

GRADUATE-LEVEL CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS AT MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

Graduate certificate programs represent mid-level presentations of academic content aimed at students in search of personal/career development or professional continuing education. As such, certificate programs will be crafted with the intent to provide needed educational services to the various populations living and working within the Marshall University service area. Any graduate certificate program offered through Marshall University shall represent a coherent, specialized body of knowledge. These certificate programs are offered to students desiring an educational experience beyond the baccalaureate level but who choose not to pursue a degree-based graduate program in that academic area. Graduate-level certificates will be awarded to those students who successfully complete a well-defined series of courses designated by the faculty in the area offering the certificate program. Because these certificates represent a specific body of knowledge, students may also be required to successfully integrate the required courses via a capstone exercise such as a comprehensive examination or research paper.

APPROVAL PROCESS

The approval process for certificate programs shall approximate that found for regular offerings at the graduate level. Specifically, the approval process for each certificate program shall begin with a proposal offered by an appropriate academic department (or departments in the case of a multi-disciplinary certificate). After the sponsoring department's proposal is approved at the college level, it shall be forwarded through the remainder of the existing approval protocol: the Curriculum Committee of the Graduate Council, full Graduate Council, and President's Office. In order to promote the orderly consideration of proposals, sponsoring departments are strongly encouraged to seek and secure written support from departments and schools that may be affected by new certificates. The effect of a proposed certificate on existing programs is a valid consideration during the entire approval process. Each proposal shall contain, at minimum, information dealing with the following issues:

- The sponsoring department's determination of how credits earned within the proposed program may be applied to graduate degrees offered at Marshall (if applicable).
- A market analysis for the proposed certificate.
- How the proposed certificate will be promoted.
- Admission standards and certificate requirements for the proposed certificate.
- Roster of qualified instructors (if new courses are proposed).
- Whether the courses will qualify for professional continuing education.
- Identification of relevant administrative personnel.
- Description of capstone experience (if appropriate).

PUBLICATION AND AWARD

All approved graduate certificate programs shall be published in the Graduate Catalog. Each sponsoring department shall also be expected to actively promote its own certificate programs.

Students who successfully complete all requirements for a graduate-level certificate shall have their accomplishments entered onto their formal transcripts. Each student shall also receive a diploma-quality certificate as an acknowledgement of his or her effort.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

All certificate programs shall abide by the following guidelines:

- Each course of study should consist of at least 12 credit hours and no more than 21 credit hours. The Graduate Council may authorize exceptions.
- No more than 6 credit hours from outside Marshall University may be transferred into any certificate programs.
- An overall GPA of at least 3.0 must be earned for all courses within the certificate program.

ADMINISTRATION

Each certificate program will have a designated administrative home. Within each administrative home, one faculty member shall be designated as the internal and external contact person for that certificate program. All official communication will be channeled through that individual.

NOTE: A new graduate certificate will not be aid eligible unless the program submits a successful application for aid eligibility to the US Department of Education. Please see the Dean of the Graduate College for information on how to apply.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The sponsoring department(s) shall set minimum admission standards for their certificate programs. Students should consult the catalog for admission requirements to a particular certificate program.

In addition:

- Prospective certificate-only students should apply for admission to Marshall University (with the non-refundable application fee), as a Certificate/Professional Development student.
- Students already enrolled in the degree program which sponsors the certificate they wish to pursue should submit a Secondary Program Request form. There is no application fee.
- Students enrolled in a degree program who wish to apply to a certificate program sponsored by another degree program should apply for admission to Marshall University (with the non-refundable application fee), as a Certificate/Professional Development student.
- Students who wish to pursue concurrently a degree and certificate sponsored by the same degree program should complete the application for admission to the degree program (with the *non-refundable* application fee) and a Secondary Program Request form.

Note: Completion of a certificate program does not guarantee acceptance as a degree student in a particular graduate program. Individual departments may, however, choose to use performance in certificate courses as supporting data when considering an application for full admission into a degree program.

Approved by Graduate Council, January 2012.