

MEMORANDUM

June 21, 2007

TO: Brian Berry, Dean, School of Economic, Political, and Policy Sciences
Michael Coleman, Dean of Undergraduate Education
Austin Cunningham, Dean of Graduate Education
George Fair, Dean, School of General Studies
Myron Salamon, Dean, School of Natural Sciences & Mathematics
Robert Helms, Dean, School of Engineering & Computer Science
Dennis Kratz, Dean, School of Arts & Humanities
Bert Moore, Dean, School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences
Hasan Pirkul, School of Management

FROM: Hobson Wildenthal, Executive Vice President and Provost

REFERENCE: Professional (non-credit) Certificates

The University has an explicit policy (PM 07-III.21-94) on the implementation and assessment of Academic Certificate Programs, i.e., programs that involve organized courses for credit. The University also has a policy (PM 78-III.30-24) on continuing and extended education activities that discusses the goals of extramural education at UTD and the means for compensation for those involved. I urge you to take into consideration both policies when contemplating new certificate programs.

As you know, UTD does not currently have an office of Continuing Education, nor does the University have an official (recognized) continuing education program. Nonetheless, some programs and schools do wish to offer professional education to individuals who are not seeking academic credit but who are seeking certification. All such education must be closely monitored by the Dean of the School in which the program is housed and must follow the procedures outlined in this memo.

1. Before any non-degree seeking, professional certificate program can be implemented, the certificate program must first be vetted and approved by a standing faculty committee that deals with curricular matters (where possible the curriculum committee) within the School which will offer the program. This process will involve (1) a written description of the professional certificate program, including a mission statement that states who the targeted audience is, (2) either an annotated course list or a description of the curriculum, (3) a complete assessment plan that identifies multiple objectives and multiple measures for each objective, (4) a list of the faculty/instructors, including their qualifications, who will teaching in the certificate program, and (5) an implementation schedule.
2. Upon the approval of the professional certificate program by the designated school committee, the Dean of the School must write a short memo, stating his or her official approval, to the Provost.
3. No certificate program can enroll students or do any advertising, including web postings, until the Provost has authorized the existence of the program.
4. The use of the University seal on any publicity about the program or on the certificate of completion must be pre-authorized by the Vice President of Communications.
5. Each professional certificate program's continued existence must be evaluated by the Dean of the School annually (before the first day of classes each fall). This evaluation will consider (1) the annual assessment report of the program, (2) the value and cost of the program, (3) the qualifications of the instructors for the coming year, and (4) the participation rates in the program. The Dean's evaluation must be received in the Provost's office by September 1 if the program is to continue.
6. If the Dean determines that the professional certificate program should be discontinued, all promotional material on the web and elsewhere must be immediately removed.

The value of professional certificate programs to the University and to the Metroplex is clear. Following these procedures will ensure the accountability and integrity of those programs.

