CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

General Information
A student wishing to earn an undergraduate or graduate certificate at San Francisco State University is expected to follow the university requirements and procedures outlined herein and complete the prescribed program requirements of the desired certificate.

Purpose of Certificate Programs
A certificate program is a coherent set of academic courses that does not lead to a degree but focuses on a substantial area of study that may be practically oriented toward skills and/or occupations. Such a program is designed to meet special needs, especially those with a limited time to learn specific subjects, concepts, skills, and competencies. The award of a certificate means the holder has completed the required courses and related work at an acceptable level of academic accomplishment. The certificate indicates to a prospective employer that the university validates the particular program of study. It neither credentials nor licenses the student, nor does it guarantee the ability of the student to put into practice what has been studied.

Acceptance to Certificate Programs
Guidelines for Acceptance to Undergraduate Certificate Programs
To be accepted to an undergraduate certificate program, a student must have completed 56-semester units of undergraduate coursework with a 2.0 (C) grade point average. Exceptions may be permitted upon presentation of special justification to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies or appropriate program administrator for Extended Learning programs.

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Students interested in pursuing an undergraduate certificate program should contact the offering department regarding specific program requirements and procedures. For certificate programs offered through Extended Learning, students should contact the program area as shown in the program description.

Guidelines for Acceptance to Graduate Certificate Programs
Admission to Post-Baccalaureate Status
• Admission to a certificate program requires a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, with a major in the appropriate field(s) of study, as well as a grade point average of at least 3.0 in the last 60-semester (90 quarter) units attempted. If the major is not in a related field of study, the department offering the certificate may require the student, prior to admission, to take additional courses.
• A student who is already enrolled in the university as a post-baccalaureate student (i.e., pursuing a graduate degree, a credential program, or in unclassified status) may apply to a certificate program.
• A student who is interested in pursuing a certificate program may apply to the university as a post-baccalaureate classified student. Note: It is recommended that the student seek admission, if appropriate, to a degree program within the sponsoring department so that graduate units taken may be considered, where permitted, for later application towards a degree. Not more than 12 units taken as an unclassified student may be applied toward the requirements for a graduate degree.

Acceptance to Certificate Program
A student enrolled, or eligible to enroll, in the university as a post-baccalaureate level student must contact the program offering the desired certificate to complete any prescribed requirements for acceptance to that program. Such requirements and procedures may include a supplementary application, a defined set of prerequisite courses, a designated GPA, written recommendations, etc., as may be appropriate for the program in question.

Basic University Certificate Program Requirements
The university requirements listed below are considered to be minimal and the academic department offering the program may impose additional or higher requirements for its specific certificate program(s). See the specific presentation in the Academic Programs section of this Bulletin or contact the department offering the certificate for further information.

Basic University Undergraduate Certificate Program Requirements
• Every student in an undergraduate certificate program must complete a minimum common core of coursework (i.e., required of all students) consisting of at least 12-semester units. See specific program requirements.
• At least two-thirds of the units comprising an undergraduate certificate program must be at the upper division level. Graduate level courses may be used in special circumstances to satisfy program requirements at the discretion of the academic area offering the certificate.
• At least one-half of the required minimum number of units must be taken in residence. Credit by examination is permitted in accordance with established university regulations.
• At least two-thirds of the units applied toward meeting the requirements of an undergraduate certificate program must be graded on an A-F basis.
• The course work used to satisfy the requirements of an undergraduate certificate must be completed with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 (C), and only courses with a grade of CR, C–, or better, may be included to meet undergraduate certificate program requirements.
• Before completing an undergraduate certificate program, all students must demonstrate an appropriate level of writing competency as prescribed by the program area offering the certificate (see program requirements).
• Courses may be used to meet both a baccalaureate degree and an undergraduate certificate objective providing they are appropriate and acceptable toward the specific requirements of each program.
• There is normally no statutory period for units required for an undergraduate certificate at SF State. However, if any course required for the certificate was taken more than seven years prior to graduation, then departments and programs may require students to retake that course or demonstrate currency in that subject. Consult with the department for more information.

Basic University Graduate Certificate Program Requirements
• Every student in a graduate certificate program must complete a minimum common core of coursework (i.e., required of all students)
consisting of at least 9-semester units. See specific program
requirements.
• At least one-half, but not less than six, of the units comprising a
  graduate certificate program must be in graduate level courses. Any
  undergraduate level course utilized in the program must be at the
  upper division level.
• At least two-thirds of the course units for the certificate must be
  taken in residence. Units earned through extension, including Open
  University enrollment, are not considered as work in residence.
• Curriculum requirements must be met explicitly without the use of
  waivers and substitutions.
• At least two-thirds of the required units for a certificate program must
  be graded on an A-F basis.
• At least two-thirds of the course units used to meet the requirements
  for the certificate must have been taken while in post-baccalaureate
  status. Coursework taken prior to acceptance in the certificate
  program may not be used to meet program requirements, except in
  unusual circumstances. Approval must be granted in advance.
• The course work used to satisfy the requirements for a graduate
  certificate must be completed with a minimum cumulative grade
  point average of 3.0 (B), and only courses completed with a grade
  of C or better may be used to meet program requirements (i.e., C–
  grades and below are unacceptable).
• Before completing a graduate certificate program, all students
  must demonstrate an appropriate level of writing competency as
  prescribed by the program area offering the certificate (see program
  requirements).
• Courses may be used to meet both a master's degree and a graduate
  certificate objective providing they are appropriate and acceptable
  toward the specific requirements of each program.
• All requirements for a graduate certificate program must be
  completed within a seven-year period defined as beginning with
  the date of registration for the first course used to meet the
  requirements for the certificate and ending with the date the last
  requirement is completed. It is expected that the student will have
  filed an application for the award of the certificate within this same
  period. Students, who for documented, serious and compelling
  reasons, cannot complete their degree within the seven-year limit,
  may request one extension. If granted, extensions cannot exceed one
  year. Students requesting an extension must be in good academic
  standing and have revalidation for all expired coursework exceeding
  seven years.

**Observance of Certificate Requirements**

A student planning to earn an undergraduate or graduate certificate must
meet the requirements in the University Bulletin, that are in effect either
as of the date the student is officially accepted to a certificate program
or as of the date the application for the award of the certificate is filed in
the Division of Graduate Studies (for both undergraduate and graduate
certificates).

**Advising and Registration**

Advising assistance will be provided by the program faculty responsible
for offering the program.

Registration for required courses will be accomplished by means of
the normal registration process of the university or through Extended
Learning registration procedures for Extended Learning certificate
programs.

**Applying for Award of the Certificate**

When all the requirements for either an undergraduate or graduate
certificate program have been completed, the following steps must
be taken to apply for the certificate, to have the completion of the
requirements checked, and to have the certificate awarded to the student.

Note that the Graduate Division is responsible for the final processing
requirements for both undergraduate and graduate certificates. Graduation
for Extended Learning certificates is processed through the Extended
Learning Office.

The student prepares a Certificate Approved Program (CAP) form
(available in the department, Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies,
or CAP form (http://grad.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/assets/forms/
certificate-approved-program.pdf) and forwards it, along with transcript(s)
showing the completion of all course requirements, to the department
chair of the area offering the certificate program.

The chair is responsible for determining that all the requirements for
the certificate have been satisfactorily completed. This is accomplished by
signing the CAP form.

After paying the application fee ($7.00) for the award of the certificate at
the Cashier’s Office and having the CAP form stamped "Paid," the student
is responsible for filing

1. the signed CAP form,
2. the supporting transcript(s), and
3. the evidence of the fee paid, in the Division of Graduate Studies (for
both undergraduate and graduate certificates).

The Division of Graduate Studies is responsible for reviewing the
materials received and authorizing the issuance of the undergraduate
or graduate certificate on behalf of the department/program area and
in the name of the university. This is accomplished by the Dean of
Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate,
signing the certificate and returning it along with two signed copies of
the CAP form to the department/program area. Upon receipt, the department/
program chair signs the official certificate and arranges to issue it,
along with a copy of the CAP form, to the student. A second copy of the
signed CAP form is to be retained by the department/program area for its
records.