UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

SG 2.02

Date of Last Update:
November 12, 2025

Approved By:

- University Academic Senate / Provost

Responsible Office:
Provost Office

POLICY STATEMENT

G. Undergraduate Certificate Program Criteria and Guidelines

1. Purpose: A certificate is awarded in recognition of completion of a well-defined program of coursework that falls within existing units at Grand Valley for a specified purpose that could not simply be achieved by obtaining a transcript. A certificate is not defined as a degree by the University; rather, it is a focused collection of courses that, when completed, affords the student some record of coherent academic accomplishment in a given discipline or set of related disciplines. Furthermore, certificates are available to both degree-seeking and non-degree-seeking (i.e., certificate seeking) students. Therefore, they are available to a wider range of students than a traditional major.

2. Criteria:

a. Certificate programs may be either freestanding or as add-ons to existing degree programs.

b. The number of courses (credits) required for completion of a certificate program may vary from certificate to certificate.

c. A limited number of new courses may be added for certificate programs.

d. Minimum standards for academic progress should be identical to those of the parent program(s). Additional standards or requirements may be imposed.

e. The number of courses comprising the certificate program that must be completed at Grand Valley is set by the department providing the certificate program.

g. Courses accepted for transfer as part of the certificate program must be reviewed and

approved by the department providing the certificate program.

h. Courses taken as part of a certificate program at another institution may be transferable and shall be evaluated on their own merits in keeping with standard procedures; however, certificates from other institutions are not transferable to Grand Valley.

i. Certificate courses may be applied toward requirements for completion of a major/emphasis or degree, as determined by the unit providing the certificate program.

3. Procedure:

a. Certificates are created using the New Certificate Proposal Form in the online curriculum system that is linked from the GVSU Faculty Governance website.

b. Certificate review follows the same curriculum review process as badges.

c. Changes to existing certificates should use the Program Change Request form.