

Graduate Certificate Policy

Overview

The University recognizes new student demand at the graduate level for short-term or preparatory experiences commonly referred to as certificates, and seeks to offer certificates of high academic quality and value to students. As is the case for degree programs, each certificate should rely on a unique body of work. The body of work should be determined in the context of the learning outcome for the certificate, which is articulated by faculty. While some cross-counting may be permitted, the unique essence of the program must be preserved.

Proposals for new certificates should be discussed with the Director of Financial Aid and the Registrar in relationship to gainful employment requirements and aid regulations. Students need to pay attention to credit loads, timing and calendar issues, present and future degree plans, and other factors that may affect their pursuit of a certificate. The federal government requires that international students maintain a full time course load while they are enrolled in graduate school. International students that are in certificate programs at Seattle University may enroll in other courses outside the certificate program to maintain full time status.

Curricular Standards

- A graduate certificate must be composed of 12 or more graduate quarter credits (8 semester credits for Law) to assure breadth and depth of the credential; the credits must be appropriate to the learning goals and outcomes of the certificate. Schools and colleges may set higher minimums.
- A graduate certificate must be able to be taken as a standalone program, although pre-requisites or competency assessment may be required prior to pursuit.
- Once granted, like a degree, a graduate certificate is part of a student's permanent record.
- Any certificate program without student enrollments during three (3) consecutive academic years will be flagged for discontinuation unless the school or college successfully petitions the Office of the Provost to keep it.

Certificate Credit Handling

- When a certificate is pursued concurrently with a degree program, the certificate coursework must be completed out of credits excluding foundation or core requirements.
- When a student has one or more previously completed certificates, content and/or credits may be counted towards another certificate or a new degree with permission of the dean. Coursework credits applied to the subsequent credentials are subject to the 6 year degree completion requirement.
- Students with one certificate who are seeking a second or subsequent certificate must complete no less than 9 credits unique to the second/subsequent certificate.

Graduate Certificate Levels

- To earn a graduate level certificate, a person must already possess a bachelor level degree. Courses are offered at the 5000 level.
- To earn a post-master's certificate, a person must already possess a master level degree. Courses may be offered at the 5000 or 6000 level.

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Related policies:

Admission to the University, Policy 2004-02

Certificates Policy 76-11 (originally issued 11/01/76; revised 7/01/93, 8/21/97, 10/11/00, 10/13/03)