

GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY

CERTIFICATES

Certificates at Governors State University are defined as coherent clusters of coursework and related learning experiences that are narrower in scope and shorter in duration than complete degree programs and that enable students to acquire a distinct knowledge base or set of skills most frequently applicable in specific career settings. As such certificates at GSU generally impose specific admission requirements. Certificates differ in kind based upon the level of instruction and in type based upon the approvals required. Thus, at GSU certificates are either at the undergraduate or graduate level of instruction, and are either subsumed under the mantle of existing approved majors at the university or are distinct from the disciplines that the university is authorized to offer.

Level of Instruction

Undergraduate certificates require between nine (9) and eighteen (18) hours of content that is at the upper-division level of instruction and that therefore may require additional prerequisite undergraduate coursework. Minimally, students must have completed at least sixty (60) semester hours of college credit with a “C” or better grade point average to be eligible to pursue an undergraduate certificate at GSU. Each certificate may establish additional admission criteria.

Graduate certificates require between nine (9) and eighteen (18) hours of content that is at the graduate level of instruction and that therefore may require prerequisite undergraduate and/or graduate coursework. Minimally, students must have completed a baccalaureate degree with a “C” or better grade point average to be eligible to pursue a graduate certificate at GSU. Each certificate may establish additional admission criteria.

Type of Approval

Prior to being promoted, advertised, or offered, all certificates at Governors State University require completion of the university’s established process for approval of instructional units, which may include approval by IBHE staff.

For a new certificate that is subsumed under an existing major at GSU, final approval rests with the university president after consultation with the Provost. Upon approval, the president will notify the Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

When a new certificate that is distinct from existing majors approved at the university is recommended by the university president, final approval rests with IBHE staff.

New certificates will be reviewed after three years. Thereafter, certificates will be reviewed in accordance with the Five-Year Cyclical Academic Program Review Schedule. The Provost’s

Office will develop a review schedule for those certificates which are distinct from the majors that the university is authorized to offer.

Length and Time Limits

Certificates shall consist of nine (9) to eighteen (18) credit hours of approved coursework. Exceptions to the eighteen credit hour limit will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All coursework for a certificate must be completed within two (2) years from the date of acceptance. Individual certificates may be more restrictive.

Students may not pursue more than three certificates at one time.

Requirements for Certificates

- A. Minimum Requirements and Restrictions
 1. Demonstrate that all specified certificate coursework and any related activities have been completed;
 2. Be in academic good standing based upon the level of the certificate;
 3. Remove all grades of incomplete (I or E) by the date that the certificate is to be completed;
 4. Meet all financial obligations to the university;
 5. Complete the collegial and university procedures that cover the implementation of the above requirements.

- B. Transfer Credits
 1. The decision to accept transfer credits toward certificate requirements is made by the academic advisor during the first trimester of enrollment when the Certificate Study Plan is developed.
 2. The amount of transferable credit hours shall not exceed thirty-three (33) percent of the total number of credit hours required for the certificate.
 3. Work from regionally accredited institutions completed with a grade of “B” or better may be considered for transfer credit for graduate certificates. Work from regionally accredited institutions completed with a grade of “C” or better may be considered for transfer credit for undergraduate certificates. Each college and/or division shall determine whether grades of “P” (for “pass” or its equivalent) may be considered for certificate transfer credit.
 4. Credits earned and applied toward any certificate previously earned may not be applied toward a second or additional certificate. Students pursuing two or more certificates simultaneously may not apply the same credits to more than one certificate. If the same course is required for both/all certificates, the program faculty will identify an appropriate substitute course. A maximum of three (3) credit hours may be substituted.
 5. A maximum of six (6) credit hours earned as an undeclared or non-degree student can be applied to a certificate.

Recognition

1. Certificate completion will be noted on the student's academic transcript.
2. Each college is responsible for developing and issuing its certificate awards.
3. Certificate students are not eligible to participate in university commencement. Individual colleges/programs may hold separate recognition ceremonies.

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