



# Policies



## **Certification**

Initial certification as a Texas Gulf Coast Gardener requires completion of the course along with the completion of 40 hours of volunteer service to Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens. Certification will be for a period of one year from the date of graduation.

Annual recertification requires the completion of 20 hours of volunteer service, and may include approved continuing education classes, regardless of the number of Tiers completed.

## **Course Requirements**

- Participants must attend all the weekly classes.
- Successful classroom completion requires no more than two days of absence be permitted (no exceptions). Classes missed must be made up, when that same Tier is offered the following year.
- 40 hours of volunteer service to Mercer is required for certification and graduation. Volunteer hours must be completed within 12 months starting at the end of the class.
- Interns will be assigned a pin number to log-in and out, on the V-Works program in the volunteer cottage to track their hours.
- No refund of fees will be made once the course begins.

## **Certification and Recertification Activities**

- The following Mercer activities are approved for internship/volunteer credit:
  - Planting, pruning, maintaining the plant collections/gardens
  - Transplanting or propagating in the greenhouses
  - Training as a docent, to lead adult and/or children's tours.
  - Fundraising Activities - plant sales (March Mart, Tropical Sale)
  - Join a March Mart Committee – annuals and perennials, gingers, trees and shrubs, shade group, natives, roses, or tropicals. These committees meet once a week, year round.
  - Educational symposiums/Events (Tropical Workshop, Garden Faire).
  - Other unspecified activities as approved.

## **Limitations**

- Texas Gulf Coast Gardeners may identify themselves as such, only when doing unpaid public service work in an approved horticultural, education, activity. The certification status may not be used for commercial publicity or private business.
- As a Texas Gulf Coast Gardener working with the general public, no discrimination shall be shown on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.