

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE POLICY
Approved by the Graduate Council October 20, 2011
Revised May 17, 2012 (Bold Text)

A Graduate Certificate is a formal collection of courses that form a coherent program of study offered through an academic unit. A Graduate Certificate is recognition of the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a given field of study.

Student Eligibility:

1. Graduate students may complete a Certificate in a specialized field within their major or a Certificate in another field that enhances their career interests.
2. Non-degree seeking students may pursue a Graduate Certificate with the approval of the academic unit as long as the applicant has at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a regionally accredited institution.
3. All students (degree seeking, non-degree seeking, or post-baccalaureate) wishing to complete a Certificate must **apply and be admitted** by the academic unit offering the Certificate and the college dean or designee.

Responsibility for Developing and Overseeing a Certificate:

1. Graduate Certificate programs shall be developed and overseen by an academic unit and governed within the Graduate School. The approval process includes the graduate faculty in the academic unit, the college curriculum committee and the Graduate Council. Exceptions may be made for existing graduate certificates offered through Centers or Institutes with close ties to an academic unit(s).
2. Graduate Certificates must be offered through an academic unit but may be administered by campus units such as a Center or Institute that does not offer degrees or courses for academic credit.
3. Proposals for Graduate Certificates must include student learning outcomes and appropriate assessment methods.
4. Academic units are required to notify the Graduate School if their Certificate program is discontinued and to present a plan for permitting currently enrolled students to finish the program.
5. Changes to the number of required credits or course levels (professional to graduate) require Graduate Council approval.
6. Certificates currently offered at UF that use graduate-level coursework have to go through the approval process by December 31, 2012 in order to remain active. Graduate Certificates listed in the Graduate Catalog have already been approved by Graduate Council and do not need to go through this process.

7. Any Certificate program that has not awarded a certificate in the previous 5 years will be closed.
8. Academic units interested in submitting a Graduate Certificate for approval must do so through the tracking system at – www.approval.ufl.edu.

Criteria for Completion of a Certificate:

1. A Certificate must include a minimum of 9 credits hours of academic coursework or related experiences approved by the university.
2. Consistent with longstanding Graduate Council policy, the only passing grades for students in a Certificate program are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S. All work used for the Graduate Certificate must meet a minimum overall 3.0 GPA (truncated). Undergraduate coursework cannot be used for a Graduate Certificate but some professional coursework may count as long as the coursework has the approval of the Graduate Council.
3. Coursework used for the Graduate Certificate may also be used to fulfill the requirements for the graduate degree.
4. Graduate Certificates may include courses that are a part of an academic program or courses created specifically for the Certificate.
5. The coursework used to satisfy a Certificate may not be used to count toward another Certificate or a minor.
6. **Applicants will not be admitted into a Graduate Certificate program that has the same name as the major, concentration or minor.**

Issues to Address in the Application for a Graduate Certificate:

1. Justification for offering the Graduate Certificate.
2. Non-degree students must complete their coursework for the Certificate with a 3.0 or higher GPA. Only coursework with a letter grade of B or better will transfer into a graduate program. All relevant Graduate Council policies apply to transfer of credits.
3. For graduate programs offering concentrations, the difference between the concentration and the Graduate Certificate must be clearly delineated on the New Certificate Transmittal Form.
4. Programs that currently have students pursuing a Certificate must provide a plan for transitioning their students into a Graduate Council approved Graduate Certificate.

Administrative Logistics:

1. Graduate Certificates will be awarded after successful completion of the approved Certificate program and will be posted to the academic transcript. Comments posted to

the transcript will be titled "Graduate Certificate in... ." The **Office of the Registrar** will print and distribute Graduate Certificates to the recipients.

2. The Graduate School will maintain a list of approved Graduate Certificates. Academic Units may describe their approved Certificate programs in their Fields of Instruction in the Graduate Catalog.
3. Only programs of study that involve UF for-credit coursework need to seek approval through the approval system. Those programs of study, such as continuing education, may not be termed "Graduate Certificate" and may not bear the official UF seal. Such programs may issue "Certificates of Completion".
4. **The academic unit will notify the Office of the Registrar of students admitted into a Graduate Certificate program.**
5. **Students must be registered the term that they receive the Certificate.**
6. **Students must apply to receive a Certificate by the mid-point of their final term.**
7. **Applicants who are not enrolled in the Graduate School must register as non-degree seeking students and be admitted by the academic unit each term.**
8. **Verification of a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a regionally accredited institution is required.**