

Guide for Developing Graduate Certificate Proposals

Graduate certificates allow individuals to obtain expertise by updating their professional credentials, to add an interdisciplinary aspect to a disciplinary degree, and/or to try out graduate school or a new area of interest. Many individuals interested in graduate certificates are already in the workforce; therefore, thinking of the target population is important in developing admission requirements, delivery modality and content. Because of their flexible nature, graduate certificates allow OSU to offer niche, unique and/or interdisciplinary programs to keep up with the rapidly changing workforce needs and to determine the level of interest in potential new graduate degree programs.

Admission Criteria

A graduate certificate is a transcribed, graduate-level program, open only to those students who meet the general graduate admission requirements of the University. Students are expected to have conferred baccalaureate degrees from accredited institutions. Programs may stipulate additional requirements.

Academic Requirements

- The certificate program must consist of a minimum of 12 graduate-level semester credits.
- Courses must be at the 5000 or 6000 level.
- A minimum GPA of 3.0 must be achieved in certificate coursework.
- The program generally utilizes existing courses, facilities, and resources. New courses may be proposed.

Federal Financial Aid and Enrollment Considerations

Currently, OSU graduate certificates are Federal Financial Aid (FFA) eligible – it is a separate approval process the Graduate College facilitates with OSU Financial Aid after Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) approval. *FFA eligibility requires a minimum enrollment in 4 credit hours at the graduate level.* Therefore, it is very important to think about how the courses are offered in certificates, as there is a big difference between taking 4 credit hours while employed full time and taking 6 credit hours (two traditional 3 credit-hour courses). *Access to FFA can be very important to potential students; therefore, please consider modular course formats with 1 credit-hour options.*

Proposals

Forms for new Graduate Certificates are available at: <http://academicaffairs.okstate.edu/faculty-a-staff/61-degree-programs-a-curricular-requests>

Proposals for Graduate Certificate programs are similar to any new degree program. They should provide all the information required in the New Program Request:

- Graduate Certificate title, home unit, inception date and contact person for the program
- Need for the program and how the proposed program will meet that need.
- Type of delivery: traditional or online. Please consider online to maximize accessibility.
- Potential demand for the program, target population, estimated enrollment, and comparable programs offered at other institutions.
- Program objectives.
- Admissions requirements. Please consider not requiring the GRE/GMAT/standardized test.
- Academic requirements.
- List of core and elective courses -- Prefix number, title, credit hours.
- Administrative structure (academic oversight, admission, advising, program evaluation).
- Target audience and marketing plan.
- Program evaluation plans.

Certificates must be in the Academic Plan the year they are submitted for OSRHE approval.