



FACULTY SENATE

Faculty Senate Resolution Number _____

To: Joe Bertolino, Ed.D., President, Southern Connecticut State University
From: Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, SCSU Faculty Senate

The attached Resolution of the Faculty Senate is entitled:

RESOLUTION Regarding _____

This Resolution was approved by Faculty Senate on: _____

- This Resolution is presented for APPROVAL
- This Resolution is presented for INFORMATION

In accordance with the CSU-AAUP Contract (Article 5.10), "When the Senate makes a written recommendation to the President, the President shall acknowledge and respond to the recommendation in writing within fifteen (15) school days of receiving the Senate's recommendation. "

After considering this resolution, please indicate your action on this form and return it to the President of the Faculty Senate.

Natalie Starling, Ph.D., President, Faculty Senate Date

cc: Robert S. Prezant, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

ACTION OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Resolution for Approval:

- Resolution APPROVED
- Resolution DISAPPROVED (Provide comments below or attach statement)

Resolution for Information:

- Resolution NOTED (applies to Informational Resolutions only)

Joe Bertolino, Ed.D., President, SCSU

Date

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Resolution Regarding Catalog Definitions and Curricular Review Process for Continuing Education Offerings, Non-Credit and Micro-Credentials

Whereas, Southern Connecticut State University exists for the primary purpose of furthering academic excellence;

Whereas, The SCSU Faculty Senate is the official representative body of the Academic Faculty;

Whereas, Academic excellence is a function of educational quality and curricular integrity; and

Whereas, Curriculum is an organized sequence of learning with defined learning outcomes;

Whereas, Micro-credentials, -badges, and non-credit continuing education are comparable to courses and certificates and/or degrees in a curriculum, in that each are designed to support competency or skills with mastery of learning outcomes;

Whereas, Curriculum can be for credit or not for credit; designed for matriculated students or for those seeking continuing education;

Whereas, Curriculum is the domain of the faculty (Preamble, and 5.17 & 5.17.1 in the CBA);

Whereas, Any academic curriculum offered by SCSU carries with it the implication that it has been designed, taught, and/or approved by SCSU faculty, which is not the case with some current non-credit curricular offerings; and

Whereas, The faculty has established processes of review and approval of changes and innovations in the curriculum via UCF and Grad Council; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Faculty Senate approves the definitions presented by Ad-hoc Committee for Non-credit, Continuing Education & Micro-credentialing working group;

Resolved, That micro-credentials, badges, and non-credit continuing education are part of SCSU curriculum and therefore, subject to faculty governance via UCF and GC proposal processes;

Resolved, That the UCF, GC, and university administration shall be charged with developing curriculum proposal processes along the lines described by the Ad-hoc Committee for Non-credit, Continuing Education & Micro-credentialing "Recommendations" document (attached below).

Catalog Definitions and Curricular Review Process for Continuing Education Offerings, Non-Credit and Micro-Credentials

The Micro-credential, badge, non-credit, continuing education working group is an ad-hoc committee charged by Faculty Senate to: (1) gather and receive recommendations and information from constituents and other groups across the university community, (2) establish definitions for non-credit, continuing education and micro-credentialing terminology and offerings, (3) establish recommendations for curricular review of for non-credit, continuing education and micro-credentialing offerings, and (4) upon presentation to the Faculty Senate, consideration to be given to the ad hoc committee's recommendation for additional charge(s).

Overview

Continuing education for professional or personal enrichment can be conceived as any credit or non-credit offering not associated with an individual's program of study. The definitions associated with these learning experiences are outlined below.

Catalog Definitions

For-Credit Courses: Learning experiences resulting in a learner earning credit on the academic transcript.

Certificate Programs: Certificate programs are for credit and based on a free-standing body of knowledge at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional level. Certificate programs have at least 8 academic credits and may be stackable for credit towards a degree program. Certificate programs are displayed on academic transcripts, and upon successful completion, a certificate is awarded to the student bearing the official seal and signatures from the Connecticut Board of Regents and Southern Connecticut State University.

Non-Credit Courses: Learning experiences that do not result in a learner earning academic credit, and do not appear on the academic transcript. Non-credit courses cannot be graduation requirements in a degree or certificate credit-based program.

Micro-Credential Programs: Micro-credential programs are non-credit certificate programs based on competencies or skills that allow learners to gain knowledge and demonstrate mastery learning in a very particular area. Micro-credential programs are typically smaller than certificates but may be stackable for credit towards a certificate or degree program. A micro-credential can also be embedded in a for-credit course. Micro-credential programs are not displayed on academic transcripts, but upon successful completion, a verifiable digital badge and non-credit certificate will be awarded to the student by Southern Connecticut State University.

Curricular Review Process

For-credit courses and program proposals are approved as follows (*for reference only*):

- Department Curriculum Committee
- Department
- Notification Management Committee (UCF)/Graduate Curriculum Committee (GC)
- Undergraduate Curriculum Forum/Graduate Council

- Provost
- The Academic Council, Academic and Student Affairs, and Board of Regents approve new programs and substantive revisions to existing programs

Non-credit courses and program proposals are approved as follows (*proposed*):

The goal of this approval process is to address concerns about quality control (protection of our “academic brand”) and possible overlap with current teaching expertise and/or academic programming. It is also intended to be a nimble and not overly bureaucratic process to allow the university to quickly respond to continuing education opportunities.

- **Proposal Development:** Proposal is generated by a department or by the Director for Continuing Education or from some outside entity. The Director of Continuing Education is responsible for coordinating between parties, assessing the viability of programs (resources, etc), and preparing the proposal. The Director of Continuing Education is also responsible for notifying any affected parties on campus; such notifications should be included in the proposal. Ideally any concerns with the proposal will be addressed during this notification process and conversation with stakeholders.
- **Department Curriculum Committee** (we might consider if we want both steps of review at the department level or if just the full department is sufficient – and faster).
- **Department Approval:** The proposal must be reviewed by at least one department with a clear disciplinary connection to the proposed program. This department should have been consulted during the development of the program proposal so that ideally any concerns were addressed prior to the proposal moving forward. The department’s approval indicates they are comfortable with their involvement in implementation of the program as indicated in the proposal (as in a department may have any level of involvement in the actual implementation and running of the program).
- **Undergraduate Curriculum Forum/Graduate Council Approval:** The purpose of review at UCF/GC is to provide an opportunity for all departments to be informed about the proposed program and to voice any potential issues. Once a proposal is received at UCF/GC (submitted by the Director for Continuing Education and with approval of a department) it will become an agenda item for the body’s next meeting and shared with faculty via the meeting packet. The members will have the opportunity to review the proposal prior to the meeting and to raise any concerns or questions about the proposal prior to a vote. Proposals receiving a simple majority move forward. Declined proposals may be revised and resubmitted.
- **Provost Approval and Implementation**

Further Recommendations

Upon approval by the Faculty Senate of the definitions and curricular review process noted above, the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum or Graduate Council will develop a joint Flow of Proposals document outlining an expedited curricular review and consent agenda process for non-credit course and program proposals. In addition, those bodies will work with the School of Graduate and Professional Studies (Director for Continuing Education? Or the Dean of SGPS? Or both?) to develop guidelines and best practices for the development and implementation of non-credit courses and programs.

Possibly consider a pilot program option (similar to special topics) with a lower bar for approval and expiration date.