

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
RULES COMMITTEE
concerning
**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
AN AD HOC COMMITTEE ON CERTIFICATES (ACERT)**

Presented at the
669th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
February 14, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Maurianne Adams, Chair
Marilyn Billings
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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON CERTIFICATES (ACERT)

Rationale:

The Faculty Senate has “certificate” proposals pending in several Councils which do not conform to the University’s current understanding of, and regulations regarding “certificates.” The purpose of this Ad Hoc Committee is to deliberate the purpose and desirability of current and proposed undergraduate and graduate certificate programs and to determine whether to recommend changes in the University’s current policies and procedures with respect to certificates at both the graduate level and the undergraduate level.

Name:

Ad Hoc Committee on Certificates (ACERT)

Charge:

1. To deliberate the current and proposed graduate and undergraduate certificate programs; to determine the relation between certificates and current policy; to consider whether it is generally desirable and appropriate for the University to expand its curricular offerings through the development of certificates; and to determine whether to recommend changes in the University’s current policies and procedures with respect to certificates at both the graduate level and the undergraduate level.
2. The Ad Hoc Committee shall proceed to deliberate conceptual and operational questions including but not necessarily limited to the following:
 - a. *Undergraduate vs. Graduate.* Presently, there is a single definition and approval process for certificates. Perspectives at the two levels seem to be diverging. Should the approval policy and procedure reflect this divergence?
 - b. *Program level and focus.* Presently, the minimum requirements for a certificate are completion of five courses. Increasingly, certificate proposals (especially at the graduate level) are becoming more and more elaborate and taking on characteristics of degree programs. What are the implications of this? Should the policy address this issue?
 - c. *Overlap with degree programs.* The current policy requires that certificates “extend beyond the requirements of any individual major.” Increasingly, certificate proposals are paralleling or overlapping degree requirements. How can this be resolved?
 - d. *Eligibility and admissions.* The current policy makes no reference to eligibility for or admission to certificate programs (perhaps, because it assumes that all students eligible for certificates are already matriculated students), yet proposals increasingly include elaborate admissions policies for non-matriculated students.

Are separate admissions procedures appropriate for some or all certificate programs? Should each certificate program designate criteria for eligibility, whether for matriculated or non-matriculated students? How should these questions be addressed, and how will the cumulative resource implications of such admissions procedures be addressed?

- e. *Relationship to existing degree programs.* Some certificate programs seem to be designed as “stepping stones” into degree programs, but current regulations constrain the transfer of credits earned in “non-degree” status into degree programs. Should the policy which imposes such constraints be modified?
- f. *Resources.* Certificate proposals universally state that “no additional resources are needed” (often adding “at this time.”), yet proposals position certificates as a means of expanding enrollment. How should we think about this, especially with respect to departments already struggling to meet their current obligations? Resources may be needed for the administration of certificates, or for separate admissions programs, or to ensure the continuity of cross-departmental courses that constitute a certificate.

Membership:

1. The Chair of the Academic Matters Council or a designee;
2. The Chair of the Undergraduate Education Council or a designee;
3. The Chair of the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee of the Graduate Council or a designee;
4. The Chair of the Graduate Council or a designee;
5. The Chair of the Program and Budget Council or a designee;
6. The Chair of the Academic Priorities Council or a designee;
7. The Chair of the University Service, Public Service and Outreach Council or a designee;
8. The Chair of the Rules Committee or a designee;
9. The Dean of the Graduate School or a designee;
10. The Vice Provost for Outreach or a designee;
11. The Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Assessment or a designee;
12. The Deputy Provost or a designee;
13. The Executive Director of Five Colleges, Inc. or a designee;
14. The Secretary of the Faculty Senate; and
15. Two members of the Faculty at large, selected by the Committee on Committees.

Reports:

A progress report shall be provided at the meeting of the Faculty Senate on April 24, 2008. Other reports to the Faculty Senate or the Provost may be provided at any time. The Ad Hoc Committee shall submit its final report on or before June 16, 2008.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on
14-08 Certificates (ACERT), as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 08-018A.