Policy Statement on Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs  
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire  

INTRODUCTION  
Certificate programs at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UW-Eau Claire) serve the needs of both degree-seeking and non-degree seeking populations. They are a means of meeting expressed needs of a specified audience with an educational program that has internal cohesion. For those not seeking a degree, these programs offer an opportunity for an individual to earn college credit and advance towards a credential that certifies a significant level of achievement within a prescribed array of courses. As the rate of change in the workplace accelerates, more people find it necessary to engage in continuous learning to meet the challenges of new duties and responsibilities or career changes or career. Often their need is for in-depth study that goes beyond what is generally provided in non-credit professional development activities. The credit-bearing certificate programs are of particular value since the program can be verified by a university transcript and quality control asserted through the curriculum approval processes currently in place at UW-Eau Claire. For degree-seeking students, a certificate program can be pursued to demonstrate expertise in a particular academic field. Successful completion of a certificate program may serve to satisfy graduation requirements for a second program of study or to add credentials beyond any other required programs.

STANDARDS  
1. The development and continuation of certificate programs will be based on student and university needs and interests.
2. Approval of certificate programs must not impinge on the quality of regular programs and opportunities for degree-seeking students. Opportunities for certificate programs will be based on student needs and interests.
3. The purpose of a certificate program must be clearly outlined in any proposal and must demonstrate the benefit(s) of the certificate to its potential students and its alignment with the mission of the University.
4. Certificates may be earned by degree-seeking students or by a specified audience from the community not pursuing a university degree. Guidelines and standards will be identical for both populations groups.
5. Where appropriate, certificate programs should meet industry/professional society/accreditation standards.

6. At least 25% percent of the credits applied to the certificate program requirements must be taken through UW-Eau Claire. (Credits earned through the National Student Exchange Program, the Health Care Practicum, internships, study abroad opportunities, and UW-Eau Claire Internet courses are counted as resident credit.) by participation in a UW-Eau Claire study abroad program are resident credits unless special considerations apply.

7. Departments/programs, schools, or colleges proposing certificate programs have the right to specify (a) admission requirements for entry into a certificate program, (b) minimum GPA requirements for courses included in the program and certificate completion, (c) GPA requirements for certificate completion above the university minimum, and (d) applicability of the S/U option, if any.

8. Where appropriate, certificate programs should meet industry/professional society/accreditation standards.

9. Certificate programs articulate with existing degree programs.
PROCEDURES

1. Certificate program proposals should originate at the department/program level; all affected departments/programs must endorse proposals. Each proposal will include the following:

   a. Context for the certificate program (any predecessor programs, relationship to existing programs, alignment with university mission);

   b. Rationale explaining need for the program (e.g. target audience(s), evidence of long-term need, anticipated enrollment);

   c. Statement of benefits to students, the department(s)/program(s), school/college(s), and university;

   d. Identification of target audience(s) and evidence of long-term need;

   e. Description of the academic component including:

      i. Learning goals and outcomes for students: Goals

      ii. Specification of any program admission requirements, minimum GPA requirements for courses, GPA requirements for certificate completion above the university minimum, applicability of the S/U option;

      iii. Number and array of courses including specification of any required courses. Course electives are allowed within the 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;

   f. 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

      ii. Proposed frequency of course offerings for the courses included in the certificate program;

      iii. Proposed arrangements for ongoing advising for students in the certificate program;

      iv. Anticipated need for student support services for students enrolled in the certificate program;

      v. For certificate programs involving more than one academic department/program, identification of an administrative home: unit for the program;

      vi. Funding needs to initiate and maintain the certificate program, including source(s) of funding and any needed resource reallocation;

      vii. Impact on existing courses and programs.
2. Each proposed certificate program and the courses included in it must gain the approval of all affected departments/programs and the appropriate school/college curriculum committee(s). The proposed program will then be forwarded to the Academic Policies Committee of the University Senate (or Graduate Council) for approval. The certificate will be enacted following approval by this committee.

3. School/college curriculum committees will review certificate programs within the school/college as part of the existing-program review process for academic departments/programs; interdisciplinary certificate programs will be reviewed in conjunction with the administrative home's coordinating department program review process. School/College curriculum committees will have the authority to suspend or reinstate certificate programs.