3.14 Graduate Certificate Programs

A. Definition

A Graduate Certificate Program (GCP) is a prescribed set of related graduate-level academic courses, designed by an academic department or program. To receive a certificate, non-degree-seeking students must submit an application and fee through the Graduate School (ADD APP LINK) and obtain admission, whereas enrolled graduate students are required to submit the Graduate Certificate Plan Entry form. Certificates cannot be conferred retroactively. Upon completion, the GCP will be designated on the student's transcript and the student shall receive a certificate from Registration and Records entitled "Graduate Certificate in…." In most cases, certificate students are not eligible for federal financial aid, although some students in teaching certificate programs may be entitled to Financial Aid (contact the Financial Aid Office for specific eligibility requirements).

B. Minimum Requirements for Graduate Certificate Programs

1. All students enrolled in a GCP must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education; the transcript of this degree indicating conferral date must be submitted to the Graduate School.
2. All GCP coursework must be taken at NC State. **Transfer credit from other institutions is not allowed**.
3. Courses required for a GCP must be regular graduate-level academic courses.
4. The minimum number of credits required for a GCP is 12. No more than three of those credits may be S/U graded.
5. Up to six hours of NC State graduate coursework may be used in a certificate program. All transfer credit must carry a grade of B or better (B- or below is not allowed).
6. Up to three hours of coursework taken at the 400 level may be used. Students who took a 400-level course while in undergraduate status at NCSU may transfer it into a certificate provided that the credit was not used for an undergraduate degree.
7. To receive a Graduate Certificate, a student must have an overall minimum 3.000 grade point average (GPA) on all certificate coursework. All grades on courses taken towards the certificate program in courses numbered 400 and above are included in the GPA.
8. A minimum grade of a C- in each course is required to receive certificate credit, although departments/programs may require a higher minimum.
9. GCP students who take 400-, 500- and 700-level courses which are letter graded do not have the option of taking the courses for "credit only" if they intend for the course to be part of their GCP.

10. All GCP requirements must be completed within four calendar years, beginning with the date the student commences courses applicable to the GCP, unless a more restrictive time limit has been established by the program or academic college/school.
11. Students can obtain multiple certificates from NC State. Each certificate must have at least nine credit hours that are unique to it; see Section D for certificates taken by students in a degree program.

D. Graduate Certificates and Graduate Degree Program

1. Transfer Credit
   a. Up to 12 hours of certificate credit taken prior to enrollment in a degree program (either master's or doctoral) may be transferred into that degree program (**note**: transfer totals into degree programs shall not exceed 12 hours from all sources) so long as eighteen hours remain unique to the master's and thirty-six hrs to the doctorate.
2. Shared Credit
   a. Graduate certificate courses taken while enrolled in a degree program may be double-counted with the degree courses to the extent that the courses unique to the degree remains eighteen hours for a master's or thirty-six hours for a doctorate.
   b. Certificate and graduate minor coursework shall not be shared, i.e., a student getting a minor using a set of coursework may not also get a certificate using that same coursework.
   c. Up to nine hours of coursework taken in a previous degree program may be used in a certificate (to the extent allowed by the double-counting rules in sub-section D), provided that the degree and the certificate are pursued simultaneously.