learning experiences geared towards the adult learner. To encourage the development of non-credit certificates programs, and to recognize the individuals who complete them, the University has approved the following policy governing the issuance of non-credit certificates.

The University authorizes the issuance of two types of non-credit certificates:

1. The Certificate of Advanced Professional Development
2. The Certificate of Participation

The University's non-credit Advanced Professional Development certificates consist of formally constructed and approved areas of study designed to meet requirements for professional competence, expand access to specialized knowledge, and meet occupational needs for advanced interdisciplinary work. Issuance of the University's Certificate of Advanced Professional Development attests to the acquisition of specialized knowledge and skills in particular academic, professional or service areas.

The second type of non-credit certificate is the Certificate of Participation, which may be awarded in recognition of any of a wide variety of educational experiences sponsored by some segment of the University. Such certificates are not meant to connote any specific level of competence and may not be designed or used for such purpose. They are meant to confirm participation of the student in the program.

All non-credit certificates bearing the name of the University shall be one of these two

types. Furthermore, no member of the University faculty, administration, or staff other than those who are authorized, as outlined above in this document, shall issue a certificate bearing the University name; or the name of any of the University's colleges, departments, units, or study centers; or the University logo.

## **I. The CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development**

The CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development is administered and issued by the University's Tseng College of Extended Learning. Students may earn a CSUN Certificate of 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 curriculum for a CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development shall consist of at least 18 hours of instruction.
- B. All requirements for the non-credit certificate program shall be clearly identified and announced.
- C. The proposal for each Certificate of Advanced Professional Development non-credit program shall include a statement about the approach to grading of courses in the program. The statement will explain the approach to grading, such as: satisfactory/unsatisfactory, completed/incomplete, pass/fail or traditional letter grades (e.g., A through F). Though graded, courses and/or modules in a Certificate of Advanced Professional Development non-credit program cannot be transferred to a University degree and credential program.
- D. Criteria for assessment of satisfactory performance in the program must be stipulated in the non-credit program proposal before it is put forward for approval.
- E. A time limit not to exceed five years shall exist for completion of all certificate requirements and shall be specified in the non-credit program proposal. Programs may set shorter time limits for completion, if appropriate to their educational purpose.
- F. Programs may be proposed by University 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 CSUN Faculty Senate Committee on Extended Learning, which

will provide feedback to the Dean of CSUN's Tseng College of Extended Learning before a non-credit program is approved by the Dean.

- G. The Dean of the Tseng College of Extended Learning shall designate an appropriate individual as coordinator for any approved non-credit program.
- H. The Tseng College of Extended Learning will review all CSUN Certificate of Advanced Professional Development non-credit programs every five years, or earlier if necessary, to ensure program content remains relevant and up to date.
- I. 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 websites, in digital distribution formats, or in other marketing modes prepared by the Tseng College of Extended Learning and with the approval of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Graduate Studies Committee. Program descriptions should be appropriately listed with CSUN's other degree and non-credit certificate program offerings.
- J. The Tseng College of Extended Learning shall develop and implement procedures for processing applications for enrollment in CSUN's Certificate of Advanced Professional Development non-credit programs. The Tseng College of Extended Learning will also arrange for issuance of the certificate to students who successfully complete a given program.

## **II. The Certificate of Participation**

A Certificate of Participation may be awarded in recognition of any of a wide variety of educational experiences sponsored by some segment of the University. Such certificates are not meant to connote any specific level of competence and may not be designed or used for such purpose. The rules governing the issuance of such a certificate bearing the University's name or the name of any of its colleges, departments, units, or study centers, are as follows:

- A. Certificates shall not be awarded for completion of regular University credit courses individually or in clusters.
- B. All wording on the certificate should be such that there is no implication of any kind that the University by issuing this kind of certificate is attesting to any level of skills gained or educational achievement.

- C. Requests to issue a Certificate of Participation shall be reviewed and approved by the head of the relevant sponsoring unit (Dean, department chairs, center/institute director, Provost for a University level offering, or relevant vice president for offerings from other administrative units or University divisions).
- D. Approved Certificates of Participation apply only to a specific educational, co-curricular, or professional development experience, with a specific date of offering.