

Florida Gulf Coast University
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Introduction

The following descriptions and procedures are consistent with Regulation 8.011 *Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings* adopted by the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) on March 24, 2011, and Policy 2.42 *Academic Program Authorization* approved by the Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) Board of Trustees on June 19, 2007. The following procedures address the planning and approval of academic programs including degree programs, program majors, minors, concentrations, and academic certificates at FGCU.

Degree Program

Definition: A degree program is an organized curriculum leading to a college degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics, or as demonstrated by the existence of similar programs existing at other colleges and universities. An argument may also be made for a truly unique degree program, based upon emerging research trends or occupational demand. Each degree program shall have designated faculty effort and instructional resources and shall be assigned a CIP code and included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory. Each degree program shall include at least one program major as defined below, but may have multiple majors.

Baccalaureate Degree Program: A baccalaureate degree program at FGCU consists of 120 hours distributed as follows: (Exceptions to the 120 hours must be approved consistent with BOG Regulation 8.014 *Bachelor's Degree Exception to 120 Credit Hours Requirement*.)

- a. The first 60 hours of a 120-hour baccalaureate degree program consists of the following:
 - o General Education Core Curriculum. Consistent with State Board of Education Rule 6A10-024, *Articulation Between and Among Universities, Community Colleges, and School Districts*, FGCU's general education core curriculum consists of 36 semester hours of college credit in communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences (see FGCU catalog for distribution).
 - o Common prerequisites coursework. The state-level Articulation Coordinating Committee has approved common prerequisites or their substitutions, which must be completed by all students going into a field of study and which must be accepted by all state universities and applied toward the degree. The number of semester hours required varies by field of study. (<http://www.facts.org>) Courses can be used to satisfy both general education and common prerequisite requirements.

- Electives. Consistent with Rule 6A-10.024, the university can recommend, but not require, students take specific courses as electives during the first 60 hours of a baccalaureate degree.
- b. The last 60 hours of a 120 baccalaureate degree program consists of the following:
 - University Colloquium: 3 hours
 - College common core (optional)
 - Major: Minimum of 27 hours
 - Concentration (optional): 9 to 18 hours
 - Upper division coursework: At least 48 hours of coursework at the 3000 level or higher.
 - Senior Seminar: A 3-hour course included in the college common core or the major.
 - Service Learning.
- c. Other admission and graduation requirements as noted in the FGCU catalog including college-level communication and computation skills (Rule 6A-10.030, formerly known as the “Gordon Rule”) and foreign language (Rule 6A-10.02412, BOG Regulations 6.002 and 6.004).

Master’s Degree Program: A master’s degree program consists of at least 30 semester credit hours distributed as follows:

- Major: At least 21 hours
- Concentration (optional): 9 to 18 hours

New Degree Programs: Faculty and academic units proposing new degree programs complete a *Request for Approval to Plan* that describes the proposed curriculum and addresses need, demand, resources, and fit with the University’s mission. The completed *Request for Approval to Plan* is reviewed by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, the Office of Planning and Institutional Performance, and the Provost. If approval to plan is granted by the Provost, the faculty and academic unit complete a *Request to Offer a New Degree Program*.

The *Request to Offer a New Degree Program* and supporting documents are reviewed and approved by the relevant college/school curriculum team, the college dean, the Deans Council, the Undergraduate Curriculum Team or Graduate Curriculum Team, the Provost, and the President prior to submission to the Chair of the Academic/Student/Faculty Affairs Committee of the FGCU Board of Trustees. A qualified external consultant reviews professional and doctoral level proposals prior to consideration by the FGCU Board of Trustees. Upon approval by the FGCU Board of Trustees, the proposal is forwarded to the Board of Governors’ Office of Academic and Student Affairs for assignment of a CIP and inclusion in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

Revisions to Existing Degree Programs: Faculty and academic units proposing revisions to existing degree programs complete the *Degree Program Revision Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand; library, faculty, technology, space and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team,

college dean, Undergraduate Curriculum Team or Graduate Curriculum Team, and the Provost (or designee).

Program Major

Definition: A *program major* is an organized curriculum offered as part or all of an existing or proposed degree program. The program major shall be reasonably associated with the degree program under which it is offered and shall share common core courses with any other majors within the same degree program. Although in some cases the major and the degree program names are synonymous, only the degree program shall be assigned a CIP Code and shall be included in the State University System Academic Degree Program Inventory as a stand-alone program.

A program major at the baccalaureate level consists of a minimum of 27 semester credit hours. A program major at the master's level consists of a minimum of 21 hours.

New Program Majors: Faculty and academic units proposing a new program major complete a *Request for Approval to Plan* that describes the proposed curriculum and addresses need, demand, resources, and fit with the University's mission. The completed *Request for Approval to Plan* is reviewed by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, the Office of Planning and Institutional Performance, and the Provost. If approval to plan is granted by the Provost, the faculty and academic unit complete a *Request to Offer a New Program Major*.

The *Request to Offer a New Program Major* is reviewed and approved by the relevant college/school curriculum team, the college dean, the Deans Council, the Undergraduate Curriculum Team or Graduate Curriculum Team, the Provost, and the President prior to submission to the Chair of the Academic/Student/Faculty Affairs Committee of the FGCU Board of Trustees. Upon approval by the FGCU Board of Trustees, the Board of Governors' Office of Academic and Student Affairs is notified of the new major. No CIP is assigned.

Revisions to Existing Program Majors: Faculty and academic units proposing revisions to existing program majors complete the *Degree Program/Major Revision Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand; library, faculty, technology, space and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team, college dean, Undergraduate Curriculum Team or Graduate Curriculum Team, and the Provost (or designee).

Concentration

Definition: A *concentration* is an organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student's degree plan and enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. Concentrations are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

A concentration in a baccalaureate degree program consists of 9-18 hours. A concentration in master's degree program consists of 9-18 hours.

New Concentrations: Concentrations may be included as part of the curriculum for the in a degree program or major (see New Degree Programs or New Program Majors).

Revisions to Existing Concentrations: Concentrations are revised as part of a revision to the degree program or major under which the concentration is offered (see Revisions to Existing Degree Programs or Revisions to Existing Program Majors.)

Minor

Definition: A *minor* is an organized curriculum that is offered as part of an individual student's degree plan and enhances or complements the degree to be awarded in a manner that leads to specific educational or occupational goals. Minors are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory.

A minor consists of at least 15 semester credit hours, but not more than 21 hours. Each prerequisite course must be included in this count unless it meets the following exception: the course is an option to satisfy general education requirements. Prerequisites that are not included in the total credit hour count for the minor must be listed in the catalog copy for the minor and identified as course prerequisites above and beyond the total credit hours required to complete the minor. The following guidelines apply:

- a. At least 12 of the hours of the minor must be taken at FGCU and at least 9 of the hours must be upper division (3000-4000 level).
- b. Students must meet with a college advisor to declare a minor and review the course requirements.
- c. Students desiring certification of a minor and designation on the official academic transcript must (1) note the minor on the Application for Graduation and (2) contact a college advisor to certify completion of all course requirements for the declared minor.

New Minors: Faculty and academic units proposing a new minor complete the *New Minor Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand, including enrollment estimates; library, faculty, technology, space, and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team, college dean, Undergraduate Curriculum Team, and Provost (or designee).

Revisions to Existing Minors: Faculty and academic units revising an existing minor complete the *Minor Revision Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand, including enrollment estimates; library, faculty, technology, space, and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team, college dean, Undergraduate Curriculum Team, and Provost (or designee).

Academic Certificate

Definition: An *academic certificate*, also referred to as a college credit certificate program, is an organized curriculum of college credit courses offered as a distinct area of study that leads to specific educational or occupational goals, and for which the university awards a certificate or diploma. Completion of an academic certificate is noted on the student's official transcript. FGCU academic certificates are offered at the post-baccalaureate level or above. Academic certificates are not assigned CIP codes and are not included in the SUS Academic Degree Program Inventory. (See FGCU Policy 2.008 Professional Certificate Programs for policies and procedures relating to certificates that include non-college-credit experiences.)

Each college has overall responsibility for the administration of its academic certificate programs in coordination, as appropriate, with the Office of Curriculum and Instruction, the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of the Executive Director for Off-Campus Programs and Continuing Education, the Office of the Registrar, and various offices within the Division of Student Affairs and Division of Administrative Services.

The following guidelines apply:

- a. Typically, an academic certificate consists of 12 to 18 semester credit hours, which includes a capstone experience. Academic certificate programs required for licensure may consist of more than 18 hours.
- b. Typically, existing courses are used in the development of certificate programs. When more than half of the courses in a certificate are not part of the curriculum of an existing or proposed degree program, the proposal (1) must be exceptionally strong in terms of fit, need, and demand; and (2) must demonstrate adequate administrative and fiscal capacity to implement and sustain the academic certificate.
- c. An academic certificate at the post-baccalaureate level consists of upper division courses (3000-4000 level) and/or graduate courses (5000 level and above). An academic certificate program at the post-master's level consists of all graduate courses.
- d. Applicants to an academic certificate program must submit a completed FGCU Post-Baccalaureate Non-Degree Application to the Office of Graduate Studies.
- e. Applicants to a post-baccalaureate academic certificate program must provide official transcripts showing award of baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution or equivalent non-U.S. institution. Applicants to a post-master's academic certificate program must provide official transcripts showing award of a master's degree from a regionally accredited institution or equivalent non-U.S. institution.
- f. A college may impose additional requirements for admission. Acceptance into an academic certificate program does not ensure acceptance into an FGCU degree program.
- g. The FGCU policy regarding the number of credits a student may enroll in as a non-matriculated student does not apply to academic certificate programs.
- h. In order to be awarded an academic certificate, a student must achieve an overall GPA of 3.0 in coursework applied to the certificate. An individual college may

apply the university's grade forgiveness policy to undergraduate courses in its academic certificate programs.

- i. It is the responsibility of the leadership of the college/unit offering the academic certificate to ensure that courses are available for students to complete the program in a timely manner. Typically, the time allotted for completion of an academic certificate program is two to four years.
- j. Separate course sections for academic certificate programs are permitted; however, these sections must be offered at the same level of quality and require the same prerequisites as the sections offered for degree programs. Course sections for academic certificate programs are subject to the same minimum enrollment class sizes as all other courses. Class sizes below established minimums must be justified and approved by the Provost.

New Academic Certificates: An individual college may offer academic certificates in only those subject areas related to the academic programs it offers. Colleges are encouraged to work cooperatively in the development of academic certificates. Faculty and academic units proposing a new academic certificate complete the *New Certificate Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand, including enrollment estimates; library, faculty, technology, space, and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team, college dean, Graduate Curriculum Team (in consultation with the Undergraduate Curriculum Team regarding upper division courses), and Provost (or designee).

Revisions to Existing Academic Certificates: Faculty and academic units revising an existing academic certificate complete the *Certificate Revision Proposal* form, which addresses program requirements; rationale and fit with the FGCU mission; need and demand, including enrollment estimates; library, faculty, technology, space, and other physical and financial resource needs; and impact on existing programs. The proposal is reviewed and approved by the college curriculum team, college dean, Graduate Curriculum Team (with consultation with the Undergraduate Curriculum Team regarding upper division courses), and Provost (or designee).