



THE UNIVERSITY *of*
NEW MEXICO

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Date: 25 February 2013

To: Kathleen Keating, Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee

Cc: Amy Neal, Faculty Senate President
Greg Heileman, Associate Provost for Curriculum
Branch Campus Deans and Executive Directors

From: Wynn Goering

Re: Proposed Undergraduate Certificate Policy

Current Policy (catalog copy)

Candidates for certificates offered by any of the University of New Mexico's colleges or branches must meet the following minimum requirements and are subject to the following University limitations:

- 1. A minimum of 30 acceptable semester hours must be earned. Technical-vocational work (up to the limit specified below) may be included in these 30 hours upon approval of the certificate-granting program.*
- 2. A minimum of 15 semester hours must be earned in residence at the University of New Mexico.*
- 3. Of the 30 hours minimum, no more than 6 semester hours may be earned by extension or correspondence.*
- 4. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00.*

Proposed policy (Faculty Senate)

Undergraduate certificates offered by any of the University of New Mexico's colleges or branches must meet the following minimum requirements:

- 1. A minimum of 30 acceptable semester hours must be earned. Technical-vocational work (up to the limit specified below) may be included in these 30 hours upon approval of the*

certificate-granting program. Of the 30 hours, a minimum of 15 semester hours must be earned in residence at the University of New Mexico.

2. *Branch campuses may offer technical-vocational certificates of less than 30 hours, provided:*
 - a. *The proposed curriculum fulfills a recognized professional certification: e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant (NLN), Fire Science Officer (IAFC) etc.; or*
 - b. *The proposed curriculum fulfills a specified local workforce need*

Certificates consisting of academic (transferrable) coursework require approval of the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate. Technical-vocational certificates require approval of the Office of the Provost.

Rationale

UNM's current policy requiring a minimum of 30 credit hours for an undergraduate certificate is based on the premise that a complete curriculum should entail at least one year of study. Yet there is a growing national consensus that curricula of less than a year may serve important functions in workforce development, provided they are clearly linked to specific professional credentialing.¹

Locally, the impetus for enabling UNM branches to offer selected certificate programs of less than 30 credit hours is that most other New Mexico community colleges do so. That puts us at a significant recruitment disadvantage in areas where there is local competition (e.g., between UNM-Valencia and CNM).

¹ See, for example, "Certificates Count: An Analysis of Sub-baccalaureate Certificates," Complete College America, December 2010; and "Certificates: Gateway To Gainful Employment and College Degrees," Carnevale, Rose, Hansen, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, June 2012.