

Reviewed: November 2025

Basic Principles in Presenting a Certificate Program to the CSUN Faculty Committee on Extended Learning

Noncredit Certificate Programs (Certificate of Advanced Professional Development)

Before a new certification program can be offered (or marketed), it must be approved. The noncredit certificate programs are approved by the dean of ExL. But, the dean will look for a recommendation to approve from the Faculty Committee on Extended Learning before she acts to approve a new certificate program. Getting a recommendation to approve from the Faculty Committee on Extended Learning requires the following steps:

1. A draft proposal should be prepared using the models available from the assistant dean for program development. The associate dean and the dean should review the draft proposal three weeks before the date you plan to present the program to the Faculty Committee on Extended Learning. This allows time for the proposal to be reviewed and changes to be made before the material must go to members of the Faculty Committee.
2. Also, three weeks in advance, let the committee's recording secretary know that you plan to present a new certificate at the next committee meeting. Remember, this is a formal standing committee of the CSUN Faculty Senate and the faculty chair of the committee working with the dean plans the agenda for upcoming meetings. ExL cannot just add to or change the agenda unilaterally. The dean and the chair meet to plan the agenda about two weeks before the meeting.
3. An electronic copy of the final draft of the proposal should be delivered to the committee's recording secretary a minimum of 10 days before the meeting at which you plan to present the certificate program. It is important that we give faculty committee members at least that long to read and consider the proposal before the committee meeting. The recording secretary will gather all the material for the upcoming meeting and share them with the committee members. No material should be shared to committee members in any other way.
4. At the meeting of the Faculty Committee on Extended Learning, be prepared to make a formal presentation of the certificate program. Seek guidance from the associate dean if you have not done this before. If the program is recommended for approval, you can move on to the next step. If the committee asks for changes to be made in the program, those changes should be made in a new draft prepared for review at the next committee meeting (three weeks in advance of the next meeting you will again have to alert the recording secretary about the

need to be on the agenda, and you will have to share the revised proposal for distribution at least 10 days in advance of the meeting).

5. Once the faculty committee has recommended approval, you should bring a copy of the proposal in the form recommended for approval by the faculty committee to the recording secretary for formal review and approval by the dean. The dean may have additional questions or may ask for additional refinement in the proposal before approving it. Once the dean has given formal approval, the program may be marketed and offered.
6. A copy of the proposal with notation on the cover of the date on which the faculty committee recommended approval and the date on which the dean approved should remain in a central file with the associate dean. This will be the reference point for the program. If key features of the program are changed (beyond normal update of courses) from the approved version, the program will need to be resubmitted for review by the faculty committee. Campus policy calls for each certificate program to be formally reviewed every five years. It is this original approved version of the program that will provide a foundation for the review.

Credit Certificate Programs (University Certificate Programs)

Credit certificate programs need to go through all of the steps outlined above and also must go to the Faculty Senate's Graduate Studies Committee for review and approval as well. Work with the ExL associate dean to plan and arrange your visit to the Graduate Studies Committee. The associate dean, dean, or designee will accompany you to this meeting. The associate dean, working with the dean, will make appropriate arrangements with the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and the associate vice president for graduate studies that serves as staff to that committee.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Both the Faculty Committee on Extended Learning and The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee has only a limited number of meetings each year. Neither committee meets in the summer or during the winter break or intercession. To ensure that a new certificate program is approved in time to launch in a particular semester, work with the associate dean to develop a viable timetable for approval and launch. pr:E:ExL/Faculty Committee/Process for Certificate Approval/4-23-02

Certificate Program Proposal Checklist

Program Name:

Date:

Program Developer:

College:

Collaborative Partners:

Development Checklist

(Note - this checklist was developed based on the document dated April 14, 1998 "Basic principles for the Creation of Certificate Programs")

Check one: (program must meet this minimum, but may require more.)

Credit = 15 semester units for upper division or graduate level

Noncredit = 100 hours of instruction

How many outside units/classes can be transferred in? (May not exceed more than 25% of the program):

The program can be completed by a part-time student in two years or less (both credit and noncredit programs).

The certificate information clearly states that the program must be completed within a timeframe (for credit = max of seven years, for non-credit = max of five years. Timeframe may be less, but not more.)

A clearly defined admission and application procedure has been established. At a minimum, this must include a statement to the effect that students must apply before 25% of the courses have been completed. Individual programs can make the application required earlier but not later.

A review date (every five years or earlier from approval date) has been calendared to ensure in-depth review. (Note: an annual review by the instructors/program coordinator is suggested to keep the program up to date and excellent.)

The proposed program does not infringe on other existing degree or credential programs of the University.

The targeted group of learners has been clearly defined.

The distinctive educational goals have been clearly defined.

The program content and the logical organization of the curriculum have been defined.

The individual courses have been defined.

Potential instructors and/or criteria for hiring instructors have been defined.

The criterion for admission has been clearly defined.

The criteria for completion of the program and awarding of the certificate have been clearly defined.

- Grading standards have been clearly defined. At a minimum, they must be a 2.0 for undergraduate courses in the credit programs, 3.0 for graduate credit courses in the program and a 2.5 7 for non-credit programs.

Resource Checklist: (For self-supporting programs - must be done through the College of Extended Learning.)

- Planning budgets have been done (must include potential revenue, potential costs, risks involved, and plan for revenue sharing if appropriate.)
- A cross functional work team has been assembled at ExL to discuss and plan for the following: academic support, registration, marketing, distance learning (if any), any unusual requests.

That team includes (list names of department representatives):

Planning for Review:

- Criteria for assessing the effectiveness of instruction have been developed.
- Criteria for assessing the overall success of the program have been developed (i.e.: student enrollment, student retention, graduation rates, etc. as well as fiscal assessment.)

Other considerations: