

Academic Subject Certificate Programs Procedures and Guidelines

An academic subject certificate program is a designated set of courses that does not lead to a degree, but complements an existing degree program by enhancing the development of skills and knowledge in a focused area of study, or provides an alternative to a degree program in the form of intensive professional training or personal enrichment in a focused area of study. Certificate programs are classified as either graduate or undergraduate certificates. They are generally narrower in scope than degrees, and the courses, together with other forms of credited educational experience, are specifically structured to form a coherent specialization. They may be offered as a field of specialization within an existing degree program; as an interdisciplinary field that combines courses from two or more degree programs; or as an area of professional and practical forms of specialist knowledge and skills.

Individuals who may enroll in certificate programs include students who are in existing graduate or undergraduate degree programs or other students who meet University and program entrance requirements. Those who enroll solely to obtain an undergraduate certificate will be admitted as unclassified students; students enrolled solely in graduate certificate programs must be admitted as classified graduate students.

Academic subject certificates are awarded to students either on completion of the degree requirements for the degree program in which they are enrolled or, in the case of students who hold a baccalaureate degree, or who are not enrolled in a degree program, upon completion of the certificate requirements.

UH Executive Policy E5.205 grants the Chancellor (President for UH Mānoa) the authority to approve certificate programs in specific subjects that represent recognition of work taken within (or among) existing Board authorized programs. Certificate programs that do not meet these criteria and those that require the commitment of new resources by the University require Board of Regents approval.

Graduate Certificate Programs

Graduate certificate programs have two broad purposes: 1) to complement the education of students within disciplinary graduate programs; and 2) to provide the training necessary for professional certification. Typically, independent admission is accepted but some may limit admission to current graduate students. Students interested in completing graduate certificate programs must be admitted as classified graduate students.

Graduate certificate programs offer a distinct program of study and provide graduate students with a concentrated and intellectually coherent set of courses. They must include at least one required course (three credits) and a capstone project or experience.

A graduate certificate program requires a minimum of 15 credit hours of coursework at UH Mānoa, at least nine of which must be at the graduate level (600-700). Successful completion of the certificate program requires passing required courses with a grade of B or higher, and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 for all courses counted towards the certificate.

Students may enroll in multiple certificate programs or in certificate and advanced degree programs. There is no general prohibition against double counting between certificate and other programs as long as it is permitted by both programs. However, double counting between certificate programs is not permitted.

Graduate certificate programs, like all graduate programs, are administered by their graduate faculty, which may include members of the professional community. The graduate faculty are responsible for overseeing the program, including assessment of learning, maintenance of quality, monitoring of the curriculum, and admissions. Clear standards and procedures must be developed, publicized in the catalog, and consistently maintained.

Graduate certificate programs should have a director or chair who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program and for advising students.

Proposals for graduate certificate programs should follow the “Guidelines for Academic Subject Certificate Proposals” and should include course proposals for all new courses. Approval of the appropriate curriculum committees and Dean(s) of the sponsoring unit(s) is required, as well as Graduate Division, Faculty Senate, the President, and the Board of Regents (if appropriate). All programs, including certificates, require an approved “Authorization to Plan” prior to submission of a proposal.

New graduate certificate programs are approved for two-year provisional period and will subsequently be subject to regular program reviews. Evidence of lack of quality, low student interest, and/or lack of faculty interest or participation may lead to probation or termination of a program.

Undergraduate Certificate Programs

Undergraduate certificate programs are generally designed to complement the education of students within other existing major programs. They may be offered as an interdisciplinary course of study, as a specialization within an existing major, or in a field that currently lacks a major. In any case, undergraduate certificate programs provide students with a concentrated experience within a defined field of study. They cannot be simply a subset of courses required for an existing undergraduate degree, but must offer a distinct program of study.

Undergraduate certificate programs are based on a series of intellectually coherent courses requiring a minimum of 15 credit hours at UH Mānoa, at least nine of which must be upper division (300-400). There should be at least one required course (three credits) and a capstone project is recommended in order to provide cohesion to the program.

Successful completion of the certificate program requires a cumulative GPA of 2.5 for all courses counted towards the certificate. Students may enroll in multiple certificate programs, but no more than six credits may overlap between any two programs, and they may not overlap between more than two.

Undergraduate certificate programs should have a director or chair who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program and for advising students. There should also be appropriate mechanisms for assessment of learning, maintenance of quality and monitoring of the curriculum. Clear admissions standards and processes must be published in the catalog and consistently maintained.

Proposals for undergraduate certificate programs that (1) represent recognition of work that is not part of existing Board authorized programs, (2) involve units in more than one college, or (3) involve the commitment of new resources by the university administration, should follow the “Guidelines for Academic Subject Certificate Proposals.” They should include copies of course proposals for all new courses and will require approval of the appropriate curriculum committees and Deans of the sponsoring units, the Faculty Senate, the President, and the Board of Regents (if appropriate).

Proposals for undergraduate certificate programs that are (1) interdisciplinary, but within a single college, (2) offered within an existing major, or (3) in the absence of a major by another single unit, should follow the “Guidelines for Academic Subject Certificate Proposals.” Such proposals will require the authorization of the appropriate curriculum committees and Deans of the sponsoring units, the Faculty Senate, and the President.

An approved “Authorization to Plan” is required prior to submission of the proposal.

New undergraduate certificate programs are approved for a two-year provisional period and will subsequently be subject to regular program reviews. Evidence of low and declining enrollment may lead to probation or termination of a program.

GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC SUBJECT CERTIFICATE PROPOSALS

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

1. What is the purpose and objectives of the proposed academic subject certificate program, including the relationship to existing degree programs(s), if any?
2. How will the program be administered? Who will be responsible for advising of students (e.g., department chair, program director or staff, individual faculty from the various participating departments)?
3. What units (e.g., programs, departments, schools, colleges) are involved? Who are the faculty involved in the planning process and who will be involved in implementing the proposed academic subject certificate?
4. What population will be served by the program (e.g., graduate students enrolled in degree programs at the University; professionals working in the community who wish to upgrade knowledge and skills, desire a certificate only, and will not enroll in a degree program; undergraduate students enrolled in degree program at the University (full-time, part-time))? What is the anticipated number of students to be served each year?
5. How is the program organized?
 - a. What are the foundation courses and prerequisites needed for acceptance into the program (e.g., graduate or undergraduate status, grade point average; work experience)?
 - b. What are the fields of concentration (tracks, areas of specialization) in the program? If there is more than one concentration, how do the fields differ?
 - c. What are the number of credits required for the academic subject certificate? (Note that the minimum required credits for graduate and undergraduate academic subject certificates are 15.)
 - d. What courses are required for the certificate program? What is the rationale for including these courses?
 - e. What is the structure of the program (e.g., first-semester courses; required or core courses; electives)?
 - f. Will a practicum or internship be required for the academic subject certificate? If so, how will the certificate program arrange for and administer the practicum?
 - g. Is there an integrative experience at the end of the certificate program and if so, of what nature, e.g., scholarly paper, research project, written examination, integrative interdisciplinary seminar?
6. What resources are required for program implementation and operation? How will these resources be obtained? Are additional resources required for the operation of the program?

7. How will the effectiveness of the program be demonstrated and measured? How will student learning be assessed?

8. Are the program objectives appropriate functions of the college and university? (Applies to proposals for all graduate certificates and for undergraduate certificates that involve units in more than one college or that require the commitment of new resources by the University.) Discuss relationship to University and campus mission and evidence of continuing need for the program.