



Guidelines for For-Credit Certificate Programs

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL CERTIFICATE TYPES

DEFINITION: A certificate program is a designated set of for-credit courses focused upon a specific topic or theme. Certificates give students the opportunity to pursue a subject of interest in a formalized way and to have completion of the course of study recognized by the awarding of the certificate. After approval, the for-credit certificate is documented on the student's UW-Madison transcript and becomes part of the official student record. Certificates add opportunities for flexibility not available in majors and degrees.

CATEGORIES: Certificate programs fall into several categories that are tied to the student's status.

Undergraduate Certificates: Available to degree-seeking UW-Madison undergraduates; are offered at an undergraduate level of content and intensity are designed to complement undergraduate degree/majors; 12-21 credits. May be open to University Special (non-degree seeking) students who hold a bachelor's degree if provisions for these students are planned and approved by program faculty, school/college academic planning council and University Academic Planning Council.

Graduate and Professional Student Certificates: Available to degree-seeking graduate and professional students (GRAD, LAW, MED, PHARM, VMED "careers" and any careers that may be added at the post-baccalaureate level); designed to complement graduate or professional programs of study; usually 9-12 credits.

Capstone Certificates (Post-baccalaureate level): For University Special (non-degree seeking) students who hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent; at least 9 graduate/professional level credits (rarely more than 16 credits); designed to "cap off" undergraduate educational experience or to

offer a focused professionally oriented educational experience. Students apply, are admitted, and enroll as prescribed by the capstone certificate program.

Not-for-credit Certificates: Offered by various units; not formally approved through this process; based on not-for-credit activity; may carry continuing education units (CEUs); not posted to the UW-Madison student transcript. Consult the Division of Continuing Studies. Policy guidelines for Non-Credit Certificates were approved in June 2011.

OFFICIAL LIST OF CERTIFICATES: http://registrar.wisc.edu/documents/85_Official_Certificates.pdf

TRENDS IN CERTIFICATE AWARDS: <http://apir.wisc.edu/students-degrees.htm>.

RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

Originally certificates were intended to be a resource neutral approach to recognize a course of study that a student would complete along the way to completing their degree and major. Over time, certificates have become more prominent in the program array, more complex in their design, and often require devoted resources or put resource demands on other units. Faculty who propose certificates should plan for resources that support instruction, student services, compliance with state and federal regulation, and other demands. Faculty should understand how the certificate offering is related to degree and major offerings. For undergraduate certificates, faculty should design the certificate so that it does not extend time to degree. Certificates may not be subdivided into options or other sub-plans.

APPROVAL OVERVIEW

Specific details about the approval process are provided in the guidelines for each certificate category. All certificates require approval by the program faculty who are sponsoring the certificate program (most often a department). Subsequently, the school/college that houses the certificate considers the certificate for approval. After school/college approval, the dean forwards the proposal to the provost. The Graduate Faculty Executive Committee will consider graduate/ professional and Capstone certificates. Continuing Studies will be consulted on certificates that serve University Special students. For all categories of certificates, the provost will seek a recommendation for approval from the University Academic Planning Council. All certificates must be accompanied by statements of support or concurrence from departments or academic units that provide courses and from schools/colleges/divisions that may have overlapping interests with the certificate. Refer to the detailed guidelines for the specific category of certificate.

SUNSET PROVISIONS

Certificate programs that meet all three of the following three conditions may be discontinued at the discretion of the provost:

- a. The sponsoring unit and the program faculty are unresponsive to requests from the Office of the Provost for information about the status of the certificate program.
- b. No student has had the certificate recorded to their official student record and their transcript for three consecutive years.
- c. The certificate program has not completed a review five years after implementation or the regular 10 year program review in a reasonable time.

These conditions signal insufficient interest by faculty and students to continue the program and provide a mechanism to discontinue a program when program faculty have left the university or are not otherwise available to formally request a discontinuation.

HISTORY

In the late 1970s, UW-Madison faculty first established guidelines for certificate programs when certificates were formalized and noted on the transcript. In the mid- to late-1990s there was an expansion of faculty interest and Capstone certificates were created as a new category. In 1997, the UAPC and the GFEC established guidelines for planning, approval, and offering of certificate programs. Those guidelines were expanded and updated in 2011.

Why certificates and not minors: In the mid-1980s, an ad hoc committee studied the value of certificates versus minors. They concluded that certificates better fit the intentions of this non-major type of offering. Certificates offer more flexibility because they can be attached to any degree, unlike minors, which are traditionally offered in association with specific degrees. Given that certificates are established, and given that some certificates functionally act as minors, it now seems redundant to add minors. (Minors are available only in association with teacher certification programs within the School of Education and in association with research doctoral degrees.)

ACCREDITATION CONSIDERATIONS

UW-Madison's accreditation status does not currently allow for the awarding of pre-baccalaureate level certificates or degrees.

Certificates that meet all four of the following conditions require approval by the Higher Learning Commission (*as of 2008 and 2010*):

- Half or more of the courses are associated only with the certificate and are not also associated with any degree program or available to degree-seeking students (Interpretation: courses created just for the certificate and outside the subject areas that are available to degree-seeking students; for example, establishing a Nursing certificate if there is no Nursing degree program),
- Certificate curricular requirements are comprised of credit bearing courses,
- The certificate is free-standing and does not require that students be degree-seeking students,
- Students in the program are to be eligible for federal financial aid (under Title IV).

COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS

In some cases, certificate programs may be subject to federal US Department of Education regulations that differ from regulations associated with majors and degrees. For example, certificate programs available to University Special students designed to prepare students for specific occupations must comply with "gainful employment" regulations promulgated by the US Department of Education (effective October 1, 2011). Consult the director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research (www.apir.wisc.edu).

II. UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Undergraduate certificates are available to degree-seeking UW-Madison undergraduates. They are offered at an undergraduate level of content and intensity and are intended to complement undergraduate degree/majors. Undergraduate certificates are not open to enrolled graduate students.

Under certain circumstance, undergraduate certificates may also be open to University Special (non-degree seeking) students who hold a bachelor's degree. The proposal must be explicit that that this opportunity is intended by the faculty and the certificate proposal must explain how the certificate curriculum is designed and resourced to accommodate University Special students, keeping in mind that they enroll in courses as space allows. See section 12 below.

GUIDELINES AND STIPULATIONS FOR NEW UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Proposals for new undergraduate certificates must originate from and be prepared by members of the faculty. Proposals must describe the purpose of the certificate, the details of the curriculum, provisions for the academic administration and for advising, and how the stipulations associated with certificates will be met.

1. Certificate name. Also specify sponsoring unit(s) and program faculty— Identify which academic department and which school(s)/college(s) will be the sponsoring unit for the certificate. This unit is the academic home that is responsible for student progress, governance, staff and resources that support the certificate. Include a name for the initial faculty director of the certificate program. Provide a list of the key program faculty.
2. Timeline for implementation.
3. Supporting letters/memos – Append to the packet memos or letters of support or concurrence from other academic units that will have overlapping interest (for example, units that provide courses for the certificate, share a student audience, represent a closely related areas of study, have overlapping faculty, have names that are similar). Letters or memos should be included for each department and school/college that has an overlapping interest, and for any department and the school/college dean's office that contribute faculty or courses.
4. Governance – Describe how the certificate program will be governed. If the sponsoring unit is a school/college or a department then governance will be more straightforward than if the sponsoring unit is a center or other unit. Will it have an executive committee? How will program faculty be identified? What will be the process for the transition of the faculty program director? What succession plans are in place? Who will appoint the faculty program director and to whom will the faculty program director report?
5. Purpose, rationale, justification – What is the purpose of the certificate program? How does it contribute to the mission of the sponsoring unit(s)? What gap in the program array is it intended

to fill? How is designed to complement students' major program of study? What is the evidence that there is a societal and student demand for the certificate program experiences?

6. Curriculum – Describe the certificate curriculum (12 to 21 credits). Provide a description of the proposed course sequence and anticipated progression and program length. Are the courses all in place? If not, where are they in the proposal process? Are all of the certificate requirements unambiguously identifiable in a DARS audit? Are the courses offered on a regular basis? Have all departments that offer certificate courses provided a memo stating that they have space in the courses and that they are committed to on-going communication with the certificate faculty program director about plans for changing course offerings?

The curriculum plan should account for the following stipulations:

- a) Required course work for an undergraduate certificate consists of 12 to 21 credits and should not require more than half of the credits required for a major in a related field.
- b) Courses for undergraduate certificates are to be those numbered 699 or lower.
- c) The proposal should specify if courses taken as credit/no credit or pass/fail are allowed and any limits on such course work.
- d) The course requirements for the certificate program must be defined discretely enough so that the certificate requirements can be encoded in the degree audit system (DARS).
- e) Core courses to be included in the certificate must be approved as a distinct course when the proposal is advanced (not special topics courses). Such courses should be included in a proposal for a certificate only if they have been approved at the school/college level. The certificate may only be implemented after core courses are approved by the University Curriculum Committee.
- f) Courses that are offered as special topics courses should be used sparingly because of the considerable administrative burden they add. Ideally, special topics courses will only be included if *all* offerings of the given special topics course will satisfy the requirement.
- g) If exceptions and substitutions are allowed, a process should be developed for considering exceptions and substitutions; the certificate should be designed so that exceptions are rarely required. Any substitution or exception that is made should be added to courses that meet the requirements for certificate program so that substitution/exception is available to all students. Resources allotted to the program must be appropriate to handle the one-on-one advising required to allow exceptions. A “no exceptions” policy is allowed.
- h) The certificate curriculum should avoid having so many unique requirements that the certificate impedes a student's progress to degree. For example, certificate programs that have capstone course requirements should be designed so that a capstone experience associated with a related major also satisfies the certificate requirement.
- i) At least half (50%) of certificate credits must be earned in residence at UW-Madison as a degree-seeking undergraduate (or University Special student, see section 12). Credits earned by participation in a UW-Madison study abroad program are counted as resident credits unless special considerations apply. Credits earned in distance-delivered UW-Madison courses also count as credits earned in residence. Any requirements for any other standard of residency requirements must be justified and must be sufficiently clear that they can be included in the automated degree audit system.

- j) The certificate should be designed to accommodate students who start both as new freshmen and as transfer students. If a freshmen course or a four-year progression of UW-Madison-only courses is part of the curricular design, an alternative should be developed for students who become aware of and interested in the certificate later in their undergraduate experience.
7. Overlap limits – Describe any limits on overlap with closely related majors or other certificate programs. Students may not earn a certificate and a major with the same name/subject area.
8. Assessment and program review – Specify the major learning goals associated with the certificate program? How do the curricular requirements relate to the learning goals? Provide an assessment plan that demonstrates how the program faculty will regularly evaluate student learning. How will the success of the program be measured or determined? Provide a statement in the proposal that the sponsoring unit understands that there is a requirement for program review five years after implementation and periodically after that. (Note: Consideration of certificates for approval by UAPC may be delayed if reviews of other academic programs in the same department or unit are past-due.)

Assessment and program review planning should account for the following stipulations:

- a) An active plan for assessment of student learning is required. At least one assessment activity should be conducted annually. Curricular changes should be based on evidence associated with student learning and program effectiveness.
 - b) Program review is required at the five year mark and at least once a decade after that (every 5 years for L&S certificate programs).
Low-enrollment certificate programs (fewer than 10 certificates in 5 years) will be subject to review (<https://kb.wisc.edu/vesta/page.php?id=24079>). Note that it is a requirement for certificate programs to follow Registrar's Office procedures for certificate declaration and completion.
9. Admission to the undergraduate certificate program - Describe how students will declare or be admitted to the certificate program. If the certificate has limits on admission, explain criteria for deciding on who is admitted.

Admissions planning should consider the following stipulations:

- a) Admission limits should be related to interest or aptitude for the content and not based on a high GPA cut off; degree-seeking students have already faced competitive and selective processes for admission, so criteria designed to select for skill/aptitude/interest in the focused area are preferred.
- b) The certificate program faculty are responsible for having participating students complete the declaration form and having it submitted to the Registrar's Office. The faculty program director will need to stay current with school/college and Registrar's Office practices related to declaring a certificate program.
- c) Undergraduate certificates may be made available to non-degree seeking University Special students who hold a bachelor's degree. See the section 12 below.

10. Enrollment, progress, and certificate completion –What are the projections for annual enrollment and numbers of students who complete the certificate? Is there available capacity in the core courses? What are practical limits? What are contingency plans for enrollments that are much higher or lower than projected?

Progress and completion planning should account for following stipulations:

- a) The faculty program director is responsible for remaining conversant in school/college and Registrar's Office practices related to certificate progress and completion. For undergraduate certificates, the major/certificate declaration process is the mechanism for identifying student participation. Requirements must be encoded in the degree audit system, which is the official document of record. Completion of the certificate will be validated and posted to the record at graduation after the program faculty director or designee has complied with the Registrar's Office procedure for reporting certificate completion.
 - b) Students who participate in certificate programs should be in good academic standing according to the standards set by their school/college degree or major requirements. In the absence of other specifications, a minimum average 2.0 GPA must be earned on all course work applied to meet the requirements of the certificate program.
 - c) Undergraduate certificate declarations must be submitted through the student information system. The Registrar's Office will run batch DARS reports to confirm the completion of the certificates. The certificate is recorded on the official student record and is displayed on the student's transcript when the student completes the degree. In effect, degree completion (or having a bachelor's degree for University Special students) is a requirement of all undergraduate certificate programs.
 - d) Graduation must not be delayed simply to allow an undergraduate student who has otherwise fulfilled degree/major requirements to complete a certificate. Rather, the student may enroll after graduation as a University Special (non-degree seeking student) to complete the remaining requirements, if the certificate program has been authorized to serve University Special students in this way. (See section 12.)
 - e) Certificates are not awarded retroactively to graduated students who completed all of the certificate requirements before a certificate program is approved.
11. Advising and exceptions/substitutions – Describe how students will be advised and how the resource load of the additional advising will be met. Describe ways that the proposed certificate will align with the requirements of majors that it might be coupled with frequently. Will the certificate hinder a student's timely progress to degree? How will exceptions to the specified curriculum be accommodated? Who will a student consult? Who will have sign-off authority on exceptions? Do the individuals or offices have the capacity to add this workload? Does the program have the resources to support all aspects of advising and student support? How will interactions with the program faculty, school/college dean's office and with the Registrar's Office be managed? Does the dean's office have the academic and student support services capacity to support the certificate program?

12. University Special students - Undergraduate certificates may be open to University Special (non-degree seeking) students who hold a bachelor's degree. Program faculty must be intentional about providing this opportunity. The proposal must explain ways in which the certificate is appropriately designed and resourced to support University Special students. The proposal should specify any limits on eligibility. For example, program faculty may limit access to students who were formerly UW-Madison undergraduates and who completed a portion of the certificate requirements as an undergraduate. Or program faculty may make the certificate more broadly available.

Planning should consider the following stipulations:

- a) Special students must hold a bachelor's degree to seek an undergraduate certificate (in compliance with UW-Madison's accreditation status).
 - b) University Special students will apply and be admitted to the University through the Division of Continuing Studies. Adult Career and Special Student Services (ACSSS) in the Division of Continuing Studies serves as the advising, admissions, and academic dean's office for all University Special students. ACSSS will advise prospective students on the appropriateness of participating in the certificate and will make connections with the certificate program faculty. The certificate program must still have sufficient advising and staff capacity to support University Special students.
 - c) University Special students are last in the priority order for becoming eligible to enroll in courses. Effectively, they can only take courses on an "as available" basis and do not and will not receive enrollment priority over degree-seeking or Capstone students. Thus the undergraduate certificate program should have the enrollment capacity to accommodate these University Special students if they choose to allow them to participate. The proposal should explain how this capacity is available.
 - d) University Special students in undergraduate certificates are not eligible for financial aid because these certificate programs are not considered to be a defined program of study under financial aid regulations.
 - e) Prior coursework may satisfy certificate requirements, but to earn a UW-Madison certificate, at least 12 credits must be earned in residence at UW-Madison, either while enrolled as a University Special student or from undergraduate course work at UW-Madison. Although ACSSS does not formally evaluate academic work from other universities for credit transfer, program faculty may allow prior academic work to satisfy certificate requirements.
 - f) Certificate program faculty and staff are required to report to the Registrar's Office when a student has completed the certificate. This is the only way the Registrar's Office knows to record the certificate on the student record.
 - g) The general expectation is that University Special students will pursue an undergraduate certificate for personal enrichment and/or to expand skills and knowledge, and not for vocational training. In keeping with federal regulations, undergraduate certificates intended to train a recipient for a specific occupation will need to meet "gainful employment" requirements.
13. Resources and Ongoing Commitment – Given all the considerations above, what resources are allocated to the undergraduate certificate program? Who is responsible for resource support of

the certificate program (department chair? dean? other?) Is there sufficient capacity in the curriculum and in academic support services to meet the additional workload imposed by the certificate program? Is there a source of new funding? If the funding is from reallocation what activities will be reduced as a result? If the program requires new capital resources (for example computer labs) or additions to the Library collections, a supporting letter should demonstrate that the appropriate unit can provide the resources. Both the proposal from the program faculty and the school/college dean's office cover memo should specify that the resource commitment is being made to the program.

Planning for an ongoing commitment should address the following considerations:

- a) Units offering certificates are expected to be proactive about checking on availability of course offerings that are included in the curriculum.
- b) The certificate program faculty/staff are responsible for maintaining regular contact with the Registrar's Office, the dean's office, and the advising community. The certificate program faculty/staff prepare advising materials and communicate with students and advisors about certificate requirements. This includes providing information for official University publications such as the Undergraduate Catalog in the format requested by University Communications.
- c) Units maintain certificate requirements so that they are up-to-date and see to it that curriculum changes are approved through the appropriate school/college academic planning council or curriculum committee. The school/college curriculum committee will notify units that need to implement changes, including the Office of the Registrar and individuals responsible for maintaining requirements in the degree audit system, about curricular changes. Changes to the curriculum should be infrequent.
- d) The certificate program faculty are responsible for seeking appropriate governance approval for suspending admissions or discontinuing the certificate program.

APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Program faculty in the sponsoring unit will prepare a proposal according to the guidelines described above. Faculty are advised to consult with their dean and dean's office and with the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research (www.apir.wisc.edu) in the planning stages.
2. The proposal should be approved by the sponsoring department(s)/unit(s). The department chair or equivalent academic leader forwards the proposal to the dean's office for consideration.
3. The school/college academic planning council (or equivalent) reviews the proposal. After approval by the school(s)/college(s), the dean's office forwards the proposal, attachments, and cover letter of dean's support to the provost (copy to the director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research).
4. The director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research will review the proposal for alignment with the guidelines and to assure that all supporting documentation is provided. The

director of APIR will consult with the provost and schedule the proposal for consideration at a University Academic Planning Council meeting.

5. The UAPC will review the proposal and recommend consideration to the provost. The provost will formally announce the approval of a new certificate program to University constituencies.
6. The school/college dean's offices and the program faculty will consult with the Office of the Registrar to implement the program. Typically, a certificate program will be implemented no sooner than the fall semester following governance approval.

III. GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL STUDENT CERTIFICATES

Graduate/professional certificate programs are intended for all degree-seeking graduate and professional students (technically, those in the following careers: GRAD, MED, LAW, VMED, PHARM and any additional degree-seeking post-bachelors careers that may be added). Graduate students are admitted to their degree program through the Graduate School. Professional students are admitted directly to professional programs in the Law School (JD), School of Medicine and Public Health (MPH, MD, DPT, MPAS), School of Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), and School of Veterinary Medicine (DVM).

GUIDELINES AND STIPULATIONS FOR NEW GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATES

Proposals for new certificates must originate from and be prepared by members of the faculty. Proposals provide a description of the purpose of the certificate, details of the curriculum, provisions for the advising, oversight, and how the stipulations associated with certificates will be met.

1. Certificate name. Also specify the sponsoring unit(s) and program faculty— Identify which academic department and which school(s)/college(s) will be the sponsoring unit for the certificate. This unit is the academic home that is responsible for student progress, governance, staff, and resources that support the certificate. Include a name for the initial faculty director of the certificate program. Provide a list of the key program faculty.
2. Timeline for implementation.
3. Supporting letters/memos – Append to the packet memos or letters of support or concurrence from other academic units that will have overlapping interest. Letters/memos should be included for each department and school/college that is supplying participating faculty and courses beyond the sponsoring unit. If there are other units that offer programs with very similar names or content, communications should be included that signal concurrence with the proposal.
4. Governance – Describe how the certificate program will be governed. If the sponsoring unit is a school/college or a department then governance will be more straightforward than if the sponsoring unit is a center or other unit. Will it be part of a regular department? Will it have an executive committee? How will program faculty be identified? What will be the process for the transition of the faculty program director and succession planning? Who will appoint the faculty program director and to whom will the faculty program director report?
5. Purpose, rationale, justification – What is the purpose of the certificate program? How does it align with the mission of the sponsoring unit(s)? What gap in the program array is it intended to fill? How is designed to complement students' major program of study? What is the evidence that there is a societal and student demand for the certificate program experiences?
6. Curriculum – Describe the certificate curriculum (9-12 credits). Provide a description of the proposed course sequence and anticipated progression and program length. Are the courses all

approved? If not, where are they in the proposal process? Are the courses offered on a regular basis? Have all departments that offer certificate courses provided a memo stating that they have space in the courses and that they will communicate with the certificate faculty program director about plans for changing course offerings?

The curriculum plan should account for the following stipulations:

- a) The certificate should require 9 to 12 credits of graduate-level course work (courses numbered 300 or above).
 - b) The proposal should specify if courses approved for Credit/No Credit grading may be included in the curriculum.
 - c) Courses taken pass/fail or audit may not be included in the curriculum and may not be counted towards the completion of the certificate.
 - d) The course requirements for the certificate program must be defined discretely enough so that the requirements can be easily checked and so that exceptions are rarely needed.
 - e) Core courses to be included in the certificate must be approved by the school/college curriculum committee when the proposal is advanced. The certificate may not be implemented until the core courses are approved by the University Curriculum Committee. Special topics courses are not acceptable as core courses in graduate/professional certificate programs.
 - f) Courses that are offered as special topics courses should be used sparingly, given that they add to the administrative overhead of the program. Ideally, special topics courses are only included in certificate curricula when all instances of the special topics course satisfy the certificate requirement.
 - g) A process should be developed for considering exceptions and substitutions; the certificate should be designed so that exceptions are rarely required. Any substitution or exception that is made should be generalized to certificate requirements and available to all students. Resources allotted to the program must be appropriate to handle the one-on-one advising required to allow exceptions. If the program does not allow exceptions and substitutions, that should be specified.
 - h) Requirements may be waived by prior course work but at least half (50%) of certificate credits must be earned while enrolled at UW-Madison as a degree-seeking graduate/professional student. Consistent with other policy, credits earned in distance-delivered UW-Madison courses also count as credits earned in residence.
7. Overlap limits – Describe any limits on overlap with closely related majors, research doctoral minors, or other certificate programs. Students may not earn a certificate if they are also earning a post-baccalaureate major/degree or research doctoral minor with the same name.
8. Assessment and program review – Specify the major learning goals associated with the certificate program? How do the curricular requirements relate to the learning goals? Provide an assessment plan that demonstrates how the program faculty will regularly evaluate student learning and how the goals are being met. Provide a statement in the proposal that the sponsoring unit understands that there is a requirement for program review five years after implementation and regularly thereafter.

(Note: Consideration of certificates for approval by UAPC may be delayed if reviews of other academic programs in the same department or unit are past-due.)

Assessment and program review planning should account for the following stipulations:

- a) An active plan for assessment of student learning is required. At least one assessment activity must be conducted annually. Evidence related to student learning and program effectiveness should be used as the basis for curricular changes.
- b) Program review is required at the five year mark and at least once a decade after that (every 5 years for L&S certificate programs).
- c) Low-enrollment certificate programs (fewer than 10 certificates in 5 years) will be subject to review (<https://kb.wisc.edu/vesta/page.php?id=36160>). Note that the faculty program director is responsible for the reporting of which students have completed certificate requirements to the school/college dean's office and the Registrar's Office. Certificates completed by students but not reported are not included in certificate counts, nor are they recorded on the student's transcript.

9. Admission to the graduate/professional certificate program - Describe how students will gain admission to the certificate program. Describe who will make admissions decisions and how the admissions process will be managed.

Admissions planning should consider the following stipulation:

- a) The admission process should provide a provision for students to gain consent from their degree/major program to participate in the certificate program.
- b) The certificate program faculty are responsible for the admission process and for knowing which students are participating in the certificate. In keeping with this stipulation, the faculty program director will need to stay current with Registrar's Office practices associated with identifying which students have declared or are admitted to a certificate program.

10. Enrollment - What are the projections for enrollment and for annual numbers of students who complete the certificate? Is there available capacity in the core courses? What are contingency plans for enrollments that are much higher or lower than projected?

11. Student progress, and certificate completion – Describe plans for monitoring student progress. Describe plans for certificate completion and for communicating with the Registrar's Office about who has completed the certificate. Planning should account for following stipulations:

- a) Graduate/professional certificates are declared and canceled in the student information system. The faculty program director is responsible for remaining conversant in Registrar's Office practices relative to this consideration.
- b) Students who participate in certificate programs should be in good academic standing according to the standards set by their degree/major requirements. Typically a minimum average 3.0 GPA must be earned on course work attempted for the certificate programs.

- c) It is a requirement that the certificate faculty program director or designee submit a list of students who have completed certificate requirements to the Office of the Registrar as this is the only mechanism for posting the credential to the student's transcript.
 - d) Certificates are not awarded retroactively to graduated students who completed all of the certificate before the certificate was approved.
12. Advising and exceptions/substitutions – Describe how students will be advised and how the resource load of the additional advising will be met. Describe ways that the proposed certificate will connect with the requirements of majors that might be coupled with frequently. How will exceptions to the specified curriculum be accommodated? Who will a student consult? Who will have sign-off authority on exceptions? Do the individuals or offices have the capacity to add this workload? Does the program have the resources to support all aspects of advising and student support? How will interactions with the school/college dean's office, the Graduate School, and with the Registrar's Office be managed?
13. Resources and Ongoing Commitment – Given all the considerations above, what resources are allocated to the program? Who is responsible for resource support of the certificate program (department chair? dean? other?) Is there sufficient capacity in the curriculum and in academic support services to meet the additional workload imposed by the certificate program? Is there a source of new funding? If the funding is from reallocation what activities will be reduced as a result? If the program requires new capital resources (for example computer labs) or additions to the Library collections, a supporting letter should demonstrate that the appropriate unit can provide the resources.

Planning for an ongoing commitment should address the following considerations:

- a) Units offering certificates are expected to be proactive about checking on course offerings that are included in the curriculum.
- b) The certificate program is responsible for maintaining regular contact with the Registrar's Office, the school/college dean's office, and the Graduate School. This includes providing information for official University publications such as the Graduate Catalog in the format requested by University Communications. In addition, more detailed, accurate, and formally approved information should be provided through a certificate program web site.
- c) Units maintain certificate requirements so that they are up-to-date and see to it that curriculum changes are approved through the appropriate school/college academic planning council or curriculum committee. The school/college curriculum committee will notify the Graduate School and the Office of the Registrar about curricular changes to the certificate according to standard practice. Any changes in requirements will be effective no sooner than the fall semester after approval.
- d) The certificate program faculty are responsible for seeking appropriate governance approval for suspending admissions or discontinuing the certificate program.

APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Program faculty in the sponsoring unit will prepare a proposal according to the guidelines described above. Faculty are advised to consult with their dean and dean's office, with the Graduate School, and with the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research in the planning stages.
2. The proposal should be approved by the sponsoring department(s)/unit(s). The department chair or equivalent academic leader forwards the proposal to the dean's office for consideration.
3. The school/college academic planning council (or equivalent) reviews the proposal. After approval by the school(s)/college(s), the dean's office forwards the proposal, attachments, and cover letter of support to the provost (copy to the director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research as well as the assistant dean of Academic Assessment and Funding in the Graduate School).
4. The director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research will coordinate with the Graduate School to review the proposal for alignment with the guidelines and to assure that all supporting documentation is provided.
5. The Graduate School will schedule the proposal for consideration by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee. Upon approval by GFEC, the director of APIR will consult with the provost and schedule the proposal for consideration at a University Academic Planning Council meeting.
6. The UAPC will review the proposal and recommend consideration to the provost. The provost will formally announce the approval of a new certificate program to University constituencies.
7. The school/college dean's offices and the program faculty will consult with the Office of the Registrar to implement the program. A certificate program will typically be implemented in the fall semester following governance approval.

IV. CAPSTONE CERTIFICATES

Capstone certificates are open to University Special (non-degree seeking) students who hold a bachelor's degree or an equivalent credential. They are designed to attract new students who would not otherwise enroll at UW-Madison. They seek to "cap off" the undergraduate experience or to provide a focused educational experience in a format that is friendly to working professionals. The curriculum may represent a more practice-oriented subset of an existing graduate discipline or field of study. In addition, Capstone certificates are intended to allow for innovative formats for delivery or program design.

Capstone certificate programs are expected to be a focused collection of courses that afford the student a record of coherent academic accomplishment. Completion of the course of study is recognized by the awarding of the Capstone certificate, which is recorded on the UW-Madison transcript and becomes part of the official student record. No degree is awarded.

The Graduate School is responsible for academic approval and oversight. Tuition levels and full-time credit load policies are based on Graduate School policy, unless otherwise approved for the Capstone. The Division of Continuing Studies is responsible for broad administrative oversight, including student admissions administration and student record policy.

GUIDELINES AND STIPULATIONS FOR NEW CAPSTONE CERTIFICATES

Proposals for new certificates must originate from and be prepared by members of the faculty. Proposals must describe the purpose of the certificate, the details of the curriculum, provisions for oversight, advising, and how the stipulations associated with certificates will be met.

1. Capstone certificate name. Also specify the sponsoring unit(s) and program faculty— Identify which academic department and which school(s)/college(s) will be the sponsoring unit for the certificate. This unit is the academic home that is responsible for student progress, governance, staff and resources that support the certificate. Include a name for the initial faculty director of the certificate program and list key faculty.
2. Timeline for implementation.
3. Supporting letters/memos – Append to the packet memos or letters of support and concurrence from other academic units that will have overlapping interest. Letters should be included for each department and school/college that supplies participating faculty and courses. If there are other units that offer programs with very similar names or content, communications should be included that signal concurrence with the proposal.
4. Governance – Describe how the certificate program will be governed. If the sponsoring unit is a school/college or a department then governance will be more straightforward than if the sponsoring unit is a center or other unit. Will it be part of a regular department? Will it have an executive committee? How will program faculty be identified? What will be the process for the transition of the faculty program director? Who will appoint the faculty program director and to

whom will the faculty program director report? In summary, include a succession plan in the proposal.

5. Purpose, rationale, justification – What is the purpose of the Capstone certificate program? How does it contribute to the mission of the sponsoring unit(s)? What gap in the program array is it intended to fill? How does it serve the intended purpose of the Capstone certificate? Who is the audience? What is the evidence that there is a societal and student demand for the certificate program experiences? Proposals for new Capstone certificates must provide a demonstrated need for such a program: this provision must be defined in terms of external markets (i.e. external demand for the skills associated with such a certificate) and must describe how the capstone program will attract new student enrollments.
6. Curriculum – Describe the Capstone curriculum (at least 9 graduate/professional level credits) and the sequence of coursework. Describe how the program is appropriate to be offered at the post-baccalaureate level. Are the courses offered on a regular basis? Have all departments that offer certificate courses provided a memo stating that they have space in the courses and that they will communicate with the certificate faculty program director about any plans for changing course offerings? Faculty may propose the same curriculum in both the Capstone and the graduate/professional certificate format.

The curriculum plan should account for the following stipulations:

- a) The Capstone certificate should generally require 9 to 12 credits (although exceptions may be allowed) of graduate or professional level course work (courses numbered 300 or above). Additional undergraduate-only credits may be added if appropriate for the capstone design (courses numbered lower than 300). However, courses numbered below 300 may not subsequently be counted in graduate programs nor will they be accorded grade points on the transcript.
- b) The certificate curriculum should be designed so that it does not put undue burden on a student, recognizing that a core audience for Capstone certificates is working professionals who may not be able to pursue full-time study. A Capstone certificate may be offered in a part-time format or in a full-time, time-compressed, intensive format.
- c) Courses approved for Credit/No Credit grading may be included in the curriculum.
- d) Courses taken pass/fail or audit may not be included in the curriculum and may not be counted toward completion of the Capstone.
- e) The course requirements for the Capstone certificate program must be defined discretely enough so that the requirements are readily verified and so that exceptions are rarely needed.
- f) Courses to be included in the certificate must be approved by the school/college curriculum committee when the proposal is advanced. The Capstone certificate may not be implemented until the core courses are approved by the University Curriculum Committee.
- g) Special topics courses may be included in Capstone certificate curricula only if all offerings of the special topics course satisfy the requirement.
- h) A process should be developed for considering exceptions and substitutions; the Capstone certificate should be designed so that exceptions are rarely required. Any substitution or exception that is made should be added to courses that meet the requirements for certificate

program so that substitution/exception is available to all students. Resources allotted to the program must be appropriate to handle the one-on-one advising required to allow exceptions. Exceptions requiring dean's action require assistance by the academic dean in the Adult Career and Special Student Services office in the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS-ACSSS). If the program faculty elect to establish a "no exceptions and substitutions" policy, that should be specified in the proposal.

k) All of the Capstone requirements must be earned in residence at UW-Madison. In keeping with other policy, credits earned in distance-delivered UW-Madison courses also count as credits earned in residence. Prior academic work from other universities or taken in the course of a degree-seeking program at UW-Madison may not be used to satisfy Capstone requirements.

7. Overlap limits – Specify if a student may not a student may earn the Capstone certificate and any other closely related major/degree or certificate program. Excessive overlap in credentials is not allowed.

8. Assessment and program review – Specify the major learning goals associated with the Capstone program. How do the curricular requirements relate to the learning goals? Provide an assessment plan that demonstrates how the program faculty will regularly evaluate student learning and how these goals are being met? Provide a statement in the proposal that the sponsoring unit understands that there is a requirement for program review five years after implementation and regularly after that.

(Note: Consideration of certificates for approval by UAPC may be delayed if reviews of other academic programs in the same department or unit are past-due.)

Assessment and program review planning should account for the following stipulations:

- a) An active plan for assessment of student learning is required. At least one assessment activity must be conducted annually. Evidence from assessment of student learning and program effectiveness should be the basis for considering curricular changes.
- b) Program review is required at the five year mark and at least once a decade after that (every 5 years for L&S certificate programs). The review is conducted in concert with the Division of Continuing Studies, the Graduate School and the home school/college.
- c) Low-enrollment certificate programs (fewer than 10 certificates in 5 years) will be subject to review (<https://kb.wisc.edu/vesta/page.php?id=24079>).

9. Admission to the Capstone certificate program - Describe admission requirements. Describe who will make admissions decisions and how the admissions process will be managed. The admission process is planned with and coordinated with the Adult Career and Special Student Services office in the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS-ACSSS).

Admissions planning should consider the following stipulations:

- a) Capstone students are enrolled as University Special students. Degree-seeking students may not participate in Capstone certificates.

- b) To be eligible for admission to a Capstone program, a student must hold an earned bachelor's degree or equivalent credential from an accredited college or university.
- c) Capstone students apply to the University and are admitted through DCS-ACSSS in consultation with the Capstone faculty program director or designee. They carry a University Special student classification. Special students apply via an online application system by selecting the Capstone program of choice from a program list on the application. DCS-ACSSS codes the applicant for that program and defers final admission until a decision is made by the Capstone program faculty/staff. DCS-ACSSS serves as the advising, admissions, and academic dean's office for all University Special students.
- d) Programs who will seek to enroll international students must plan accordingly. International students (any student who needs a UW I-20 for a student visa) may only enroll in a program if the Capstone program is offered full-time, if students are enrolled full-time, and if the program has been approved to receive international students by the US government. That approval process is conducted through the Office of International Student Services and can be initiated after academic approvals are complete; such approvals may take up to a year. Note that fully online programs are not subject to this restriction because students do not need a visa.
- e) Additional program-specific admission standards and criteria for satisfactory progress for students enrolled in a Capstone certificate are determined by the Capstone certificate program. In order to provide greater flexibility and meet the needs of specific target student populations, each Capstone program shall identify the minimum GPA for admission, any tests and minimum scores (for example GRE and TOEFL where applicable), and other similar criteria required of applicants to the program. These elements must be clearly specified in the program proposal, and clearly communicated to applicants and students. In planning, programs should give special attention to English-language proficiency for non-native English speakers and consider how proficiency will be determined in the admission process; ESL support is not generally available to students in Capstone programs.

10. Marketing and enrollment - What are the projections for enrollment and for annual numbers of students who complete the certificate? Is there available capacity in the core courses? What are contingency plans for enrollments that are much higher or lower than projected? What is the plan for marketing the Capstone program?

11. Progress and certificate completion – Describe plans for monitoring student progress. Describe plans for certificate completion and for communicating with the Registrar's Office and the Division of Continuing Studies about who has completed the certificate. Planning should account for following stipulations:

- a) At the point of admission, Capstone students are coded in the student information system with the appropriate codes (the academic program code UNCS and appropriate plan code for the specific Capstone certificate). DCS-ACSSS generates a list of newly enrolled students for the new term with the program coordinator and assists the program coordinator with identifying students. DCS-ACSSS also coordinates communication with the Registrar's Office.
- b) The faculty program director and staff are responsible for being able to identify who is in the certificate program, for monitoring student progress, and for remaining conversant in DCS-

ACSSS and Registrar's Office practices relative to this consideration. DCS-ACSSS serves as the office of the academic dean for all University Special students and supports actions related to enrollment policy and the official student records such as credit limits, exceptions, grade changes, eligibility to continue, disciplinary holds, or withdrawal approval.

- c) Capstone program proposals should specify standards for good academic standing. At a minimum, C grades must be earned on all course work attempted for the certificate program. Academic standing is verified by the program faculty and staff. (Only graduate-level work from the Capstone that is earned with a grade of B or better is eligible for subsequent application to a UW-Madison graduate degree program.)
- d) Students may be enrolled part-time or full-time. Proposals should specify any enrollment considerations or limits or considerations related to curricular design and how the program plans to serve part-time or full-time students. (Note: International students on a student visa are only eligible for full-time study; programs seeking to serve international students should be aware of this consideration.)
- e) It is a requirement that the certificate faculty program director or designee report which students have completed the Capstone certificate requirements to the Registrar's Office and to DCS-ACSSS.
- f) When the certificate is completed, the program faculty director or designee must notify the Registrar's Office in order for the Capstone certificate to be recorded on the official student record and for it to print to the transcript
- g) Certificates are not awarded retroactively to students who completed the certificate requirements before the Capstone certificate proposal was approved, either while enrolled as a degree-seeking student or University Special (non-degree) student.

12. Advising and exceptions/substitutions – Describe how students will be advised and how the resource load of the additional advising will be met. How will exceptions to the specified curriculum be accommodated? Who will a student consult? Who will have sign-off authority on exceptions? Do the individuals or offices have the capacity to add this workload? Does the program have the resources to support all aspects of advising and student support? How will interactions with the school/college dean's office, DCS-ACSSS, and with the Registrar's Office be managed?

13. Financial Aid and Graduate Assistantships - Students enrolled in a Capstone certificate may be considered for merit-based financial aid by the department or program, as well as for need-based financial aid by the Student Financial Aid Office. Students enrolled in Capstone certificate programs are not eligible for TA, RA, PA or graduate fellowship support; these appointments are only available to degree-seeking graduate students.

14. Fiscal Structures - All Capstone certificate proposals must include a description of the fiscal structure used to support the program.

If a program will be supported using standard general purpose revenue and tuition structures, describe what resources are allocated to the program. Is there sufficient capacity in the curriculum and in academic support services to meet the additional workload imposed by the Capstone program? Is there a source of new funding? If the funding is from reallocation what

activities will be reduced as a result? If the program requires new capital resources (for example computer labs) or additions to the Library collections, a supporting letter should demonstrate that the appropriate unit can provide the resources.

If the Capstone program will be supported using non-pooled tuition, the proposal must include a description of the proposed fiscal structure, including: Identification of the proposed fund structure (e.g. 131, 104, etc); Description of the proposed tuition fee structure; Proposed operating budget.

Any proposed non-pooled tuition must be developed in conjunction with your school/college Budget Officer and approved by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, in consultation with the Division of Continuing Studies dean's office.

15. Ongoing Commitment – Given all the considerations above, the proposal should address ongoing commitment. Planning for an ongoing commitment should address the following considerations:
 - a) Units offering Capstone certificates are expected to be proactive about checking on the availability of course offerings that are included in the curriculum.
 - b) The certificate program faculty are responsible for maintaining regular contact with the Registrar's Office, the school/college dean's office, and DCS-ACSSS. This includes providing relevant information for the Division of Continuing Studies' website.
 - c) Units must maintain Capstone certificate requirements so that they are up-to-date and see to it that curriculum changes are approved through the appropriate school/college academic planning council or curriculum committee. The school/college curriculum committee will notify the Office of the Registrar the Graduate School, and DCS-ACSSS about curricular changes to the certificate according to standard practice. Typically, any changes in requirements will be effective no sooner than the fall semester after approval.
 - d) The certificate program faculty are responsible for seeking appropriate governance approval for suspending admissions or discontinuing the certificate program.
 - e) The Capstone certificate program should maintain a web site with current, accurate, and governance-approved details about the program. This web site should be linked from the Division of Continuing Studies lists of Capstone certificate offerings.

APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Program faculty in the sponsoring unit will prepare a proposal according to the guidelines described above. Faculty are advised to consult with their dean and dean's office, with the Division of Continuing Studies, the Graduate School, and with the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research in the planning stages.
2. The proposal should be approved by the sponsoring department(s)/unit(s). The department chair or equivalent academic leader forwards the proposal to the dean's office for consideration.
3. The school/college academic planning council (or equivalent) reviews the proposal. After approval by the school(s)/college(s), the dean's office forwards the proposal, attachments, and

cover letter of support to the provost and to the Division of Continuing Studies (copy to the director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research as well as the assistant dean of Academic Planning and Assessment in the Graduate School).

4. The director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research will coordinate with the Graduate School and the Division of Continuing Studies to review the proposal for alignment with the guidelines and to assure that all supporting documentation is provided.
5. The Graduate School will schedule the proposal for consideration by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee. Upon approval by GFEC, the director of APIR will consult with the provost and schedule the proposal for consideration at a University Academic Planning Council meeting.
6. The UAPC will review the proposal and recommend consideration to the provost. The provost will formally announce the approval of a new certificate program to University constituencies and to UW System Administration.
7. The school/college dean's offices and the program faculty will consult with the Office of the Registrar to implement the program. A certificate program will typically be implemented in the fall semester following governance approval. A representative of the home school/college will call an implementation meeting so that all faculty and staff involved with admissions, student records, and other implementation considerations can fully review and confirm processes, roles and responsibilities.

V. PROGRAM REVIEW GUIDELINES FOR CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Regular review of academic programs is a responsibility of the program faculty. Certificates are to be reviewed five years after implementation and every ten years thereafter (every five years thereafter in Letters and Science). The review is initiated and overseen by the school/college dean's office, as are other program reviews. The Office of the Provost will provide annual reports to the schools/colleges about which programs are due for review. A certificate review may stand alone or be combined with the review of an appropriate major, department, center, or other unit.

PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS: The school/college dean's office will follow established procedures for review and final reporting of the self-study. In the absence of school/college-specific guidelines, certificate program faculty and dean's offices should refer to University guidelines. All program reviews include a review committee (formed by the school/college) and for certificate reviews should typically include at least three faculty members, including a member from the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) for graduate/professional and capstone certificates (who serves as a member not as chair).

For details on program review policy, see <http://apir.wisc.edu/programreview.htm> especially the UW-Madison Academic Program Review Guidelines, Appendix III. Guidelines for Structuring the Self-Study for a Certificate Program.