|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date: |  | Effective Date: | AY: |
| School/College: |  |
| Program Name and CIP Code: |  |
| Program Coordinator: |  |
| Submitted by: |  |

**Policy**

The authorization to provide student access to Federal Student Aid funds for stand-alone certificate programs requires that the program meet certain employment and wage expectations as supported in the following sections. According to the U.S. Department of Education,

The proposed definition of gainful employment is primarily based on two measures: (1) the repayment rate, or the percentage of the outstanding principal balance of the Federal loans of the program’s former students that entered repayment in the previous four years that has been repaid or is being repaid, and; (2) the relationship between the median student loan debt and average annual earnings after the completion of the program.

A program would be “fully eligible” if (1) the repayment rate Federal is at least 45% or (2) students who completed the program have a debt-to-earnings ratio of less than 20% of discretionary income or less than 8% of total income. (Gainful Employment Disclosures, 2019, p. 2).

Federal aid availability may be indicated only after successful inclusion of the stand-alone certificate program in the Program Participation Agreement between Mercer University and the Office of Federal Student Aid.

The submission deadline for fall semester disbursement of funds is **April 2nd**and **November 2nd** for spring semester disbursement of funds.

**Program Coordinator Responsibilities**

The Program Coordinator agrees to take responsibility to coordinate with all responsible parties to ensure that consumer information disclosures are posted anywhere the program is described, including the program’s web page, university catalogs, and any promotional materials for the program. These disclosures are required by the U.S. Department of Education and created by the Office of Student Financial Planning at Mercer University. The Program Coordinator will be consulted when any new information must be collected to complete future version of the disclosures, which are updated annually. The Program Coordinator understands that failure to comply puts the university at risk and may result in termination of federal aid eligibility for students in the program. The Program Coordinator will assess, monitor, and track metrics for determining gainful employment as part of the annual assessment process and cycle for degree programs and stand-alone certificates. The identified metrics are: (1) repayment rate, (2) completion rate, (3) debt-to-earnings ratio for completers. The annual assessment planning and reporting for these metrics will be recorded in Compliance Assist.

**Oversight of Policy and Review of Forms**

Committee on Stand-Alone Certificate Request for Federal Aid Eligibility

Point of Contacts: Committee Co-Chairs Maria Hammett, Associate Vice President of Student Financial Planning and Danielle Buehrer, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness

**SECTION I**

**Program Data.**

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| Recognized Occupation Code: Enter the Standard Occupational Classification, <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm>, and title that corresponds to the recognized occupation for which the proposed program prepares completers. |
| Program Completion Time: This program is designed to be completed in (XX weeks/months/years]. (Enter the normal time to complete the program as will be published in the catalogs or other publications and indicate if its is in weeks, months, years.) |
| Program Cost: This program will cost $[XX,XXX] if completed within normal time. (Provide the future projected costs for the entire length of the program assuming normal time to completion.) |
| Student Debt: Of the students who will complete this program within normal time, the typical graduate leaves with $[XX,XXX] of debt. |

**SECTION II**

**Proposed Schedule.**

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| First day the program was/will be offered: |
| The day in which the disbursing Title IV funds will begin to students enrolled in the program:  |

**SECTION III**

**Narratives.**

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| Describe how the need for the program was determined. |
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**Narratives continued.**

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| Describe how the program was designed to meet local market needs or (for an online program) regional or national market needs. |
|  |

**Narratives continued.**

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| --- |
| Describe and provide wage analysis you performed, including consideration of Bureau of Labor statistics wage data related to the program. |
|  |

**Narratives continued.**

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| --- |
| Describe how the program was developed, reviewed, and approved, including feedback from a business or discipline advisory committee and businesses likely to employ graduates of the program. For example, describe the steps taken to develop the program, identify when and with whom discussions were held, provide relevant details of any proposals or correspondence generated, and/or describe any process used to evaluate the program. Mercer University must retain, for review and submission to the U.S. Department of Education upon request, copies of meeting minutes, correspondence, proposals, or other documentation to support the development, review, and/or approval of the program. |
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