

Certificate Programs

Academic Affairs – Curriculum and Programs

CWU Policy 501-09

Effective: August 2, 2023

Policy Review Date: YEAR

Policy Executive: Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs

Responsible Office/Unit: Registrar

Policy Statement:

Applicability:

Contents

Policy

Appendix A – Certificate Programs Procedure

(1) UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

- A. Undergraduate certificate programs are courses of study that normally require less than one-quarter of the credits required during a degree program at a similar level. Certificate programs may not exceed 44 credits. They are usually highly specialized career programs and are occasionally geared for admission to licensing or career entrance tests.
- B. Certificate programs are prescribed courses of study designed (a) to provide a specialty within an academic program or (b) to build competency in an applied field of study. Because many students and employers place high value on such programs that do not necessarily constitute or require a four-year academic program, Central Washington University has developed three types of undergraduate professional certificate programs.

(2) GRADUATE STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

- A. Graduate certificate programs are courses of study that require equal to half or less than half of the credits required during a degree program at a similar level. Certificate programs may not exceed 44 credits. They are usually limited in scope relative to a graduate degree program but provide an opportunity for advanced study with a particular focus. Subject to the regulations that govern a specific program, a graduate certificate can often serve as an intermediate accomplishment for a student whose ultimate goal is a graduate degree.

- B. Teacher certification programs differ from graduate certificate programs. [CWU 501-08](#) defines the administration of the teacher certification programs. The school of graduate studies and research does not administer teacher certification programs.

(3) TYPES OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- A. Four types of programs are described and the characteristics listed that determine the placement of a program into one of the four categories. The primary characteristics that determine the classification of the certificate program are (a) the primary target audience and (b) the type of courses offered within certificate requirements. The type of certificate program offered determines the unit of primary responsibility for the program and the review process required for implementation and/or revision. It also determines the type of credit that can be awarded and determines the unit charged with the responsibility of maintaining ongoing records.
1. **Type A.** College Sponsored Undergraduate Certificate Programs: Programs that admit only matriculating students and offer a set of courses approved through the CWU academic governance procedures are classified as “College Sponsored Certificate Programs.” These programs are developed, taught, and offered by academic departments housed in colleges at CWU.
 2. **Type B.** Collaborative Undergraduate Certificate Programs: Programs that admit both matriculating students and non-matriculating students and offer a set of courses that includes regular course offerings appearing in the CWU catalog and administered by CWU Colleges are classified as “Collaborative Certificate Programs.” These programs are developed, taught, and offered by academic departments housed in colleges in cooperation with the office of continuing education.
 3. **Type C.** Continuing Education Certificate Programs: Programs that target primarily non-matriculating students and offer a set of instructional experiences developed independent of CWU’s colleges but with input as appropriate from faculty are classified as “continuing education certificate programs.” These programs are developed, delivered, and administered by the office of continuing education in consultation with faculty, academic departments, and/or college dean, as appropriate.
 4. **Type D.** Graduate School Certificate Programs: Programs that only admit students who meet the criteria to be accepted into the School of Graduate Studies and Research and offer a set of courses which appear in the CWU catalog. Certificates are administered by CWU Colleges and are classified as “Graduate School Certificate Programs”. These programs are developed, taught, and offered by academic departments housed in colleges at CWU.

History:

*Responsibility: Faculty Senate; Authority: Provost/VP for Academic Affairs; Reviewed/Endorsed by Provost’s Council 05/05/2015; 06/20/2023; Cabinet/UPAC; Review/Effective Date: 06/03/2015; 06/17/2020; 08/02/2023; Approved by: James L. Gaudino, President
Reformatted and Assigned new Policy Number - Previous Policy CWUP 5-50-090, June 2025
Procedure CWUR 2-50-090 attached as Appendix A, June 2025*

Appendix A - Certificate Programs

(1) Type A. College Sponsored Certificate Programs: Primary Target Audience: Matriculating students.

- A. Courses: A prescribed set of regular credit-bearing courses that have been developed, reviewed, and approved through CWU's curriculum development process.
- B. Review Process: Certificate programs in this category are required to go through the standard curriculum review process in the college and faculty senate. Programs designed for international clientele will also be reviewed by the office of international studies and programs.
- C. Administrative Sponsor: A college within CWU is responsible for all functions associated with scheduling courses, hiring faculty, delivering instruction, and confirming completion of the certificate program. CWU's registrar office will enroll students, issue certificates on the recommendation of the college, and maintain records as part of the matriculating students' academic record. (Note: Individual classes in the certificate program may be offered as needed through the office of continuing education, in which case the enrollment process is handled there.)
- D. Instructors: Full-time or adjunct faculty hired through the academic departments and colleges (or continuing education with appropriate department, college approval).
- E. Fees: Regular tuition and fees associated with credit (or continuing education) courses.

(2) Type B. Collaborative Certificate Programs: Primary Target Audience: Matriculating and non-matriculating students may pursue collaborative certificate programs.

- A. Courses: A prescribed set of credit-bearing courses and/or instructional experiences designed to build competency in an applied field of study. Certificate requirements may include (a) regular courses that have been developed, reviewed, and approved through CWU's curriculum development process; and/or (b) special courses or instructional experiences designed specifically in support of the certificate program through continuing education in consultation with the appropriate college dean and academic department.
- B. Review Process: Certificate programs in this category are required to go through the standard curriculum review process in the college and faculty senate. Programs designed for international clientele will also be reviewed by the office of international studies and programs.
- C. Administrative Sponsor: Academic departments, consulting with college deans and faculty as appropriate, are responsible for developing curriculum, choosing appropriate faculty, and ensuring academic and instructional integrity. The office of continuing education assists as needed in these functions and in addition is responsible for marketing, registration, confirming completion of the certificate program, issuing certificates, and maintaining ongoing records.
- D. Instructors: For regular courses, full-time or adjunct faculty hired through the academic departments and colleges are preferred as instructors. However, if full-time or adjunct faculty are unavailable, additional adjunct faculty may be hired by continuing education with approval from the appropriate department and college dean. For courses developed through continuing

education, adjunct faculty hired by continuing education in consultation with the appropriate department and college dean may be employed.

- E. Fees: Fees are determined on a course-by-course basis. Courses offered through regular CWU course offerings carry regular tuition and fees associated with credit courses. Courses offered through the office of continuing education carry fees associated with credit courses offered through continuing education.
- F. Revenue Sharing: Revenue generated by courses in collaborative certificate programs offered through continuing education will be shared with the cosponsoring departments following the prevailing revenue-sharing formula.

(3) Type C. Continuing Education Certificate Programs: Primary Target Audience: Non-matriculating students; however, matriculating students are not precluded from participating.

- A. Courses: A prescribed set of noncredit courses designed to build competency in an applied field of study.
- B. Review Process: Certificate programs in this category are not required to go through the standard curriculum review process in the college or faculty senate. Instead the office of continuing education will seek input from colleges or departments as appropriate and the program will be available for review and comment for a two-week period in the provost's office. Programs designed for international clientele will also be reviewed by the office of international studies and programs.
- C. Administrative Sponsor: The office of continuing education is responsible for all phases of design and delivery.
- D. Instructors: Adjunct faculty or regular faculty hired by the office of continuing education.
- E. Fees: To be determined by length of program, direct costs, and market demand.

(4) Type D. Graduate School Certificate Programs: Primary Target Audience: Graduate students.

- A. Courses: A prescribed set of regular credit-bearing courses that have been developed, reviewed, and approved through CWU's curriculum development process.
- B. Review Process: Certificate programs in this category are required to go through the standard curriculum review process in the college, graduate council and faculty senate.
- C. Administrative Sponsors: A college within CWU is responsible for all functions associated with scheduling courses, hiring faculty, delivering instruction, and confirming completion of the certificate program. CWU's registrar office will enroll students, issue certificates on the recommendation of the college, and maintain records as part of the students' academic record.
- D. Instructors: Full-time or adjunct faculty hired through the academic departments and colleges.
- E. Fees: Regular tuition and fees associated with credit courses.