

## **Policy Statement on Credit-Bearing Graduate Certificate Programs at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire**

Graduate certificate programs are one means for meeting expressed needs of a specified audience with an educational program that has internal cohesion. These programs offer an opportunity for an individual to earn graduate credit and advance towards a recognized graduate credential that certifies a significant level of achievement within a prescribed array of courses. Credit-bearing graduate certificate programs are of particular value since the program can be verified by a university transcript and quality control asserted through the graduate level curriculum approval processes currently in place at UW-Eau Claire.

### **MINIMUM STANDARDS**

1. Graduate certificate programs must not impinge on the quality of the regular graduate programs and opportunities for graduate degree-seeking students.
2. The approval and review process for a graduate certificate program will ensure high academic standards.
3. The purpose of a graduate certificate program must be clearly outlined in any proposal and must demonstrate the benefit(s) of the graduate certificate to its potential students.
4. Graduate certificates may be earned by graduate degree-seeking students or by a specified audience from the community not pursuing a graduate degree. Guidelines and standards will be identical for both groups.
5. Where appropriate, graduate certificate programs should meet appropriate industry/professional society accreditation standards.
6. Graduate certificate programs will require no fewer than 15 credits, and all credits required for the graduate certificate program must be graduate level credits (5xx level and above). No fewer than 6 credits must be taken at the 7xx level.
7. At least 50 percent of the credits applied to the graduate certificate program requirements must be taken through UW-Eau Claire.
8. Departments, schools, or colleges proposing graduate certificate programs have the right to specify (a) admission requirements for entry into a certificate program, and (b) minimum GPA requirements for course and certificate completion.

## PROCEDURES

1. Graduate certificate program proposals should originate at the department or college (where appropriate) level; all affected departments must endorse proposals. Each proposal will include the following:
  - a. Statement of benefits to the department(s), school/college, and university
  - b. Identification of target audience(s) and evidence of long-term need
  - c. Description of the academic component including:
    - i. Goals
    - ii. Admission requirements
    - iii. Number and array of courses including specification of any required courses. If electives are allowed within the graduate certificate program, an explanation of the proposed electives in light of the need for program cohesion should be included
    - iv. A statement identifying program pre-requisites
    - v. GPA requirements for graduate certificate completion (a minimum of 3.0 for graduate certificate programs)
    - vi. A statement outlining the graduate certificate program's relationship to and articulation with existing degree programs and the select mission of UW-Eau Claire.
  - d. Description of the administration, staffing, and budgeting for the program, including:
    - i. Evidence that the faculty/staff in the department(s) are willing to teach the courses in the graduate certificate program at the times/locations necessary for completion of the certificate
    - ii. Proposed frequency of course offerings for courses included in the graduate certificate program
    - iii. Proposed arrangements for ongoing advising for students in the graduate certificate program
    - iv. Anticipated need for other student support services for students enrolled in the graduate certificate program
    - v. For graduate certificate programs involving more than one academic department, identification of an administrative unit for the program.
2. Each proposed graduate certificate program and the courses included in it must gain the approval of all affected departments and the appropriate school/college curriculum committee(s). The proposed program will then be forwarded to the Graduate Council for approval. The graduate certificate will be enacted following approval by the Graduate Dean and Chancellor.
3. School/college curriculum committees will review graduate certificate programs within the school/college as part of the existing program review process; interdisciplinary graduate certificate programs will be reviewed in conjunction with the coordinating department program review. School/college curriculum committees and the Graduate Council will have the authority to suspend graduate certificate programs.

Approved by Graduate Council on 11/19/08.