Duke University Graduate School

Recommended Components of a
“Certificate in Teaching” Program

A. Leadership

‘Certificate in Teaching’ programs are departmentally based and should have adequate faculty support. General responsibility for the Certificate program should reside with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or a duly appointed faculty member. Any change in leadership (due to sabbatical, retirement, etc.) should be communicated to the Graduate School. A thorough description of the program should be posted on the departmental or program web site and in any relevant publications, and should include leadership contact information. In general, the program should have clearly established criteria while also having flexibility in how graduate students can successfully complete the program alongside their primary graduate studies and research.

B. Graduate School Expectations of Department or Program

Individual departments or programs should determine the following:

1. a rationale for the program in relation to the anticipated career paths of graduates and expectations of tenure-track faculty teaching in the field;
2. the set of skills and competencies (both general and discipline-specific) that the program intends to develop for effective teaching in the discipline, including an awareness of policies and practices that promote academic integrity;
3. the required program components [see section C] to develop these skills and to complete the certificate, including how it relates to the specific developmental sequence of teaching experiences (practicums) and other training in or beyond the department;
4. the level of support and/or mentoring required at each stage of this sequence and how that will be provided or established;
5. procedures for candidate assessment in the certificate program;

Each program should develop appropriate assessment procedures and criteria to determine how well any given student meets the learning objectives for any program component. This assessment should guide subsequent training steps or requirements.
6. mechanisms for regular program evaluation and review [see Section D]

C. Suggested Requirements for Certificate Program Candidates

1. Completion of Graduate Certificate Program Application form

A “Graduate Certificate Program Application” form must be completed, signed by the DGS or certificate program coordinator, and submitted to Susan Williford in Graduate School Enrollment Services by the end of the first week of classes in a given semester in order to have enrollment in the program recognized for that semester. The department has the option of creating a separate ‘Certificate in Teaching’ Candidate Declaration Form that will establish a plan and timeline for completing the certificate program.

2. Courses and/or workshops on pedagogy

Students should complete at least one course on teaching in the discipline (identify course title and number). In addition, the department can determine whether or not to require participation in any related courses or training events offered by the
Graduate School or other campus resources, including:
- GS301- Instructional Uses of Technology
- GS302- Introduction to College Teaching
- Graduate School Teaching IDEAS workshops (Instructional Development for Excellence And Success)
- Graduate School Preparing Future Faculty program
- Center for Instructional Technology events
- University Writing Program events
- John Hope Franklin Humanities Center events

If required, the department should explain the importance of participating in other courses or training to candidates enrolled in the certificate program.

NOTE: Training on accepted standards of academic integrity at Duke and in the discipline must be incorporated into some of this training.

(3) Faculty mentorship
We recommend that each certificate program student be mentored by a faculty member for a minimum of one semester while the student has a role that includes actual teaching experience (either co-teaching, or teaching independently); however, students should also have broad access to the ongoing support and assistance of other faculty members within the department, in related departments, and in related departments at nearby institutions [as determined by the department]. The primary mentor should provide a written evaluation of the student’s performance and teaching skills.

(4) Practical teaching experience
A core component of any teaching certificate program is the opportunity for actual teaching experience in the classroom or laboratory setting. Programs should explain the logical and developmental sequence of instructional experiences in the department (i.e., grader, discussion leader, lecturer, laboratory section leader, frequent lecturer, instructor), and identify where certificate program participants will have opportunity to gain practical experience. Summer teaching opportunities should also be explored.

(5) Evaluation of teaching experience
Participants in the program might gather feedback on teaching from students, peers, and faculty mentors in order to write a self-evaluation of their teaching experiences. Certificate candidates might present the following set of assessments of their instructional skills and experiences:
- at least one set of teacher/course evaluations
- at least one peer review
- at least one faculty mentor review
- a self assessment of skill level achievement

(6) Products
Most Certificate in Teaching programs identify a set of materials required to complete the program that often include:
- a statement of teaching philosophy
- a set of ‘sample’ syllabi for selected courses, at different levels, in the candidate’s field (not limited to courses the candidate has taught, but also courses the candidate would feel prepared to teach)
c. a set of teaching evaluations (see C.3 and C.5 above), to include a written evaluation by the primary faculty mentor;
d. (optional) a teaching/professional portfolio that includes at least one videotape of the candidate in the classroom

D. Program Evaluation

The department or program should identify any mechanisms or procedures it will use to conduct regular and ongoing program reviews. This might include feedback from graduate student participants, reviews by departmental faculty, program reviews by external faculty, and/or evaluations conducted by specialists in faculty development or educational processes. Moreover, programs should develop appropriate assessment procedures to ascertain the effectiveness of any TA orientation, courses on teaching in the discipline, teaching practicums, and other components of the program.

Finally, programs should develop mechanisms to track graduate student progress toward the completion of certificate program requirements. When possible, we recommend that programs also develop mechanisms to monitor the early career positions of degree recipients in order to assess program effectiveness in preparing students for subsequent academic careers.