



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

MEMORANDUM

January 8, 2024

TO: School Deans

FROM: Inga H. Musselman, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

REFERENCE: Professional (non-credit) Certificates

The University has an explicit policy (UTDPP1120) on the implementation and assessment of Academic Credentials Policy – Microcredentials, Certificates, Digital Badges, and Recognition of Completion, i.e., programs that involve organized courses for credit. The University also has a policy (UTDPP1040) on Continuing and Extended Education Activities that discusses the goals of extramural education at UT Dallas 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, UT Dallas does not currently have an Office of Continuing Education, nor does the University have an official continuing education program that is authorized to award continuing education credit. Nonetheless, some programs and schools do wish to offer professional education to individuals who are seeking certification rather than academic credit. 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, it must first be vetted and approved by a program and/or school 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 the job market 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 be teaching in the certificate program; and (5) an implementation schedule. Templates for professional certificates and assessment plans can be found online on the Provost's Office Academic Program Proposals [website](https://provost.utdallas.edu/policies-tools/academic-program-proposals/new-certificate-program-forms/#professional) at:
<https://provost.utdallas.edu/policies-tools/academic-program-proposals/new-certificate-program-forms/#professional>

2. Upon the approval of the professional certificate program by the designated program and/or school faculty, the Dean of the School must write a short memo, stating his or her official approval. The endorsement and the completed templates must be submitted to the Associate Vice President for Institutional Success and Decision Support (serenity.king@utdallas.edu) who will review the proposed request and then obtain the Provost's approval as applicable.
3. No professional 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 Office of Communications (communications@utdallas.edu).
5. Each professional certificate program's continued existence must be evaluated by the Dean of the School every two years (before the first day of classes each fall). This evaluation will consider (1) an annual 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 available for review by the Provost's Office if requested.
6. If the Dean determines that the professional certificate program should be discontinued, a notification to close the program must be submitted to the Associate Vice President for Institutional Success and Decision Support (serenity.king@utdallas.edu). This notification must include a teach-out plan for any existing students.

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 professional programs.