

**Idaho State Board of Education**  
**GOVERNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**SECTION: III. POSTSECONDARY AFFAIRS**

**SUBSECTION: E. Certificates and Degrees**

**August 2020**

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1. Definitions

Programs of instruction require specified numbers of credits earned through educational work on the part of students. Completion of the program of instruction results in the awarding of a certificate to or conferring of a degree upon the student by the faculty and the Chief Executive Officer. The following definitions have been approved by the Board:

a. CERTIFICATES:

i. Academic Certificate of Completion

A credential awarded for completion of a coherent program of study consisting of six (6) semester credits or less, representing a coherent body of knowledge that does not lead to an academic undergraduate certificate or a degree.

ii. Academic Undergraduate Certificate

A credential awarded for completion of a coherent program of study consisting of seven (7) semester credits or more, representing a coherent body of knowledge that may lead to an academic degree.

iii. Graduate Certificate

A credential awarded for completion of a coherent program of study consisting of nine (9) or more semester credits of graduate course work, representing a coherent body of knowledge that may lead to a degree or may be unique and standalone.

iv. Technical Certificate of Completion

A career technical credential awarded by the institution consisting of seven (7) semester credits or less that represents mastery of a defined set of competencies.

v. Basic Technical Certificate

A credential awarded for completion of requirements in an approved career technical program of at least eight (8) semester credit hours and represents mastery of a defined set of competencies.

vi. Intermediate Technical Certificate

A credential awarded for the completion of requirements in an approved career technical program of at least 30 semester credit hours and represents mastery of a defined set of competencies.

vii. Advanced Technical Certificate

A credential awarded for completion of requirements in an approved career technical program of at least 52 semester credit and represents mastery of a defined set of competencies.

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---

viii. Microcertification

A credential in a narrowly focused area within career technical program or academic program that confirms mastery through a formal assessment of a specific industry-related skillset or topic. Completion of multiple microcertification courses may lead to a certificate.

ix. Specialized Certificate

A credential awarded upon successful completion of specific courses that have been industry validated and sequenced for the purpose of developing and upgrading skills in an occupation.

- b. ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE DEGREE: A credential awarded for completion of requirements in an approved career technical program of at least 60 semester credits (includes a minimum of 15 general education credits) and represents mastery of a defined set of competencies. An Advanced option may be awarded for additional credits of at least 15 credit hours that are beyond the A.A.S. degree.
- c. ASSOCIATE DEGREE: A credential awarded for completion of requirements entailing the equivalent of at least 60 semester credits of academic work. An Associate Degree shall not require more than 60 semester credits unless necessary for matriculation to a specific baccalaureate program or for unique accreditation, certification, or professional licensure purposes or by exception approved by the Board.
- d. BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: A credential awarded for completion of requirements entailing the equivalent of at least 120 semester credits of academic work. A baccalaureate degree shall not require more than 120 semester credits unless needed for unique accreditation, certification, professional licensure purposes, or by exception approved by the Board.
- e. APPLIED BACCALAUREATE DEGREE: A credential awarded for completion of requirements entailing the equivalent of at least 120 semester credits of academic and career technical coursework (includes a minimum of 36 general education credits). An applied baccalaureate degree shall not require more than 120 semester credits unless needed for unique accreditation, certification, or professional licensure purposes or by exception approved by the Board.
- f. GRADUATE DEGREES: A credential awarded for completion of academic work beyond the baccalaureate degree, including any required research. Graduate degrees consist of master's degrees, specialist degrees, and doctoral degrees.

2. Academic and Career Technical Credit Hour Requirements

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and

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**August 2020**

---

verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

- a. One (1) hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
- b. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (a) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

3. Requirements for Certificate or Degree

Each institution will establish the number of earned credits required for each certificate or degree. The requirements may differ from the general requirements specified in the definitions in subsection 1; however, all credit requirements must receive Board approval in accordance with the program approval policies provided in III.G. Institutional catalogs will specify the required number of earned credits for each certificate or degree.

4. Authorization Required

Programs offered at the institution, as well as the certificates and degrees to which they lead, are subject to review and approval in accordance with the program approval policies provided in III.G. A certificate or degree conferred upon the student is conferred under the authority of the Board.

5. Authorized Certificates and Degrees

A current listing of authorized certificates and degrees awarded by each institution is maintained at the institution by the Chief Executive Officer and for all institutions at the Office of the State Board of Education.

6. Honorary Degrees

Each institution may award honorary degrees, not to exceed the highest level of Board-authorized degrees currently awarded by the institution, to persons in recognition of distinguished achievements at the local, state, or national level in areas such as education, public service, research, sciences, humanities, business, or other professions. The award of an honorary degree must receive the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer upon recommendation by the faculty.

Each institution will develop its own procedures for seeking nominations for and

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**SECTION: III. POSTSECONDARY AFFAIRS**

**SUBSECTION: E. Certificates and Degrees**

**August 2020**

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selecting honorary degree recipients. Those procedures may include a statement of eligibility requirements for honorary degrees. However, no person who is currently employed by the institution, is a member of the Board or the Board's staff, or is an incumbent elected official is eligible for an honorary degree during the term of employment, appointment, or office.