Position Paper Title: Guidelines for Developing Certificate Programs

Approved By: ACAOM Executive Committee

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Last Updated:

Related Policies: ACAOM Glossary; ACAOM Notification of Change Policy; ACAOM Standards Review Policy

References: Federal Student Aid Handbook;

These guidelines were prepared to inform and assist ACAOM-accredited programs and institutions when creating certificate programs (as defined in ACAOM’s Glossary) and drafting proposed programmatic components of accreditation criteria for the Commission’s consideration. Only programs for which ACAOM has established accreditation standards and criteria are accreditable. Proposals for additions to, or revisions of, accreditation standards and criteria are considered by the Commission in accordance with ACAOM’s Standards Review Policy.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Only certificate programs having the following characteristics are eligible for ACAOM accreditation status:

1. the program has all necessary state approvals;
2. the program is AOM-related;
3. the program’s courses are taught at the masters or higher level;
4. the program’s courses are credit-bearing;
5. the program or institution awards an acknowledgement of program completion; and
6. the program may be Title IV-eligible subject to U.S. Department of Education regulations.

DRAFTING ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

1. ACAOM’s established accreditation criteria identified as “applicable to all programs” apply to proposed certificate programs.
2. Additionally, proposals for new certificate programs must expound upon the following:

   Criterion 5.02: ADMISSIONS
   
   Applicants for proposed certificate programs must:
   
   A. hold a bachelor’s degree; or
   B. be graduates of, or concurrently enrolled in, an accredited/pre-accredited entry-level program leading to qualification for professional licensure and national certification in acupuncture; and
   C. meet ACAOM’s English proficiency requirements that become effective January 1, 2020.

   Criterion 5.03: TRANSFER CREDIT/TRANSFER STUDENTS
   
   Proposed certificate program standards must define the maximum percentage of transfer credits a program may accept.

   Criterion 7.02: MINIMUM PROGRAM LENGTH, CREDITS, AND HOURS
Proposed certificate programs must be at least one (1) academic year in duration, including at least 18 semester credits of instruction accounting for a minimum of 300 clock hours of instruction.

**Criterion 7.04: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES**

Proposed certificate programs must:

A. provide training that prepares a student for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.
B. include a distinct set of competencies, rather than identifying a selection of existing masters-level competencies. If the certificate program addresses and leads to the development of any of the existing masters-level competencies, duplication of existing competencies in the certificate proposal is acceptable.

**Criterion 7.05: CLINICAL TRAINING (if applicable)**

Proposed certificate programs that provide clinical training must identify training requirements, such as:

A. patient treatment minimums
B. acceptable clinical settings
C. clinical specialty emphasis

**Revision History**

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<tr>
<th>Date Revised</th>
<th>Summary of Revisions</th>
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