

Degree Designations Recommendations

Recommendation:

- SAPC recommends the University Senate encourage all new degree programs to have degree titles that match the CPE degree designation list (<http://dataportal.cpe.ky.gov/cpedegreedesignations.aspx>). If a proposed degree designation does not appear in the CPE degree designation list, please provide a statement to the Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. They will keep the rationale on file for use in their external reporting.
- Include the link to the degree designation list on all three new degree forms and on the Senate website of helpful information.
- The 78 degree programs that currently do not have a degree designation that does not appear in the CPE degree designations can choose, if they want to, to change their degree designation to an appropriate degree designation from the CPE degree designation list using the short form provided and expedited process (after College curriculum committee approval it would be forwarded to SC office to be posted on a web transmittal). This form may only be used to change the degree designation to an appropriate degree title from the CPE degree designation list and only if a degree program does not currently match (i.e., restricted to just the 78 degree programs).

Background and Rationale

Kentucky

Between AY 2016-2017, the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) established a list of approved degree designations (<http://dataportal.cpe.ky.gov/cpedegreedesignations.aspx> - See List of CPE Degree Designations) in an effort to standardize the degree designations used across the state. All public universities and colleges were required to update their program inventory within the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Data System (KPEDS) and begin submitting all degree data with the updated degree designations.

However, the CPE created no restrictions on the internal use of degree designations (i.e., diplomas, transcripts) by universities and colleges. At the time that the CPE proposed these changes the University of Kentucky chose not to make any internal changes to the degree designations currently used by programs at the University but rather chose to create a crosswalk between current degree designations and CPE's approved list of degree designations. Approximately 78 programs at the University did not fit into CPE's approved list (see Table below) (see List of Programs with Unique Degree Designations).

Unique Degree Designation by Degree Level

Degree Level	Same Degree Designation	
	No	yes
Baccalaureate	50 (39%)	79 (61%)
Master's	28 (25%)	85 (75%)
Specialist		4 (100%)
Doctor's Degree - Professional Practice		7 (100%)
Doctor's Degree Research/Scholarship		71 (100%)
Grand Total	78 (24%)	246 (76%)

Selection of Degree Designation

Degree designations vary widely by institutions. While there are some common degree designations (e.g., B.A./B.S., M.S./M.A.) used at almost every institution awarding these degrees, there is no standardization regarding which disciplines these common degrees are to be applied. For instance, some institutions assign a B.S. to specific science and quantitative majors (e.g., Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Economics) and a B.A. to liberal arts majors (e.g., English, Humanities, History), while other institutions allow students in any major to complete electives in either science and math or languages and liberal arts to earn a B.S. or B.A., respectively. However, what constitutes the “sciences” and the “arts” also varies between institutions (e.g., Economics, Psychology, Education).

Often when degree designations deviate from the traditional B.A./B.S., M.A./M.S., Ph.D. designations it is often a professional degree that leads to a specific service with commonly recognized abbreviations (e.g., E.D.D., M.S.W., M.B.A). There are several states that have tried to define these professional degree designations and provide policies around their use (see Louisiana's Academic Affairs Policy; and, Ohio Board of Regents: Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study). However, it should be stated that even amongst professional accredited programs degree designations are far from standard. For example, a Bachelors in Forestry (BSF) is typically associated with an academic program accredited by the Society of American Foresters and leading to a career in forestry. However, a review of programs accredited by the Society of American Foresters shows multiple degree designations (e.g., Master of Natural Resource, Bachelor of Science, B.S., in Natural Resource Management, Bachelor of Science with a major in Forestry). So while there is some commonality among programs with similar accreditation it is far from standardized or required.

Below is an example of a UK transcript listing both the Degree Designation and the Major.

2017 Fall Semester

Program:

College of Ag, Food and Environment

BS in Natural Resources and Evtl Sci

Major: Natural Resources and Environmental Sci

<u>CBS NUM</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>OPTS</u>
FOR 325	ECO BOTANY: PLANTS AND HUMAN AFFECTS	---	3.0	0.00