

DISCONTINUANCE OF THE GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ONLINE TEACHING

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors discontinue the Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching in the College of Education, effective Fall term 2021.

Background

The Learning Design and Technology (LDT) faculty completed a review of 5-year data regarding enrollment trends, sustainability, market analysis, and growth potential of its existing programs. It was a unanimous decision of the faculty to close low enrollment programs, including the Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching. Productivity and interest in the program waned. Over the last five years, 19 students completed the certificate, and in the previous three years, the number was six. There are two students in the program nearing completion, which is anticipated at the end of the Winter term 2021. The program began an admission moratorium in the Fall term 2020.

While Online Teaching may seem like a viable option, especially during a pandemic when most instruction has become virtual, there has been little interest in completing an entire program. Employers seek candidates with competency-based credentials, usually found through professional learning centered on specific needs demonstrated through evidence-based products. A program focused entirely on Online Teaching no longer meets the needs of the market.

In addition, nearly 100% of the program's completers were university employees. As the WSU Office of Teaching and Learning expanded its services and training with *Teach Anywhere*, the need for formal coursework in Online Teaching declined. There is no longer a need for employees to use employee benefits for university courses to obtain this certificate. Efforts to market the program to a broader demographic were not successful.

Over the last several years, the program has shifted away from education to adult learners in business and corporate settings to optimize learning and instruction to improve performance through instructional inventions and trainings. This shift was in response to market and industry needs based on market research data. LDT programs today prepare individuals as instructional designers, e-learning specialists, training and development specialist, and user engagement designers in either a corporate or more consultative and entrepreneurial role.

Program Description

The Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching is an 18-credit hour program designed to prepare students for teaching positions in online or other distance education settings in both the K-12 and higher education environments. The certificate provides students with essential knowledge and skills in pedagogy, course development, evaluation, instruction, and other aspects of the educational process in online learning environments.

Approvals

The recommendation to discontinue this program was approved by the faculty of the Learning Design and Technology program, Dean of the College of Education, the Graduate Council, Dean of the Graduate School, and the Interim Provost.