



The Graduate School
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920

Graduate Certificate Program Admission and Requirement Policies

Graduate Certificate Programs

A non-degree certificate program is a specified series of credit courses which define a set of learning objectives and competencies essential to a defined area of study. Post-baccalaureate certificates verify an area of competency that enhances the knowledge base of degree seeking candidates or defines a specific area of competency for non-degree students. Post-master's certificates verify an additional area of competency beyond that required for the graduate degree. Certificates are not degrees and certificate programs are not degree programs. Certificate programs are verified on university transcripts, but are not equivalent to external certification granted by state or national certification agencies, for example Illinois State Teacher Certification. State and national certification agencies establish requirements and certification reviews independent of those developed by the University. Multi-disciplinary certificate programs are typically administered by one specific department or school.

Admission to Graduate Certificate Programs

- **Graduate School Admission:** Admission to the Graduate School is the first stage of admission for students seeking candidacy for a graduate certificate program. To be eligible for admission to the Graduate School, applicants must have obtained a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution approved by Eastern Illinois University and achieved a minimum undergraduate cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or a 2.75 GPA on the last 60 hours of graded academic course work. For post-graduate candidates, the Graduate School criteria include completion of a graduate degree from an accredited institution approved by Eastern Illinois University and a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- **Certificate Program Admission:** Admission as a certificate candidate is the second stage of graduate admission. Academic programs may establish requirements for certificate candidacy in addition to those established by the Graduate School. Additional requirements may include, but are not limited to, a higher cumulative GPA, a GPA for courses in the undergraduate major, or a valid standardized test score for the Graduate Record Examination, Miller's Analogies Test, or Graduate Management Admission Test. Program requirements for candidacy are outlined in the "Requirements for All Degree and Certificate Candidates" section of the *Graduate Catalog*. Applicants must meet the program requirements in order to achieve certificate candidacy.

Requirements for Graduate Certificate Programs

- **Total Semester Hours:** A minimum of 18 semester hours of study is required for all certificate programs. Certificate programs often establish minimum requirements of study above the minimum semester hour limits set by the Graduate School. Candidates are advised to review the *Academic Program Requirements* section for minimum program requirements. The 18 semester-hour minimum requirement for a certificate may not be waived or appealed.
- **Residency Semester Hours:** A minimum of 9 semester hours in the certificate program is required in residence. Residence is defined as credit for courses taught by Eastern Illinois University faculty at on-campus or off-campus sites. This requirement may not be waived or appealed.
- **5000 Level Semester Hours:** A minimum of 9 semester hours in the certificate program must be in courses numbered 5000 or higher.

Restrictions for Graduate Certificate Programs

- **Research, Internship and Special Course Restrictions:** A minimum of 9 semester hours must be completed in courses exclusive of independent study, research, thesis, and internship, and special courses or workshops.

- **4750-4999 Hour Restrictions:** A maximum of 6 semester hours of courses numbered 4750 to 4999 may be applied to certificate programs.
- **Research Hour Restrictions:** A maximum of 3 semester hours of independent study, research, and thesis may be applied to a certificate program.
- **Non-Degree Hours:** There is no restriction on the number of semester hours a non-degree student may apply to a certificate program. There is no guarantee that any credit earned as a non-degree student may later apply to a certificate program.

Requirements for All Degree and Certificate Candidates

Regardless of the type of graduate degree or academic program, all graduate degree and certificate candidates must meet the following requirements. Candidates hold final responsibility for knowing and completing these requirements.

- **GPA:** All candidates earning degrees or completing certificate programs must achieve and maintain a graduate cumulative 3.00 GPA (4.00 scale) for all courses numbered 4750 or higher taken for graduate credit at Eastern Illinois University and for all courses listed on the Graduate Study Plan. This requirement may not be waived or appealed.
- ~~**Study Plan:** All candidates must have a Graduate Study Plan submitted from the academic program to the certification officer in the Graduate School for each degree or certificate program the candidate seeks to complete. The Graduate Study Plan and the Certificate Study Plan are an approved list of all courses and their recommended sequences that fulfill requirements for degrees or certificates as specified in the regulations for degrees and certificates required by the Graduate School and the academic program. Upon achieving degree candidacy or certificate admission, candidates are required to consult with program advisors to develop a Graduate Study Plan or Certificate Study Plan. The coordinator of graduate study submits the Graduate or Certificate Study Plan electronically to the certification officer in the Graduate School no later than the mid-term date published in the *Class Schedule* during the final term of study. Coordinators must alert the certification officer to any changes to the study plan that are made after the mid-term deadline. Candidates may request printed copies of their study plans from the Coordinator.~~
- **EIU Degree Audit:** The graduate plan of study is the EIU Degree Audit, which all candidates for each degree or certificate program must have developed. The EIU Degree Audit serves as an unofficial summary of requirements for each degree or certificate program. Final authority for certifying that candidates have met all requirements for the degree or certificate rests with the certification officer in the Graduate School. There are two categories of requirements. The first category includes the standard set of degree or certificate requirements approved by the Council on Graduate Studies and published in the Graduate Catalog. The standard EIU Degree Audit is generated automatically in the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) at the time of degree or certificate candidacy. The second category of requirements includes modifications of the standard degree or certificate requirements (additions or substitutions). Modifications of the standard EIU Degree Audit are submitted electronically by the graduate coordinator to the certification officer in the Graduate School at the time the modifications are approved but no later than 10 working days prior to submission of an application for graduation. It is the candidate's responsibility to consult with the Graduate Coordinator to ensure that all degree or certificate requirements are met and to adhere to the policies outlined in the Graduate Catalog.
- **Time Limitation:** Degree and certificate candidates must fulfill all of the requirements for graduate degrees or certificates outlined on the study plan within six consecutive years. The six-year time limit ensures that the degree and/or certificate represent a well-sequenced, cohesive body of current knowledge that progresses over consecutive semesters of study. All course work listed on the candidate's Graduate Study Plan or Certificate Study Plan, including transfer credit, field experience, independent study, research, thesis, and internships, must be completed within the six-year time limit. The earliest term in which a course listed on the Graduate or Certificate Study Plan was taken marks the beginning of the six year time period. Exceptions may be requested through the Graduate School Waiver and Appeals Process when progress toward completion of the degree or certificate is interrupted by obligations or circumstances which are beyond the control of the student.

Application of Certificate Program Courses to Concurrent or Future Degree Programs or Application of Degree Program Courses Toward A Certificate Program

With departmental approval, candidates may apply some or all of the semester hours of course work earned toward current or future graduate degree programs at Eastern Illinois University to an EIU certificate program. With departmental approval, candidates may apply some or all of the semester hours earned in a certificate program at Eastern Illinois University toward a current or future degree program. Departments have ultimate authority regarding

acceptance of courses toward degree or certificate programs and certificate applicants are advised to consult with department advisors regarding department accepted course applications. Any courses to be used toward any concurrent or future certificate program must be completed within the established six year time limit.

Application of Certificate Program Courses to Concurrent or Future Additional Certificate Programs

Each separate certificate program must include 9 semester hours of new coursework that cannot be shared with a concurrent or future certificate program. With department approval, up to 9 semester hours of coursework may be shared with a concurrent or future certificate program. For example, a candidate who elects to complete 2 certificate programs concurrently must complete 9 semester hours of new course work for each separate program and, with department approval, may apply up to 9 semester hours of shared course work between the two concurrent programs resulting in a minimum of 27 semester hours to complete the 2 separate concurrent programs. Certificate applicants are advised to consult with department advisors regarding department policies on shared courses. Any courses to be used toward any concurrent or future certificate program must be completed within the established six year time limit.

Certificate Program Admission and Admission to Degree Programs

Admission to and completion of a certificate program does not constitute admission to a degree program. Candidates who complete certificate programs and then apply to degree programs are subject to the standard admission procedures used by the Graduate School and academic program which include, but are not limited to, verification of completion of a baccalaureate degree, documentation of the required grade point average and submission of required test scores. Certificate applicants should consult the appropriate sections of the *Graduate Catalog* for detailed information regarding degree admission.

Certificate Programs and Financial Aid

Non-degree certificate candidates may not be eligible for financial aid. Candidates are advised to consult with the Financial Aid Office regarding financial assistance for certificate candidates. Certificate candidates do not meet the degree candidacy criteria required for graduate assistantship eligibility.

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