

Graduate Certificate Policies

The goal of Graduate Certificate programs at NDSU is to provide course experiences that form a distinct knowledge or skill set identified as a named certificate. Origination and planning of each will occur within Graduate Certificate program committees hosted by an academic program. Interdisciplinary programs are encouraged, and in such cases, primary contributors will be listed as host programs.

Admission

Students who are currently in a degree program who wish to pursue a certificate program must complete the Add a Certificate to a Degree (http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/gradschool.ndsu.edu/Forms/Student_Forms/Add_Certificate.pdf) form available on the Graduate School webpage.

Applicants not currently in a degree program must:

1. Have a baccalaureate degree from an educational institution of recognized standing.
2. Provide official transcripts from each college or university in which they have been enrolled or are currently enrolled (including both undergraduate and graduate work).
3. Be approved for admission by the program administrator hosting the graduate certificate program and by the Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies.
4. Provide a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score equivalent to that needed for the degree programs in the unit. This is required of ALL applicants whose native language is not English.

*NOTE: Admission into a Graduate Certificate program does not guarantee admission into a graduate degree program nor imply the waiver of any requirements for admission into a graduate degree program. A separate application is required for admission to another degree granting program.

Completion

1. Only grades of C or higher will satisfy requirements for course completion. Cumulative GPA on all credits taken at NDSU must be 3.0 or better.
2. Candidates apply for certificate issuance using a form provided by the Graduate School.
3. Courses used to satisfy the Graduate Certificate program requirements cannot be older than seven (7) years at the time the certificate completion is verified.
4. Transcripts will list Graduate Certificate as the name of the completed certificate program.
5. Credits earned in completing a certificate may be used toward the completion of a master's degree.

Administration of Certificates

The Graduate School oversees the administration of all graduate certificate programs.

1. Certificate programs may be housed in an academic department or be part of a graduate interdisciplinary program. The department chair or the program director may administer the certificate program or may designate a certificate program coordinator. The program coordinator will be responsible for all aspects of the program, including admission, student tracking, and signing the student's Verification of Certificate. Programs are encouraged to have a coordinating committee oversee program assessment, curriculum, and other matters. The student's Verification of Certificate form must be signed by at least two individuals associated with the program, such as the program coordinator and the chair or director. One of the individuals signing the Verification of Certificate form must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty.
2. The program coordinator will provide outcome or descriptive information to the Graduate School that will establish and maintain a website to advertise and explain NDSU graduate certificate programs to potential candidates. The site will list admission requirements and courses for each certificate. The Graduate School must be sure that the site is updated at least annually.
3. Since a certificate is not a degree track, federal Title IV student financial assistance and tuition waivers will not be available for certificate students.
4. Current students may also pursue Graduate Certificate programs.
5. Program administrators will monitor and report certificate completions in program reviews, annual reports, and other summative documents. Faculty should be given credit for certificate participation in merit/tenure considerations.

Approval Process for Graduate Certificate Programs

The approval process will be the same as that of degree programs. The usual supporting documentation is outlined at www.ndsu.edu/facultysenate/acadaffairs/.

Signatures are required from:

1. Program administrator(s) of the host academic program(s)
2. College Curriculum Committee
3. Academic Dean
4. Graduate Council and Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies
5. University Academic Affairs Committee
6. Faculty Senate
7. State Board of Higher Education

Curriculum Development

1. Committees will develop programs with a minimum of eight (8)* credits in specific graduate-level courses which can be completed preferably within one year but no more than three years.
*Different certificates may have higher credit requirements.
2. Transfer credit may not be applied to a certificate program.