

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, STRUCTURE, ADMINISTRATION, AND REVIEW OF GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

### **Part I – Overview: Certificate Description and Administration**

#### **Description**

A certificate program is a sequence of courses that provides participants with specialized knowledge and skills for personal enrichment, professional advancement, or career change. Certificate programs may provide

- a basic introduction to an established field of study
- an interdisciplinary approach linking several fields
- a concentrated focus on a sub-field.

#### **Certificate Administration**

##### Administrative Home

An administrative home unit must be designated for a certificate program, even if a certificate is sponsored by more than one graduate program or academic department. For certificates sponsored by multiple institutions, a UWM administrative home must be designated for the UWM certificate. The administrative home unit will be responsible for prospective student inquiry, admissions, and certificate completion verification.

##### Instructional Administrative Authority

The following types of decisions are restricted to graduate faculty, and to academic staff holding probationary or indefinite appointments:

- Recommending student matriculation, continuation, and certificate completion verification
- Determining certificate requirements, such as courses, internships, capstone experiences, minimum credits and grades.

##### Advisory Committee

An advisory committee is strongly recommended for program administration and assessment. The majority of the advisory committee must be graduate faculty.

##### Certificate Director or Coordinator

At a minimum, a certificate program director or certificate coordinator must be designated. The Graduate School recognizes this individual as the signature authority for (a) recommending admission and dismissal from the certificate program, (b) approval of transfer credit, and (c) verification of courses completed.

If the certificate program has an advisory committee, the director should be ex officio on that committee. If the certificate program does not have an advisory board, the certificate director must be a member of the graduate faculty.

### Program Authorization

Requests will follow the Format for a Graduate Certificate Program Proposal (see Appendix A) and must be authorized as indicated on the current Academic Approval Matrix.

### Authorization for Program Modifications or Amendments

The administrative home unit must approve modifications or amendments to a certificate. The administrative home will consult with constituent units and certificate advisory committee before submitting changes to a certificate for further approvals through governance processes, as per the Academic Approval Matrix. The college (or college-level entity) in which the administrative home resides has approval authority over recommended changes. For a certificate that spans multiple colleges, any changes must be approved by all colleges who co-sponsor the certificate.

### Program Evaluation and Reauthorization

Certificate programs are approved for 10-year periods. During the tenth year, a review will be conducted. When circumstances warrant, graduate certificate reviews may be combined with full graduate program reviews or follow-up reviews of the home department. The process and self-study requirements for certificate reviews is specified in Appendix B.

A decision regarding certificate program reauthorization will be made by the GFC following the decennial evaluation. If a certificate program is not reauthorized, students currently enrolled in this certificate program may complete the program, subject to course availability.

## **Part II: Certificate Program Design**

### **Certificate categories**

There are 2 primary categories for certificate structure:

1. Independent certificate (does not require simultaneous enrollment in a specific Graduate Degree Program, but can be pursued in isolation or concurrently with another certificate or degree).
2. Certificate that requires simultaneous enrollment in a specific Graduate Degree Program.

### **Certificate offerings**

Regardless of category, certificates may be offered by single or multiple programs within UWM or through multi-institutional collaborations. A graduate certificate that is designated as multi-institutional draws coursework and advisement from both UWM and one or more external partner institution(s).

### **Curriculum**

The curriculum for a graduate certificate should be organized into a structured progression or cohesive collection of courses. It is recommended that no more than 20% of the credits shall be in independent study or research. A minimum of 15 and a maximum of 21 credits are recommended. An integrating course or other capstone experience is also recommended.

## **Transfer Credit**

For certificate programs fully within UWM, no more than 20% of the required credits may be taken at an institution other than UWM.

For multi-institutional certificate programs, transfer credits are inherent and essential, but the majority of credits (more than 50%) must be taken at UWM.

All transfer credits are subject to Graduate School transfer policy and must be approved by the director of the respective certificate program. Certificate programs have the right to exclude transfer credits from the curriculum.

## **Timeline**

For those certificates that require simultaneous degree enrollment and are awarded concurrent with the degree, the time limit shall be the same as that of the degree program. All other certificates must be completed within 4 years of the start of the certificate program, even if a student is simultaneously enrolled in a graduate degree program.

### **Timeline with concurrent certificates**

A maximum of two UWM graduate certificates may be pursued concurrently. This does not change the time limit for completion of each certificate.

## **Part III: Articulations**

### **Articulation between UWM and external institution(s)**

Multi-institutional certificates must designate a majority of credits to be taken at UWM.

### **Articulation between UWM Graduate Certificate Programs**

When two UWM certificates are pursued concurrently or sequentially, no more than 50% of required credits may be shared from one graduate certificate program to another, provided that both programs specify the courses as approved, required, or elective. Programs that want to have an informal coordination between two or more UWM certificates would do so by arranging their requirements so they appropriately overlap, provided that the courses are listed as required courses for the certificate.

### **Articulation between UWM Certificate and UWM Degree Programs**

1. Credits and courses required for a UWM certificate may be shared toward meeting UWM graduate degree requirements subject to the following restrictions:
  - All credits taken in completion of certificate requirements may be shared towards a UWM graduate degree as long as they do not contribute more than 90% of the total credits needed to obtain the degree. (NOTE: Students in Ph.D. programs must still complete the minimum residency requirements.)
  - Certificate courses used toward meeting degree requirements must be completed within the

time limit for transfer credit.

2. Courses completed for a degree may be shared toward a subsequent certificate, subject to all certificate policy requirements.
3. A course taken as part of a certificate may be shared toward a degree, a 2<sup>nd</sup> certificate, and/or a microcredential.
4. Students may not earn both a certificate and a transcript-designated concentration in the same area.

### **Articulation between a Multi-Institutional Certificate and a Degree Program**

1. Credits and courses required for a multi-institutional certificate may be shared toward meeting UWM graduate degree requirements subject to the following restrictions:
  - All credits will be subject to general transfer requirements, with the exception of a special articulation agreement that might allow more than 50% of transfer credits to be shared.
  - All credits taken in completion of UWM certificate requirements may be shared towards a UWM graduate degree as long as they do not contribute more than 90% of the total credits needed to obtain the degree. (NOTE: Students in Ph.D. programs must still complete the minimum residency requirements.)
  - Certificate courses used toward meeting degree requirements must be completed within the time limit for transfer credit.
2. Courses completed for a UWM degree may be shared toward a subsequent inter-institutional/multi-institutional certificate, subject to all certificate policy requirements.
3. A course taken as part of a certificate may be shared toward a degree, a 2<sup>nd</sup> certificate, and/or a microcredential.
4. Students may not earn both a certificate and a transcript-designated concentration in the same area.

## **Part IV: Admission to and Completion of Certificates**

### **Minimum qualifications for admission**

1. Admission into a graduate certificate program requires a baccalaureate degree with a minimum 2.75 cumulative undergraduate grade point average, unless the applicant is also admitted to a graduate program with specific alternative admission requirements regarding grade point average.
2. Certificate programs may require additional information or have additional criteria for admission.

### **Admission to a Graduate Certificate**

1. Admission to a graduate certificate program requires formal student application through the Graduate School admissions application system, including the required admissions application fee.
2. Certificate programs will inform the Graduate School of their admission recommendation for an applicant. The final admission decision is made by the Graduate School.
3. Early application to the certificate program is recommended; late application is possible, but may incur delays for certificate conferral related to time required for credit tracking.

### **Plan of Study**

A Plan of Study for the graduate certificate is highly recommended for each enrolled student to clarify which courses meet credit requirements and certificate-degree articulations. This practice will also help reduce delays in processing certificate completion.

### **Certificate Completion**

1. Certificate completion requires formal student application through the Graduate School completion application system, including the required completion application fee.
2. The certificate program director must verify each student's completion of the required credits and courses.

### **Criteria for Certificate Conferral**

Conferral or awarding of a graduate certificate requires:

- That certificate requirements were met within the allotted time limit
- Minimum 3.00 overall grade point average (without rounding)
- Minimum 3.00 grade point average in certificate courses (without rounding)

Certificate completion will be posted on a student's official transcript in line with UWM's official conferral dates, and an official paper certificate will be sent to the student from the Graduate School.

### **Certificates Approved Before Semester I, 2002-03**

Twelve-credit certificates that were approved by the GFC, the Graduate School, and the Provost prior to fall 2002 (implementation date of the original certificate policy – GFC document 877) will be allowed to remain at twelve credits.

## APPENDIX A

### Format for a Graduate Certificate Program Proposal

#### I. PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

- 1.1 Title of Proposed Graduate Certificate** State proposed name as it would appear on a UWM student transcript.
- 1.2 Department(s) or Functional Equivalent(s) Sponsoring the Certificate** List UWM units or external institutions that will have an active role in program administration beyond offering required or elective courses.
- 1.3 College(s), School(s) or Functional Equivalent(s) Sponsoring the Certificate** List schools and colleges with budgetary authority for certificate administration.
- 1.3.1 List lead School or College. If there are multiple internal sponsors at this level, one must serve as the administrative home.
- 1.4 Timetable for Initiation**

#### II. RATIONALE

Discuss reason(s) for establishing a new graduate certificate program in this area of study.

#### III. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

- 3.1 Relationship to Mission of Institution**
- 3.2 Relationship to/Impact on Other UWM Programs**

#### IV. NEED

Discuss potential demand for the program, target population, estimated enrollment, and comparable programs offered at other institutions.

#### V. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION

##### 5.1 Description:

- 5.1.1 Provide a brief narrative description of the program.
- 5.1.2 Define the nature of the program:  
For example, is it a disciplinary concentration where the goal is to achieve a measure of depth within a defined area? Is it multidisciplinary where the goal is to broaden one's knowledge and/or perspective on a particular area of study? Is

this a graduate/undergraduate certificate (i.e., one in which the courses are U/G and undergraduates and graduates both earn the certificate, but are differentiated by how they register for the courses)? Is this a multi-institutional program where the goal is to obtain expertise in an area that can only be met by combining offerings through two or more institutions?

- 5.1.3 List learning objectives and competencies that will be attained through this certificate. If relevant, discuss professional or certification/licensing standards that are addressed in the proposed curriculum.
- 5.1.4 List the mode(s) of instruction (i.e. in-person, on-line, hybrid).
- 5.1.5 Discuss whether this certificate program prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation. If it does and is eligible for Title IV financial aid, supply the following information:
- Occupations the program prepares students to enter
  - Occupational profiles
  - Costs for books and supplies
- 5.2 Curriculum – Courses and Credits:** Indicate number of credits and the specific courses or choice of electives that make up the certificate program. For multi-institutional certificates, indicate which courses are taken at which institution and demonstrate that more than 50% of coursework is completed at UWM. Describe any capstone requirement.
- 5.3 Admission requirements and procedures:** Identify minimum grade point average (G.P.A.) from the undergraduate and/or post-baccalaureate degree, any specific background preparation, and any other requirements for admission.
- 5.4 Allowance for transfer credit (if any):** Transfer credit is subject to the rules stated above. If the program has a more restrictive policy for transfer credit, that should be stated here.
- 5.4 Completion requirements:** State minimum grades required in specific courses, if any, and cumulative G.P.A. required in certificate courses
- 5.5 Time limit:** Indicate length of time allowed to complete the requirements for the certificate (4 years for certificates that are independent of a graduate degree; matched to the timeline for the degree when the certificate is taken concurrently with a graduate degree).
- 5.6 Certificate conferral:** State whether certificate will be awarded upon completion of certificate requirements or concurrently with completion of a specific degree program.
- 5.7 Program Administration:** State the name and administrative title (e.g. Director, Coordinator) of the person who will serve as the Graduate School liaison for the

certificate program (aka the Certificate Program Representative). Provide names and roles of others involved in program administration (e.g. curricular development and review, student advising). Describe how program administrators or advisory bodies will be appointed.

**5.8 Participating Faculty:** Please provide a list of participating faculty. For multi-institutional certificates, include faculty (rank/status) at the partner institution(s).

VI. RESOURCES

Address issues of cost to the university and any special charges or fees.

VII. BULLETIN COPY

Submit copy for the *Graduate School Bulletin* following the template provided by the Graduate School.

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Certificate Working Group 2013-15

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **REVIEW OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

Review of graduate certificate programs on a 10-year cycle and a positive recommendation of the GFC is required for program continuation. Without this recommendation, a sunset provision will become effective, resulting in the discontinuation of the certificate program. The GFC empowers the Graduate Program Review Committee (GPRC) to synchronize the review of graduate certificate programs with the review of the closely-related graduate degree program when and if the GPRC deems it beneficial to both programs with the consent of both programs.

Potential outcomes/recommendations of the review include

1. Continue the program as is.
2. Continue the program with changes to the curriculum ~~with consider~~ to reflect new directions in the field, articulation with other certificates or degrees, or development into a degree program.
3. Discontinuation.
4. No action, in which case the sunset clause will be invoked.

The following procedures are established for this review.

#### **Certificate Review Process**

Certificate Directors will be notified of the review requirement and provided with the self-study template and data from the Graduate School. Self-studies will be due six weeks after receiving data.

One member of the ~~Subcommittee on~~ Graduate Program Review Committee (GPRC) will be assigned to each certificate and will provide a written assessment of the program based on:

- Information in the self-study
- An interview with the certificate program director

The Graduate School will provide a template for the GPRC report. Internal reviewers are expected to complete their report within 6 weeks of receiving the self-study. The report will be shared with the Certificate Director, who will be invited to the GPRC meeting at which the certificate review will be discussed.

Based on this report and the discussion at the meeting, the GPRC will make a recommendation to the GFC regarding continuation of the certificate. If the GPRC or the GFC is unable to act by May, the sunset provision shall be extended by one year.

#### **Certificate Self-Studies**

In completing the self-studies, certificate programs are encouraged to conduct a thorough and participatory examination of the current status of the program. The process is intended to provide an opportunity to look at all facets of program operation and outcomes, and engage in critical self-examination. Certificate program faculty should be forthright in identifying strengths and weaknesses and assessing continuing need for the certificate.

### **Format for Certificate Full Self-Study**

Discussion points are included to guide certificate programs in identifying issues that ought to be considered in drafting the self-study. Please provide sufficient analysis, explanation, and elaboration for those outside your program to understand it.

#### The Certificate Program

##### Description and Evaluation

1. Describe the certificate program with particular attention to its special features and strengths. If the certificate qualifies for Title IV financial aid, list the occupations that the certificate prepares students to enter. Comment on any changes in the certificate program since its last review, and implementation of recommendations from the previous review.
2. Discuss challenges that have arisen over the past ten years, and describe steps that have been contemplated or taken to address those challenges.
3. Discuss the certificate in the context of any new trends in the field.
4. Discuss the current and anticipated future demand for the certificate. How does the certificate contribute toward overall student recruitment and retention, including creation of gateways into existing UWM graduate degree programs?
5. Describe how the certificate fits with college or campus strategic plans and program arrays. How does it support research and/or interdisciplinary collaborations?
6. Describe how the certificate articulates with other certificates or degree programs. Are there plans to growth the certificate program into a graduate degree program?

##### Administration

1. Describe the administrative and governance structure of the certificate program, including information on budgetary authority.
  2. How is the certificate program's structure articulated with its department, school or college (including school or college Graduate Program Committee) or for multi-institutional certificate programs, with external partners? If applicable, discuss any problems of authority or responsibility within the program.
  3. How does the structure promote the achievement of the certificate program's objectives?
  4. Discuss recruitment strategies.
  5. Describe the admission process.
  6. Describe the advising system within the program. How is student progress toward the certificate monitored?
  7. Discuss any issues related to interaction with the Graduate School in certificate program administration.
  8. Provide a list of advisory/steering committee members, and information on the frequency of meetings and what actions have been taken in the last 10 years.
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Curriculum

List qualifying courses and provide information on the frequency of certificate course scheduling.

Required Certificate Courses Offered Since the Last Review

Course Number	Course Title	Semester Offered	Instructor's Name

Are any changes to required or elective courses being contemplated? If so, explain the reasons for these changes.

Faculty

Provide a list of instructional faculty who are involved with the certificate program, and identify those who have graduate faculty status.

Students

Applications and Admissions

Assess the number and qualifications of applicants and admits to the certificate over the past 10 years, and provide demographic information regarding diversity. Have any significant trends in application patterns been discerned?

Enrollment and Completion

(Data will be provided by the Graduate School)

Academic year (e.g. 10-11)	# who were enrolled in program	# who completed program

What is the average time to completion and what percentage of students complete the certificate program each year?

Post-completion achievements

Comment on the special achievements of those who complete the program, including employment and/or other opportunities.

Resources

Discuss and prioritize any particular resource issues affecting the certificate program (e.g. finances, facilities, office space, clerical support, library collections and services). What might make the program stronger? How might this be achieved? What strategies have been applied or could be applied to improve or acquire the desirable resources?

Other

Provide any other information you think would be helpful in assessing your certificate program.

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Appendix B was Faculty Document 3207R2 prior to incorporation into UWM Faculty Document 3206R2.

The approval history for Faculty Document 3207R2 was:

No. 3207R2, April 4, 2019

No. 3207R1, October 18,

Faculty Document 3207 superseded GFC Document 1360 on September 20, 2018

The approval history of GFC Document 1360 was:

Revised and Approved May 7, 2018

Revised and Approved March 27, 2017

Approved April 20, 2015

Supersedes Appendix C of GFC Document 877, Revised and Approved September, 2010.

## Appendix C

### The Internal Review Team (IRT) Template for Report to the Graduate Program Review Committee

Report and Recommendations of the Graduate Program Review Committee (GPRC) for the Review of the Graduate Certificate in \_\_\_\_\_.

This report is a component of the periodic review process overseen by the Dean of the Graduate School. Recommended limit length for this report is 1-3 pages.

#### Graduate Program Review Committee (GPRC) Representative

Name of internal reviewer and department

#### Program Representative

Include the name of the person who you spoke with about the certificate, and their position.

#### Summary of Certificate Program

This is an overall summary of the certificate and can often be taken almost exactly from the Program Overview section of the self-study. It is to help someone who does not know the program at all get a general sense of who enrolls, how many credits it is, how the program is overseen, etc. It is helpful for the GPRC.

#### Summary of Key Issues

The certificate program provided a self-study that addressed each of these areas. In your interview of the program, you may have developed questions from the self-study, about each area. You can then use some information from the self-study together with your own observations to provide the text. This can be separated by areas or put into a running narrative, as long as the areas are addressed.

##### I. Program

This area generally talks about the need for the certificate, and where those who get the certificate may find work. Does it connect to National or International organizations, certifications? If it is new, what is the potential for it or has the certificate run its course of need since areas change over time? Does the certificate connect to industry in the region, state, nation in a significant way?

##### II. Curriculum

The graduate school or the program will often include a chart of the courses that are a part of the certificate how often they are offered and enrollments as well. With changes in depts., faculty lines, etc. how is the curriculum being impacted? Can students get the courses in a timely way? Are they dependent on a specific faculty member? How often can they rotate into sequence?

Sometimes it helps to keep some of the charted material in the report and other times, summary is sufficient.

III. Faculty

This has become an area for critical discussion of who are the faculty that make up a certificate program. This can often help to tell the story of the certificate's stability within the university. It is particularly important to voice how faculty support the certificate if the certificate program crosses programs/dept or is a multi-institutional certificate program.

IV. Students

You are provided with information about how many students have enrolled in the certificate over a period of 10 years, how many have completed, and possibly if students have used the certificate to enter a Masters program. It can help to learn about issues of advising students in the certificate, recruitment efforts, and how the certificate serves students once they finish.

V. Resources

Certificate programs can often have their own unique resource challenges. The self-study outlines these, but you may find others when you do the interview.

**Internal Reviewer's Comments**

This area is what gets directly reported back to the GPRC as the most important elements. Should the certificate continue? Is it realistic for it to continue or what would be needed for that to happen? Highlighting the efforts of the program director. Highlighting completion rates as a factor for recommendations.

**Program Response (Optional)**

**Recommendation(s) for Action**

Potential outcomes/recommendations of the review include:

1. Continue the program as is
2. Continue the program with changes to the curriculum which consider new directions in the field, articulation with other certificates or degrees, or development into a degree program.
3. Discontinuation
4. No action, in which case the sunset clause will be invoked.
5. The next review of the certificate should take place in     .
6. Certificate program review should be aligned with graduate program review cycle.