

**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY**



**Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Graduate  
Certificate Program**

Revised: February 2026

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## Overview of PFF Graduate Certificate Program

### *History and Purpose*

In addition to specializing in a field of research/creativity, doctoral students need experiences that clarify how academic institutions function and the roles and responsibilities of faculty (e.g., researcher, instructor, mentor). To prepare for academia, they also must be provided professional development opportunities (e.g., preparing for an academic interview, compiling an academic portfolio).

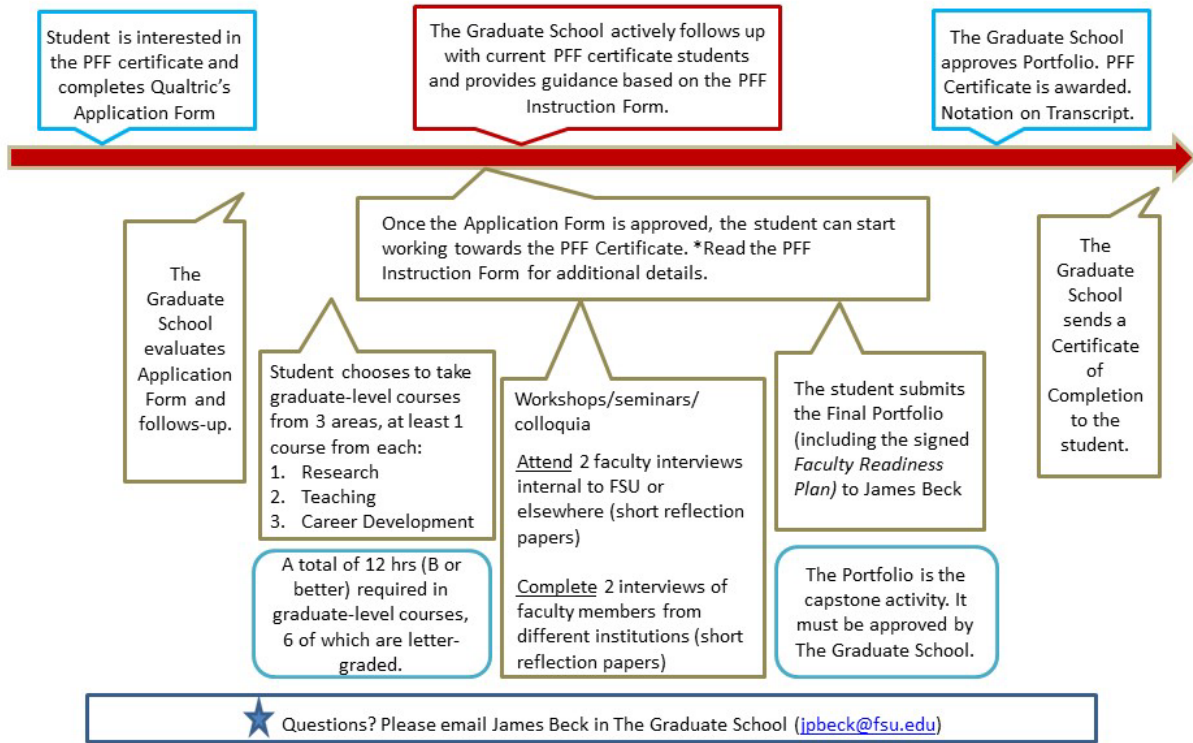
Founded in 1993 as a joint effort of the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Council of Graduate Schools, the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program was created to improve the preparation of doctoral students for a profession in academia. The following year, Florida State University was one of 15 universities that received a grant fund to establish a PFF Certificate Program that continues today. Currently, the FSU PFF Certificate Program offered by The Graduate School includes five components: **research, teaching, career development, mentoring, and the professional portfolio**, with a certificate awarded at the completion of requirements.

McNeef's (2002) survey of 271 Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) alumni from seven universities (including Florida State University) and follow-up telephone interviews found faculty mentoring and professional development activities most helpful in preparing students to make decisions about their future in academia. PFF alumni reported they were better prepared for the job application and interview process and understood academia's expectations once hired. An FSU alumnus responded "Before PFF, I had not given much thought to how many different things "assistant professor" could mean, depending on the type of institution at which you work. PFF opened my eyes."

A three-year study of PFF personnel, deans, graduate faculty and 963 former and current PFF participants by Goldsmith, Haviland, Dailey, and Wiley (2004) found that PFF certificate programs improved the participants' professional development without lengthening time-to-degree. Specifically, PFF led to gaining faculty appointments and effectiveness as assistant professors. Respondents cited the importance of feedback from faculty mentors to success in their academic careers.

# PFF Certificate Flowchart

## Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Graduate Certificate Flowchart



## PFF Certificate Application Information

### *Graduate Certificate Admission Policies*

Per University policy, graduate students are required to formally apply for admission to a graduate certificate program. Students are not enrolled in a certificate program by virtue of being enrolled in related courses. The certificate application form must be submitted prior to completing two courses in the certificate program. Admission to the program must be approved by The Graduate School who serves as the Director of the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Graduate Certificate Program.

Additionally, per University policy, completion of an undergraduate degree is required for admission to a graduate certificate program. If you have not completed an undergraduate degree, you are not eligible for admission to the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Graduate Certificate program.

### *PFF Certificate Application Materials*

1. First and Last Name
2. FSU Email Address
3. EMPLID
4. Degree-level and name of Academic Degree Program
5. Admission Term and Year
6. Current FSU GPA
7. Term and Year of Projected Graduation
8. Current CV or Resume
9. Personal Statement (500 words or less) explaining why you are interested and want to enroll in the PFF graduate certificate.

### *PFF Certificate Application Form*

Those interested in pursuing the PFF graduate certificate should fill out an application here:

[https://fsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bBqdyZFU7IcaF3U](https://fsu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bBqdyZFU7IcaF3U)

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## PFF Certificate Program of Study Requirements

Graduate students must earn a grade of 'B' or better in all certificate coursework (a B- is not acceptable). All certificate coursework must be at the graduate-level (courses numbered 5000-level and above) and must be completed within 7 years of first enrolling in certificate program coursework.

The PFF graduate certificate program includes five components with accompanying professional development workshop/seminar/colloquia requirements and the *Faculty Readiness Development Plan* completed by the PFF participant and a faculty mentor/major professor/advisor. To strengthen the roles of professional development and mentoring in the PFF graduate certificate at Florida State University, the certificate requires participants to complete a total of **12 credit hours of graduate coursework** related to research, teaching, and career development (at least 1 course from each area) that is approved by the participant's mentor and The Graduate School. The capstone activity is submitting an academic portfolio. PFF students who successfully complete the PFF graduate certificate will have a notation included on their FSU transcript.

Additional details are noted below.

### *Category 1: Research Preparation*

1. Complete one or more graduate-level courses (5000 or above, B or better) in research preparation or ethics offered by an academic unit; **AND**
2. Attend at least three (3) professional development workshops/seminars/colloquia on research preparation, writing, ethics, publishing, plagiarism, and/or grant applications offered by the Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards (OGFA), Graduate Student Resource Center, Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT), University Libraries, Office of Research, and/or an academic unit.
  - \*NOTE: The Office of Research offers a Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training which outlines FSU's policy and procedures for ensuring compliance with federal funding agencies. This training may be substituted for the three (3) professional development workshops/seminars/colloquia on research development requirement.
  - In response to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), the University Libraries offers a Graduate Skills Workshop Series which provides a variety of workshop opportunities to enhance student research and success. Some of the workshops in this series may count towards the research preparation or career development component of the certificate. For specific guidance, please refer to the workshop flier on the PFF webpage on The Graduate School's website.

The graduate courses taken, and the workshops/seminars/colloquia attended should be recorded in the "*Faculty Readiness Development Plan*." \*Students will be required to provide a brief description on the *Faculty Readiness Development Plan* as to how the courses and workshops/seminars/colloquia attended equate to research preparation, writing, ethics, publishing, plagiarism, and/or grant applications.

The Graduate School uses the following sets of approved courses as examples for faculty mentors when they approve their own academic unit's research courses for the PFF graduate certificate. Final approval of courses selected will reside with The Graduate School.

### Examples of Common Research Courses (varies by unit/discipline):

- Supervised Research Courses
- Responsible Conduct of Research Courses
- Seminar Courses that promote lectures and discussions related to current findings, ethics, approaches to problems, research, and professional topics in the area, etc.
- Concept/Research Methods and Design and Analysis Courses that cover current techniques and methodologies of the discipline.
- Colloquium Courses that include lectures and discussions on research.

### Examples of Common Research Workshops:

- *RefWorks®: Using Bibliographic Management Tools for Research*
- *Proactive Strategies to Avoid Plagiarism*
- *Contracts and Grants, From Cradle to Grave (The FSU Office of Research)*
- *Grant Proposal Writing in the STEM Fields*
- *Grant Proposal Writing in the Arts and Humanities*
- *Grant Proposal Writing in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*
- *Scientific Writing*
- *Scientific Publishing*
- *Writing and Publishing in the Arts and Humanities*
- *Writing and Publishing in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*
- *IRB (Human Subjects) Approval*
- *Copyright and Fair Use*

### Category 2: Teaching Preparation

1. Complete one or more graduate-level courses (5000 or above, B or better) in teaching methods or pedagogy offered by an academic unit; **AND**
2. Attend at least three (3) professional development workshops/seminars/colloquia on instructional methods offered by the [Center for the Advancement of Teaching \(CAT\)](#), [University Libraries](#), and/or an academic unit.
  - \*NOTE: Completion of both Module 1 and Module 2 of the online teaching modules for CAT's [Essential Policies and Practices Training for TAs](#) conducted each semester may be substituted for the three (3) professional development workshops/seminars/colloquia on instructional methods requirement.
  - Additionally, in response to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), CAT offers a [Teaching Development Program \(TDP\)](#). This is a flexible, multi-semester, non-credit bearing professional development opportunity. TDP workshops count as eligible workshops for the instructional methods requirement.

The graduate courses taken, and the workshops/seminars/colloquia attended should be recorded in the "Faculty Readiness Development Plan." \*Students will be required to provide a brief description on the

*Faculty Readiness Development Plan* as to how the courses and workshops/seminars/colloquia attended equate to teaching methods or pedagogy.

The Graduate School uses the following sets of approved courses as examples for faculty mentors when they approve their own academic unit's teaching courses for the PFF graduate certificate. Final approval of courses selected will reside with The Graduate School.

**Examples of Common Teaching Courses (varies by unit/discipline):**

- Supervised Teaching Courses
- Teaching at the College Level Courses
- Teaching Practicum Courses that provide context to substantive issues applicable to the teaching of the discipline in a university setting.
- Courses that prepare students to be able to present ongoing research at the level expected for presentations at national and international conferences.

**Examples of Common Teaching Workshops:**

- *Incorporating Global Competency in the Curriculum*
- *CAT's Teaching Training Recognition: Basics of Teaching @ FSU*
- *CAT's Teaching Development Program Workshops*

*Category 3: Career Development*

1. Complete one or more discipline-based, graduate-level courses (5000 or above, B or better) in career development offered by an academic unit (e.g., History's Museum Management, Psychology's Ethic's, and Standards of Professional Practice, etc.); **AND**
2. Attend at least two (2) job interview-related presentations by candidates for faculty positions (internal to FSU or elsewhere); **AND**
  - Following each presentation, prepare a typed, 300-word, 12-point font size, reflection paper considering the candidate's ability to describe the subject of the job talk and answer questions succinctly.
3. Attend at least two (2) professional development workshops/seminars/colloquia on career development and/or the academic job search process offered by the [Career Center](#), [University Libraries](#), and/or an academic unit.
  - \*NOTE: In response to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), both the Career Center and University Libraries offer additional career development opportunities to prepare students for a variety of careers in academia.
    - In the Career Center, [Beyond the Professoriate](#) offers digital workshops under a "Faculty Careers" path. Students must complete ALL of the Courses (1-3) and ONLY Chapter 1 (titled: "Should I go another year on the academic job market?") of Course 4 to satisfy one (1) of the professional development workshops on career development. Students must complete the associated quizzes to request the

certificate of completion from Beyond the Professorate. Upload a copy of the certificate as proof of completion in the *Faculty Readiness Development Plan*.

- In the University Libraries, the [Graduate Skills Workshop Series](#) offer a variety of workshop opportunities to enhance student research and success. Some of the workshops in this series may count towards the research preparation component of the certificate. For specific guidance, please refer to the workshop flier on the PFF webpage on [The Graduate School's website](#).

The discipline-based course(s) taken, reflection papers for the interview-related presentations attended, and workshop/seminars/colloquia completed should be recorded in the “*Faculty Readiness Development Plan*.”

\*Students will be required to provide a brief description on the *Faculty Readiness Development Plan* as to how the courses and workshops/seminars/colloquia attended equate to career development.

The Graduate School uses the following sets of approved courses as examples for faculty mentors when they approve their own academic unit's career development courses for the PFF graduate certificate. Final approval of courses selected will reside with The Graduate School.

**Examples of Common Career Development Courses (varies by unit/discipline):**

- Internship Courses
- Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice Courses or other introductory courses that cover training on ethical principles in the practice.

**Examples of Common Career Development Workshops:**

- *Reduce Financial Stress: Managing Student Loan Debt Before Your Graduate*
- *Mentors in the Making*
- *Developing a Teaching Portfolio*
- *CVs and Letters of Recommendation*
- *The Academic Job Interview: Strategies for Success*
- *The Business, Corporate and Non-Profit Job Search*
- *Negotiating the Job Offer*
- *Female Leaders in the Sciences*
- *Faculty Members in a Research University: Expectations, Opportunities and Challenges*

**Category 4: Mentoring**

1. Submit a completed “*Faculty Readiness Development Plan*” endorsed (signed) by the student's faculty advisor/major professor in the home unit; **AND**
2. Complete at least two (2) interviews of faculty members from different institutions about the development of their own careers. The interviews can be via telephone, email exchange, or virtual/zoom.

- Following each interview, write a one-page, single-spaced or two-page double-spaced, typed reflection paper that provides a detailed analysis of what you learned and how it will impact your future employment decisions and any new information you learned from the interview.
- Include interview transcripts and reflection papers in the PFF portfolio (capstone activity).
- A list of helpful interview questions can be found on the PFF certificate webpage.

Apart from the PFF portfolio requirement (capstone activity), the “*Faculty Readiness Development Plan*” will be a record of all efforts completed toward earning the PFF graduate certificate (e.g., courses, workshops/seminars/colloquia, CAT training, interviews, etc.). The Graduate School must give final approval of the “*Faculty Readiness Development Plan*.”

### *Category 5: Final PFF Portfolio (Capstone Activity)*

1. Prepare a final PFF portfolio which outlines readiness for faculty work and research/career objectives, endorsed by a faculty member from the home academic unit.
    - The PFF portfolio typically includes at a minimum a statement of research/creativity objectives, a statement of teaching philosophy and the CV. Include in the portfolio, graduate courses taken, and workshops/seminars/colloquia attended to satisfy the PFF graduate certificate requirements.
    - The instructions and scoring rubric for the PFF portfolio can be found on the PFF certificate webpage on The Graduate School’s main website.
    - See below for submission instructions.
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## PFF Certificate Completion Steps

By completing the PFF graduate certificate students will be able to:

1. Develop a professional portfolio;
2. Develop a curriculum vita;
3. Make an informed decision when selecting the type of postsecondary institution (e.g., community college, teaching college, research university) for employment;
4. Prepare, with confidence, for the academic interview;
5. Conduct research and publish results;
6. Mentor graduate students; and
7. Demonstrate strong teaching pedagogy and grasp of instructional technology.

### *Step 1: Submit the Completed “Faculty Readiness Development Plan” and Final PFF Portfolio (Capstone Activity) to The Graduate School*

- Both the “Faculty Readiness Development Plan” and “Final PFF Portfolio”, which must include all the required materials, should first be approved by the student’s faculty advisor in their academic unit. A list of the PFF portfolio required materials can be found on the PFF certificate webpage.
- Afterwards, both documents should be submitted to [Mr. James Beck](#) in The Graduate School for final review/approval. Please be sure the final PFF portfolio is submitted as one, combined PDF file.

### *Step 2: Final Approval*

- It will take some time to evaluate the PFF portfolio materials. If approved, an email notification will be sent to the student’s FSU email address from The Graduate School which states that the student has completed all the requirements for the PFF graduate certificate.
- The Registrar’s Office will be copied on the email to award the graduate certificate. This accomplishment will be noted on the student’s transcript.
- Shortly after, a “Completion Certificate” will be sent to the student’s academic unit via campus mail.
- Students who complete the PFF graduate certificate are acknowledged at The Graduate School’s “Celebration of Graduate Student Excellence” event held each Spring semester.

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## Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the PFF graduate certificate, please feel free to contact [Mr. James Beck](#) (Coordinator of the PFF Graduate Certificate) in The Graduate School.