

Policy 6-224: Graduate Studies and Degrees, Graduate Certificate Guidelines

I. Purpose and Scope

(Reserved)

II. Definitions

(Reserved)

III. Policy: Graduate Certificate Guidelines

A. Policy

1. Graduate certificates are given in recognition of graduate work conforming to a specified program of study. Proposals for new graduate certificate programs are created by departments and colleges and submitted for approval to the Graduate Council.
2. Graduate certificates shall require 15 hours or more of designated work.
3. In cases where a graduate student is a candidate for both a graduate degree and a graduate certificate, it is at the discretion of a student's graduate degree supervisory committee whether the credit hours earned toward a graduate certificate may be counted in the graduate degree plan of study.
4. Interdisciplinary graduate certificate programs are encouraged.
5. An applicant for admission to a graduate certificate program must meet the following minimum requirements: (1) A bachelor's degree from a fully accredited college or university, (2) An undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 (exceptions may be granted to this requirement, for example with respect to mature entry students), (3) Recommendation of the faculty in the college or

department in which the graduate certificate is given. An applicant may be a matriculated or non-matriculated graduate student at the University of Utah.

B. Guidelines

1. Introduction

A graduate certificate program is a focused collection of courses that, when completed, affords the student some record of coherent academic accomplishment in a given discipline or set of related disciplines. A graduate certificate is not a degree.

2. Development of new Graduate Certificate Programs

- a. Proposals for new graduate certificate programs are created by departments and colleges and submitted for approval to the Graduate Council. Proposals should address criteria in Part III-B-3. All proposals (including those for which Utah Board of Higher Education approval is not required) shall be submitted using the template prescribed by the Board of Regents Policy R401 (available from the Graduate School).
- b. Proposals must be accompanied by endorsement from the department heads and deans of the college in which the contributing coursework is housed, as well as from those academic units whose students or programs could be affected by the creation of the new graduate certificate.
- c. Proposals meeting the criteria set forth by the Graduate School (see Part III-B-3) are then recommended to the cognizant vice president, the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees for approval.
- d. Proposals for new certificate programs that are not within existing programs that have previously been approved by the Utah Board of Higher Education and which require 30 or more semester hours, shall be submitted to the Utah Board of Higher Education for notification and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

- e. During the first three years of the certificate program, an annual report will be sent to the Graduate School, to include the following information:
 - i. Number of students enrolled by year
 - ii. Number of matriculated/non-matriculated students
 - iii. Summary of credentials and academic records (i.e., GPA, GRE, etc.) of enrolled students.
 - iv. Number of certificates awarded by year
 - f. All graduate certificate programs will be reviewed within the course of regular program reviews conducted by the Graduate Council.
 - g. Interdisciplinary graduate certificate programs are encouraged.
3. Criteria for Program Administration
- a. Proposals for new certificate programs shall include the following:
 - i. Need. A statement of the need for the proposed program and the basis for such a need, supported by either externally or internally derived data;
 - ii. Educational Objectives. A statement of the educational objectives of the program.
 - iii. Impact on Existing Programs. The program proposal will address the question of the impact of the graduate certificate program on any related degree program.
 - iv. Courses. A statement of the proposed course sequence associated with the certificate, including titles and course descriptions both for existing courses and any new courses that may be developed. The

proposal will address the possibility of program delivery using distance education approaches.

- v. **Assessment.** A statement of how the proposed course sequences associated with the certificate will meet the stated educational objectives and be assessed.
- vi. **Faculty.** The names of faculty associated with or contributing to the certificate program, either by teaching one or more of the courses associated with the program or participating in the design of the course sequence.
- vii. **Coordinator.** The name and curriculum vita of the faculty member who will be designated as the coordinator of the program, for purposes of communication with the Graduate School.
- viii. **Advisory Committee.** The program may have an Advisory Committee, which will include representation from the professional, business, or government sectors, which the program is designed to serve.
- ix. **Budget.** Describe the costs of the certificate program and how the program will be funded.

4. Student Eligibility and Admission Criteria

- a. An applicant for admission to a graduate certificate program must meet the following minimum requirements: (1) A bachelor's degree from a fully accredited college or university, (2) An undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 (exceptions may be granted to this requirement, for example with respect to mature entry students), (3) Recommendation of the faculty in the college or department in which the graduate certificate is given. An applicant may be a matriculated or non-matriculated graduate student at the University of Utah.

- b. Greater flexibility than that found in graduate degree admission requirements may be built into graduate certificate programs so that the needs of the target student population may be met, if it is appropriate to do so.
- c. Successful completion of a graduate certificate is not viewed as a guaranteed means of entry into a graduate degree program.
- d. Courses comprising a graduate certificate may be used as evidence in support of a student's application for admission to a graduate degree program.

IV. Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms and other Related Resources

- A. Rules
- B. Procedures
- C. Guidelines
- D. Forms
- E. Other related resource materials

[Certificates Overview July 2014](#)

V. References

(Reserved)

VI. Contacts

The designated contact officials for this Regulation are

- A. Policy Owners: (primary contact person for questions and advice): Dean of the Graduate School.

- B. Policy Officers: Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Sr. Vice President for Health Sciences.

See University Rule 1-001 for information about the roles and authority of policy owners and policy officers.

VII. History

A. Current version: Revision 1

1. Approved by Academic Senate: May 7, 2001
2. Approved by Board of Trustees: August 13, 2001
3. Editorial Revisions
 - Editorially revised September 21, 2011
 - Editorially revised October 28, 2022 to remove outdated faculty terms.

Earlier revisions:

[Revision 0](#)