

Graduate Certificate Program Guidelines

Definition

A graduate certificate program is a related cluster of credit bearing graduate courses that constitutes a coherent body of study within a discipline or set of related disciplines.

Purpose

The purpose of graduate certificate programs is to serve the needs of both matriculated and non-degree students interested in developing specific skills and knowledge for personal and/or professional development. Graduate certificate programs are credit-based, taught by regular or associate members of the graduate faculty, and normally aligned with existing graduate education curricula. Certificate programs are encouraged to use alternative, distributed learning delivery systems and to create interdisciplinary curricula and field experiences. While certificate programs are often chosen by students who do not wish to pursue a master's or doctoral degree, courses completed during a certificate program may be applied toward degree requirements upon the approval of the appropriate graduate program coordinator and the Graduate School *as noted below*.

Curriculum

- Graduate certificate programs require a minimum of 4 graduate courses and a minimum of 12 credits of graduate course work (800- or 900-level courses) organized in a coherent and logical manner to provide knowledge and expertise relevant to a specific aspect of professional and/or personal development.
- At least ½ of the coursework in a certificate program must be required (non-elective).
- At least ½ of the coursework in a certificate program should be taught by regular members of the graduate faculty.
- A maximum of one full UNH course (3 or 4 credits) or two 1 or 2-credit UNH courses taken prior to matriculation (enrollment in the program after admission) in a certificate program may be applied to fulfill the certificate requirements.
- Courses may be applied to only one certificate program but may be applied to a master's or doctoral degree program at UNH. There are no upper limits to the number of credits that maybe applied provided the courses fulfill a degree requirement.
- Only courses completed with a grade of B- or higher may be used to fulfill certificate requirements.
- A student who receives more than one grade below B- will be required to withdraw from the certificate program.
- All course work for a certificate must be completed within 3 years from the date of matriculation (enrollment) in the program after admission.
- Students enrolled only in certificate programs are exempt from the Graduate School's continuous enrollment policy.
- The UNH Registrar will maintain official transcripts for all students enrolled in certificate programs.
- Students must file an Intent-to- Complete Form with the Graduate School by published deadline for the semester in which they intend to complete their program.
- Students who successfully complete a certificate program will be awarded an official certificate by the UNH Graduate School.

- The University Commencement ceremonies are reserved for degree programs.

Tuition and Financial Aid

- Tuition for NH residents in certificate programs will be equal to the rates for NH resident graduate degree students. Tuition for out-of-state students will be 10% above the resident rate, unless the student is also enrolled in a degree program, in which case the non-resident or New England Regional rate will apply.
- Students enrolled only in certificate programs are not eligible for graduate assistantships or scholarships unless specifically awarded by the sponsoring program, but may be eligible for need-based aid through the UNH Financial Aid Office. Students enrolled in degree programs as well as certificate programs are eligible for all forms of graduate financial support.
- Tuition revenues associated with students enrolled in graduate certificate programs will be treated in the same manner as revenues generated by graduate degree students, for RCM purposes.

Application and Admission

- Application to graduate certificate programs follows the same process as application to a degree program. The Graduate School has available certificate program application forms.
- An application fee of \$25 fee is charged for processing such applications. The application fee is waived for applicants currently enrolled in a UNH graduate degree program.
- Individuals holding a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution are eligible to apply for admission to a certificate program.
- Applicants may or may not already be enrolled in a graduate degree program at the University.
- Applicants must submit the appropriate application form, official transcripts, and the required fee.
- Graduate entrance examination scores and letters of recommendation are not required unless specified by the individual program.
- Individuals are admitted to a certificate program on the recommendation of the program faculty.
- Individuals admitted to a certificate program will be notified at the time they are admitted that they will be expected to take the appropriate courses as they are offered and that there is no guarantee that students who do not follow the prescribed program will be able to complete the certificate.

Procedures for Establishing a Certificate Program

Normally only departments/programs that offer graduate degrees are eligible to offer graduate certificate programs. However, graduate faculty from multiple departments or colleges may propose interdisciplinary certificate programs. Programs or faculty wishing to establish a certificate program must provide the following information to the Dean of the Graduate School:

- The name of the sponsoring department(s) or program(s)

- The title of the certificate
- The rationale and purpose of the certificate program (what the program is designed to prepare students for)
- The intended audience for the program
- The program of study, including required courses, elective courses, and any new courses that will be a part of the program (including a catalog description of new courses) and a tentative three-year schedule of when the courses are to be offered and who the instructors of record will be.
- Additional resources that may be required (library, technology, etc.)
- The name of the faculty coordinator(s)
- Alternative delivery systems to be employed (i.e., distance technologies, weekend or evening scheduling, off-campus venues, etc.)
- The proposed starting date for the program
- Written endorsement from the appropriate department/program chair(s) and school/college dean(s)

Approval

The Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the Master's Committee and the Graduate Council approves all certificate programs.

Certificate programs will normally be approved for a period of three years, renewable upon approval of the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Termination of a certificate program prior to its three-year approval period may occur at any time if the program is financially not viable. Students enrolled at the time of termination must have access to at least one cycle of courses needed to complete the certificate requirements. The Dean of the Graduate School approves terminations on the recommendation of the program faculty and the appropriate college dean(s).

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