



Date: June 6, 2014

To: University Academic Planning Council Members

From: Jocelyn Milner, Director, Academic Planning and Institutional Research  
Scott Owczarek, University Registrar

RE: Establishing Online Process for Certificate Declaration

At recent UAPC meetings we have discussed certificate program offerings. At the May 8, 2014 meeting, in response to questions raised at earlier meetings, we reported that the Office of the Registrar now has the technical capability and staff capacity to implement an electronic process for certificate declaration for undergraduates akin to the process in place for major declaration. The implementation could begin over the summer and processes could begin to be in place in the Fall 2014 semester. This automated declaration process would allow for better planning by students, by programs, and for better tracking by the University. It will also potentially ease workload associated with tracking the completion of certificate programs.

In your discussion you agreed to endorse a set of principles and expectations to support the implementation of the fully automated, electronic certificate declaration arrangements for undergraduates by the Office of the Registrar, as follows:

1. The UAPC affirms the expectation stated in the certificate policy guidelines that all certificates will structure requirements so that they are readily encoded in the degree audit system, and that going forward all newly proposed certificate programs will structure requirements to meet this expectation. (Existing certificates that are not encodable in the degree audit system will be encouraged to make revisions, but will not be required to change.)
2. The Office of the Registrar will take the lead on efforts at encoding undergraduate certificate program requirements in the degree audit system. The Office of the Registrar will work in collaboration with the schools/colleges and programs, with the expectation that over time all certificate coding will be housed in the Office of the Registrar.
3. The Office of the Registrar will become responsible for validating the completion of all undergraduate certificate programs at the time that degrees are awarded. The general expectation is that the Office of the Registrar will clear all certificates for degree-seeking students (recognizing it may take time to fully realize that goal). Students who complete a degree and subsequently complete an undergraduate certificate as Special students will be monitored and cleared by the certificate program faculty and staff
4. In the newly established process, students will be encouraged to actively declare the certificate when they begin to pursue the certificate and to cancel their declaration if they decide not to complete it. Students, program faculty/staff, and deans' offices will be

- expected to communicate declaration and cancellation via the electronic process.
5. With this implementation, the expectation that the awarding of certificates should not delay the awarding of a degree remains in place; degree/major credentials remain the primary awards and the focus of the academic experience. Students pursuing a certificate will be encouraged to declare and undertake a certificate sufficiently early in their undergraduate career to be able to finish it prior to or coincident with completion of degree/major requirements.
  6. As part of implementation, the Office of the Registrar will develop a communication and training program for colleagues across campus in schools/colleges and departments to support this effort.

You asked that these principles and expectations be provided in writing for your review and formal endorsement at the June 23, 2014 UAPC meeting. We look forward to that discussion.

Please let either of us know if you have any questions.