

# Policy on Graduate Certificate Programs

Approved by Graduate Council, November 19, 2025

## 1. ROLE OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS AT TWU

Graduate certificate programs serve as a way of meeting the educational needs of lifetime learners and help make TWU a center of life-long graduate education for the citizens of Texas and beyond. These programs should provide specialized knowledge and skills that go beyond existing degree programs in a way that enhances professional development and addresses evolving industry needs.

## 2. TYPES OF GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

TWU offers two types of graduate certificate programs:

### A. Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs

- Designed for students who have completed at least a baccalaureate degree
- Utilize courses at the 5000-level or above
- Serve as entry points for advanced study and professional development

### B. Post-Master's Certificate Programs

- Designed for students who have completed a master's degree
- Provide advanced specialization beyond master's degree knowledge

## 3. ADMISSION STANDARDS

The academic unit will establish specific admission standards subject to the following requirements.

### A. Educational Prerequisites

- **Post-Baccalaureate Programs:** Candidates must have completed at least a baccalaureate degree in pre-specified (listed) field(s). In most instances, the degree should be related to the certificate program.
- **Post-Master's Programs:** Candidates must have completed a master's degree in pre-specified (listed) field(s). In most instances, the master's degree should be related to the certificate program.

## **B. Exceptions**

Exceptions to the admission standards listed in the Graduate Catalog must be approved by both the admitting academic unit and the Graduate School.

## **4. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

All graduate certificate programs must adhere to the following guidelines:

### **A. Credit Hours**

- **Minimum:** 12 semester hours of graduate work
- **General Range:** 12-18 semester hours
- **Maximum:** Programs exceeding 30 semester hours will be approved only under unusual circumstances

### **B. Course Level Requirements**

- Courses at the 5000-level or above

### **C. Academic Standards**

- The course work comprising the certificate program must be an integrated and organized sequence of study
- With the exception of internship, practicum, independent projects or clinical work, all courses for certificates will be letter graded
- Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in all certificate course work
- No more than three semester hours with a grade of "C" will count towards a certificate
- A maximum of three semester hours of failed course work may be repeated
- Specific programs may set stricter grade requirements
- Students may not use transferred courses toward a certificate.
- Certificate hours may apply towards a degree and degree courses may apply toward a certificate unless the program specifically states otherwise in the catalog.
- Up to 6 hours may be double counted between certificates subject to academic unit's approval.
- Certificates must be completed within 6 years.

## **5. ADMINISTRATION OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

### **A. Program Identity**

The program, wherever it may be administratively housed, must be clearly identified and labeled as a certificate program. The intent of the program must be specified in the institution's literature.

## **B. Faculty Leadership**

A faculty director will be appointed for each certificate program. The director will be responsible for certifying the successful completion of the program's academic requirements. The Graduate School will arrange for recording the completed certificate on the student's transcript.

# **6. ASSESSMENT OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

## **A. Learning Outcomes**

All proposed certificate programs must state at least one measurable and meaningful program-level student learning outcome that indicates what students should know and/or be able to do by the end of/completion of the certificate program.

## **B. Assessment Measures**

All certificate programs must include at least two (2) assessment measures to assess student performance specific to the learning outcome(s), one of which must be a direct assessment of student learning.

## **C. Annual Reporting**

All certificate programs will prepare an annual Academic Institutional Improvement Report according to TWU institutional improvement guidelines.