

Graduate School policies and procedures for graduate certificate programs

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Introduction

The graduate certificate 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. Students may be awarded these certificates upon completion of a well-defined program of coursework. While the courses comprising a graduate certificate may be used as evidence in support of a student's application for admission to a graduate degree program, the certificate itself is not considered to be a prerequisite and does not guarantee admission into any graduate degree program. The didactic material encompassed within a graduate certificate program may represent a more practice-oriented subset of an existing graduate discipline. The certificate program is not intended to serve as a default system for students in a degree program who find that they are not able to complete the degree for academic or other reasons. Should a student drop out of a degree program and seek admission to a certificate program, all requirements outlined on pages four and five of this proposal must be followed for admission and conferral.

All certificate programs must be linked to a specific graduate degree program(s), such that they provide a specific set of skills or knowledge base within a defined body of knowledge of the particular discipline. Certificate programs are encouraged where they might provide value-added benefits to students in existing graduate degree programs or provide a needed educational initiative for post-baccalaureate students in an area not currently addressed by a graduate degree program. These programs are not encouraged where they might detract from existing graduate programs.

Graduate Faculty may develop graduate certificate programs within the structure of the Graduate School.

Process of Approval for new graduate certificate programs

Approval Procedure

Proposals for new graduate certificate programs may be created and submitted by graduate faculty in the same manner as proposals for new graduate degree programs, with the exception that all approvals are made internally at the University of Kansas. The proposal must be accompanied by the endorsement from the department chairperson(s), graduate division(s) and Dean(s) of the College/School(s) in which the contributing coursework is administered.

All proposals must first go to the Graduate School to be reviewed by the Standing Committee for New Degrees and Degree Program Changes. If the Standing Committee makes a recommendation to approve the proposal, it then moves to the Executive Committee of the Graduate Council. Once approved by the Executive Committee, the Graduate Council must also approve the graduate certificate program. The Dean of the Graduate School would forward all approved graduate certificate programs to the Provost for final approval.

Application Materials

Proposals for a graduate certificate program at KU must include the following materials:

- A statement of the educational objectives of the program
- A statement of the proposed course sequence associated with the certificate, including titles, number of graduate credit hours, and course descriptions both for existing courses and any new graduate courses that may be developed
- A statement identifying the important academic objectives of the proposed certificate program including the range of skills and knowledge future graduates will possess. Applicants should show how the program complements existing courses and does not detract from program components.
- A statement of how the proposed course sequence associated with the certificate will meet the stated educational objectives
- A statement of the need for the proposed program and the basis for such need, supported by either external or internal derived data
- The names of the faculty associated with or contributing to the certificate program, either by teaching the courses or advising the students within the program. All faculty associated with the program need to include up-to-date curriculum vitas.
- The name and curriculum vita of the faculty member who will be designated as the coordinator of the program
- A planned date of implementation

Criteria for Approval

The specific criteria applied to the assessment of the academic quality of proposals for new graduate certificate programs will include:

Program Management

- A demonstrated need or demand for such a program must exist. This provision may be defined in terms of either external markets (for example, external demand for skills associated with such a certificate) or internal academic needs, such as the need for a critical mass of students in a given discipline or any market research to support the argument for the demand of such a program.

- A clear recruitment plan must be included as part of the proposal.
- Provide a clear indication of the administrative structure of the program, which should include the name and curriculum vita of the faculty member(s) involved with the administrative workload, as well as the name(s) of the contact staff member(s) involved with the program.
- When the proposal involves collaboration with the other institutions there will need to be official written endorsement for the graduate certificate program from those areas where the program will exist. These institutions must offer a baccalaureate degree with requirements for the degree substantially equivalent to those at KU.
- All proposals for graduate certificate programs may be adopted for a seven-year time period. The certificate program will expire at the end of the period unless the program petitions the Standing Committee on New Degrees and Degree Program Changes for continuation, which may be for an additional seven-year period. The Graduate School will remind the graduate certificate program about its renewal one year before the graduate certificate program is scheduled to expire. If a program expires or is discontinued, no new students may be enrolled in the program and those students currently in the program will continue until completion.
- All graduate certificate programs will be included in the Graduate School's annual graduate program assessment. In addition, certificate programs will be reviewed every seven years as part of the Kansas Board of Regents program review process.
- The proposal will address whether or not a commencement ceremony will be conducted for persons completing the program. These students will not be recognized by any Graduate School official graduation ceremony.
- The proposal will address the fiscal arrangements for the program. As part of this, the proposal should consider the likelihood that portion of students in the graduate certificate program may have their tuition paid by employers or entirely by the individual.

Curriculum Criteria

- The proposed sequence of coursework must offer a clear and appropriate educational objective at the post-baccalaureate level.
- The proposed certificate program must achieve its educational objective in an efficient and well-defined manner.
- A statement of the proposed course sequence associated with the certificate, including titles, number of credit hours of courses, and course descriptions both for existing courses and any new courses that may be developed.

- Graduate certificate programs may be at the post-baccalaureate, the post-master's or post-doctoral level.
- Graduate certificate programs must be proposed for current KU graduate students or new students seeking a post baccalaureate certificate.
- The certificate program must include an appropriate number of credit hours. In general, certificate programs should be no less than nine credit hours. All proposals must have a maximum time to completion of no more than 4 full academic years.
- The proposal will address: the possibility for interdisciplinary development of and participation in the certificate program; the possibility of program delivery using distance education approaches; and identify the extent to which the curriculum overlaps with the curriculum of existing degree programs.
- The proposal will identify requirements of the program that are in addition to the coursework, including but not limited to laboratories, practicum, internships, and projects.
- The courses taken in the graduate certificate program will be listed on the student's transcript and recognition of the any earned certificate will also be posted on the transcript.

Faculty Criteria

- Instructors in graduate certificate programs must have gained appointment to the Graduate Faculty

Student Eligibility and Admission Criteria

- An earned baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university is required.
- Students admitted for a graduate certificate program must either have regular graduate status as a current KU graduate student or be admitted as a non-degree C graduate student. Students may gain admission to the non-degree C category upon presentation of evidence of receipt of a baccalaureate degree from an institution with requirements for the degree substantially equivalent to those at KU.
- If students admitted in the non-degree certificate category are later admitted to a department to work toward a degree, then, within the limitations specified below, applicable courses taken under the non-degree certificate category may, upon recommendation of the department or program to its Graduate Division and within general guidelines established by the Graduate School, be approved by the division to be counted in the degree program. The total of transfer credit from another accredited graduate school and non-degree Certificate category credit earned at this university may

together not exceed six hours, or eight hours if the student holds a baccalaureate degree from KU.

- Students may not transfer graduate credit hours from another education institution into a certificate program.
- The graduate certificate program sets the minimum grade point average, minimum TOEFL scores, standardized test scores (if required) in accordance with the Graduate School policies, whether or not certificate courses may be counted towards the related graduate degree program and other similar criteria as part of the application.
- Graduate students who are currently enrolled in a graduate degree program as a degree seeking student and who wish to pursue a simultaneous graduate certificate within the Graduate School must inform the graduate director/adviser/coordinator in their home department of their intent to seek the graduate certificate. A student must make known their intent to receive the certificate prior to the completion of all requirements involved with the graduate certificate program.
- The graduate certificate program is not a means of entry into a graduate degree program.

Student Records Criteria

- It is the responsibility of the graduate department to maintain all student records of the graduate certificate program. These records should include, but are not limited to the number of students that apply to the program, the number accepted and denied into the program, the number of students that enrolled every semester in the program, the number of students who complete the program by semester.
- The graduate degree program that houses the graduate certificate program will be responsible for issuing certificates to students completing its certificate program.
- The awarding of the graduate certificates will coincide with the August, December and May graduations at the University of Kansas. The certificate-awarding department will forward its list of certificate recipients to the appropriate graduate division. The Graduate Division will assume the responsibility of the forwarding of all names of the students completing graduate certificates requirements in a given semester to the Graduate School. The same degree-granting deadline dates will apply to the awarding of graduate certificates.
- The Graduate School will be responsible for providing the University Registrar's office with the names of certificate recipients along with the corresponding names of the completed certificate programs.

Transition Issues

- In the initial year (which begins Spring 2001 and ends on the first day of class Spring 2002), graduate students currently enrolled in the Spring 2001 semester are eligible to receive a graduate certificate provided the student completed or will complete all the necessary certificate requirements.