

Guidelines for Certificate Programs

General Principles

1. Certificate program (credit or non-credit bearing) must demonstrate academic value consistent with existing UW-L programs.
2. Certificate programs (credit or non-credit bearing) will be housed in academic departments.
3. Any certificate program must be compatible and consistent with university enrollment management plans.

Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs

Standards

1. Approval of certificate programs must not impinge on the quality and availability of regular programs and opportunities for degree-seeking students. Opportunities for certificate programs will be based on student needs and interests.
2. The approval process for a program will maintain high academic standards.
3. Certificates may be earned by a specified audience of "non-traditional"/non-degree seeking students from the regional community or by degree seeking students at UW-L. Guidelines and standards will be identical for both groups.
4. Where appropriate, certificate programs should meet industry/professional society/accreditation standards.
5. Certificate programs should be no less than 12 credits for undergraduate certificates (9 credits for graduate certificate programs) and usually not more than 18 credits.
6. At least 75% of the credits applied to the certificate program requirements must be taken through UW-La Crosse.

Procedures

1. Certificate program proposals will originate with an academic department; all affected departments must endorse proposals. Each proposal will include the following:

- a. A clear statement of the purpose of the program and the anticipated benefits to the department(s), school/college, university, and students.
- b. Identification of target audience(s) and evidence of long term or short term need as appropriate.
- c. Description of the academic component including:
 - i. Goals
 - ii. Statement of admission requirements that are at least equal to the appropriate admissions requirements of the university for degree-seeking individuals. Where a certificate program anticipates a student population that would not normally fall into one of the university admissions categories the proposal should describe the anticipated student background and explain how the proposed admission requirements are appropriate and consistent with overall university admissions requirements¹.
 - iii. Number and array of courses including specification of any required courses. If electives are allowed within the certificate program, an explanation of the proposed electives in light of the need for program cohesion should be included.
 - iv. A statement that identifies program prerequisites
 - v. GPA requirements for certificate completion (2.5 minimum for undergraduate and 3.0 for graduate certificate programs).
 - vi. A statement outlining the certificate program's relationship to and articulation with existing degree programs and the select mission of UW-La Crosse.
 - vii. Programs for new programs should discuss the use of online courses. Where proposals build on existing programs, prior use and effectiveness of online offerings should be addressed. For these purposes, an online course is one where fewer than 50% of

¹ For example, when originally proposed it was anticipated that the Dosimetry Certificate program might attract students who were established professionals but who had received their radiology technology training through hospital based programs. Such individuals might not possess academic degrees such as a bachelors or associate and consequently not formally match a university admissions category. The policy is designed to ensure that certificate programs have admissions requirements consistent with those for degree seeking students and yet provide flexibility where appropriate. In such cases, certificate proposals should describe the anticipated student population and why this should be considered consistent with university admissions requirements.

the contact hours are as face-to-face classroom activities.

- d. Description of the administration, staffing, and budgeting for the program including the following:
 - i. Evidence that the faculty/staff in the department(s) and other qualified personnel are willing to teach the courses in the certificate program at the times/locations necessary for completion of the certificate.
 - ii. Proposed frequency of course offerings for courses included in the certificate program.
 - iii. Proposed arrangements for ongoing advising for students in the certificate program.
 - iv. Anticipated need for other student support services for students enrolled in the certificate program.
 - v. For certificate programs involving more than one academic department, identification of an administrative unit for the program.

Approval Process

Certificate programs that are totally credit-bearing or are the combination of credit-bearing and non-credit bearing courses will, after approval by the proposing department and any required college level review, be reviewed by the Academic Planning Committee, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee or the Graduate Curriculum committee and the Faculty Senate.

Post-Approval Oversight

Once approved certificate programs will be reviewed as a part of the academic program review of the home department. This review will report on the extent to which the program has met the standards.

Non-Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs

Approval Process

A non-credit-bearing certificate program will originate with an academic department. The certificate program must be endorsed by all affected departments, be approved at the college level and by the Provost.

Post-Approval Oversight

Once approved certificate programs will be reviewed as a part of the academic program review of the home department. This review will report on the extent to which the program has met the proposed standards.