Memo To:	All UH-Downtown/PS Holders	UH-Downtown/PS 03.A.42
		Issue No. 1
From:	Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, President	Effective Date: 05/11/2020
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Subject:	Competency-based (nested) Degree & Certificate Programs	

1. PURPOSE

This Policy Statement (PS) describes the processes and definitions relevant for competency-based degree and certificate programs which meet the definitions in section 2 and falls within a BAAS degree. This policy does not apply to any programs which may use other types of competency-based curriculum or program design at UHD.

Competency-based programs and curriculum are subject to all university policies and processes not addressed herein.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1   Competency-based Course: The defining features of a competency-based course are as follows: 1) the competencies of competency-based courses are grouped or nested within the competency-based course, 2) within competency-based courses, students must demonstrate mastery before moving on to the next competency in the course, and 3) students may accelerate through the course as long as they show mastery of each competency. The course grade is based upon the demonstration of a level of mastery for the specific competencies within the course and as articulated in the course syllabus.

2.2   Competency-based Program: A program composed of all competency-based courses as defined in 2.1 or a combination of competency and non-competency-based courses that are proposed by full-time UHD faculty and taught by faculty who have been credentialed within their areas of expertise as per UHD policy. The competencies of competency-based programs are grouped or nested within the competency-based courses which make up the degree.

2.3   Designated Faculty/Academic Administrator: The faculty and academic administrator designated by the home college as responsible for the day-to-day oversight of the competency-based program.

2.4   Home College: The College that offers the degree or certificate.

3. POLICY

3.1 Academic Curriculum Development and Approval: The courses for competency-based program and certificate will be developed and approved in accordance with PS 03.A.12 – Change to Curricula, Courses, and Program.

3.2 Academic Program Assessment: Programmatic assessment of competency-based education programs is conducted per Academic Policy PS 03.A.31- Assessment of Educational Programs.

3.3 Faculty Credentialing: Faculty teaching in the competency-based courses must be credentialed under the SACSCOC guidelines and will be appointed as per UHD faculty hiring and appointment policies.

3.4 Secondary Admissions Requirements: In addition to being admitted to UHD under PS 03.A.24 - Admission of Students, the student must also be admitted to the competency-based degree or certificate program. Admission to a competency-based degree or certificate program means that the student has met requirements established by the faculty and administrators in the program to which the student has applied, and the student is authorized to enroll in credit-bearing courses for which they are qualified and approved by the relevant UHD competency-based program.

3.5 Program Admission Appeals: There is no appeal process; however, an applicant that has been denied admission to a competency-based program may reapply.

3.6 Course Load: Students must register for two courses at the beginning of each part-of-term session in which they are enrolled in a competency-based program.

3.7 Additional Course Load Options: Students who successfully complete all other courses registered for in the part-of-term with a grade of A or B and who are in good academic standing (see PS 03.A.04 – Grading System for Undergraduate Students) may register for an additional course within that part-of-term subject to the following conditions:

   3.7.1 The added course must be already scheduled for that part-of-term.

   3.7.2 The student must have permission from the designated faculty/academic administrator responsible for program oversight to add the course.

   3.7.3 Students who add a course within a part-of-term session must do so before the end of the fourth week of the session.

3.8   Grades and Repeated Courses

3.8.1   For all grading policy not addressed in this section, please see PS 03.A.04 – Grading System for Undergraduate Students.

3.8.2   Credit by Examination: Competency-based degree and certificate programs will accept credit by examination as per PS 03.A.11- Credit by Examination and Credit by Approved Equivalencies.

3.8.3   Repeated Course Policy: Undergraduate students may attempt a competency-based course a maximum of two times. The highest of the grades earned in a UHD course will be used in computing the grade point average.

3.8.4   Grade Requirements: Only grades of A or B will be counted toward a competency-based degree. Two grades of C or lower (after allowable repeated attempts) will result in removal from the competency-based program. The student may choose to transfer to a non-competency-based program (see section 3.9).

3.9   Transferring between Competency-based and Non-competency-based Programs: A student in a competency-based program may choose to transfer to a non-competency-based program if eligibility requirements for the non-competency-based program are met. Grades from competency-based courses may be transferred only to programs within the university which accept the competency-based courses. Decisions regarding program acceptance of competency-based courses are made by faculty in each program.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1   Admission to Competency-based Programs.

4.1.1   Modification to the dean evaluation questionnaire will be in the form of a cooperative effort between the Office of the Provost and the Faculty Senate, and shall involve consultation with the Deans Council. A modified iteration of the questionnaire may be administered only upon approval by the Faculty Senate.

4.1.2   Students must be approved for admission by the program administrator or designee based on secondary admissions criteria.

4.1.3   The designated faculty/academic administrator or designee will communicate admissions decisions to students. Students who have been denied admission to a

competency-based program may reapply to the program. The applicant is encouraged to reapply only if one of the following applies:

4.1.3.1   The applicant's academic credentials (GPA or associate degree completion) have changed significantly; or

4.1.3.2   The applicant wishes to provide additional information that further explains work experience that may inform the applicant's ability to meet program admission requirements.

4.2   Advising: Advising for competency-based programs will be the responsibility of the program advisors.

4.3   Addition of a Course within a Part-of-Term Session:

4.3.1   If a student satisfactorily completes one of the two competency-based courses in a part-of-term session, the student may request to enroll in another course in that same part-of-term session as per guidelines in section 3.7. To initiate the request to add a class during a part-of-term session, the student must complete a request form available from the designated faculty/academic administrator.

4.3.2   In determining whether a student may join a course after the part of term start date, the designated faculty/academic administrator must consider benefit to the student, student potential for successful completion, and faculty workload.

4.3.3   If approved by the designated faculty/academic administrator, the student will be admitted to the additional course. The designated faculty/academic administrator or designee will notify the Office of the Registrar therewith to enroll the student.

4.4   Satisfactory Academic Progress: Competency-based programs may determine and publish timelines for satisfactory progress outside of the university's general policy.

5. REVIEW PROCESS

Responsible Party (Reviewer): Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Review: Every 5 years, or as necessary

Signed original on file in Employment Services and Operations.

6. POLICY HISTORY

No prior issues of this policy.

7. REFERENCES

MyUHD
Grade Appeal Form
PS 03.A.04 - Grading System for Undergraduate Students
PS 03.A.11 – Credit by Examination and Credit by Approved Equivalencies
PS 03.A.12 – Change to Curricula, Courses, and Program.
PS 03.A.24- Admission of Students
PS 03.A.30 – Semester Credit Hours Policy.
PS 03.A.31- Assessment of Educational Programs
PS 03.A.36: Course Drop Limit
UHD Standard Academic Progress

Texas Education Code §51.907: Limitations on the Number of Courses that may be Dropped under Certain Circumstances