

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

~~December 23, 2008~~ March 10, 2009 Revised

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Directors and Chairpersons

FROM: Linda O. Stanford   
Associate Provost for Academic Services

RE: **Redefinition of the Policies and Procedures for Graduate Certificates**

The University Committee on Curriculum (UCC) made and approved a recommendation to redefine the policies and procedures for graduate certificates. The recommendation was reviewed by the University Graduate Council (UGC) and approved at its May 5, 2008 meeting. The UGC submitted the following motion for consideration by Academic Council on September 23, 2008, which was approved:

### **Motion(s) for Academic Council:**

Redefine the policies and procedures for graduate certificates to clarify the various options for colleges and departments which will enable them to develop, propose, and offer a wider variety of graduate certificates.

Require a minimum of 9 credits for Type 2 graduate certificates.

### **Proposal:**

#### ***Benefits***

Clarifying the various options for colleges and departments enables them to develop, propose, and offer a wider variety of Graduate Certificates.

#### ***Impact***

It positively impacts graduate students at Michigan State University, as departments are now able to develop, propose, and offer a wider variety of transcriptable Graduate Certificates.

Certificate programs offered in the MSU College of Law will be converted into Type 2 Graduate Certificates.



**UNIVERSITY  
CURRICULUM  
and CATALOG**

Michigan State University  
176 Administration Building  
East Lansing, Michigan  
48824-1046

PH: 517/355-8420  
FAX: 517/353-1935

### ***Previous Policy***

Previously there were three types of Graduate Certificates available at Michigan State University. The first type is part of the degree program and is transcriptable. The second type is independent of a degree program, and is not transcriptable. The third type, is the “Certificate in College Teaching,” which is a University-wide certificate program that is not part of a degree program, but is included on the transcript.

### ***Rationale for Change***

In the past 15 years at Michigan State University, the interest in and demand for graduate certificate programs has increased significantly. This is consistent with national and international trends. The term “Graduate Certificate” and certain variants thereof are widely used in higher education and are generally accepted and understood graduate-level credentials. The issuance of a Graduate Certificate signifies that the certificate holder possesses specified skills or competency levels or has completed specified professional training.

Graduate certificates are constructed in selected fields as complements to degree programs or as distinct offerings, either with credit-bearing courses or non-credit bearing courses. MSU is expanding its ability to offer Graduate Certificates from three to four types. The chart on the following page compares aspects of each Graduate Certificate. The types are as follows:

**Type 1:** A Graduate Certificate Program that is directly related to the degree program as part of the degree program’s requirements. These programs are transcriptable and must be approved via academic governance. The completed program appears on the transcript as, “Certification for...”

**Type 2 (NEW):** A Graduate Certificate Program that is a distinct entity comprised of credit-bearing courses, not related to a degree program. These programs are transcriptable and must be approved via academic governance. The completed program appears on the transcript as, “Graduate Certificate Program in...”

**Type 3:** A Graduate Certificate Program that is a distinct entity not related to a degree program. The overall program is not transcriptable and so does not require approval via academic governance, only approval by the unit responsible for its administration. Only individual credit-bearing courses taken as part of these programs will appear on the transcript.

**Type 4 (REVISED):** A University-level Graduate Certificate Program. This option is the same as Option 2, “a distinct entity not related to a degree program which is transcriptable” but due to the content of the program is awarded at the University level, not at the College or Department level. Approval from University Graduate Council and The Graduate School is required. The current “Certificate in College Teaching” is an example of such a certificate program. The completed program appears on the transcript as, “University Graduate Certification in...”.

Graduate Certificate Programs					
Type	Category	Approval	On the Transcript As	SIS Level	New
Type 1:	"Directly related to a degree program"	UCC	"Certification for..."	GR	No
Type 2:	"Distinct entity not related to a degree program"	UCC	"Graduate Certificate Program in..."	<del>GR</del> <u>GR or GC</u>	Yes
Type 3:	"Distinct entity not related to a degree program"	Unit offering the program	Not Transcriptable	<del>GR</del> <u>GR, LE, etc.</u> (never GC)	No
Type 4:	University-level "distinct entity not related to a degree program"	Unit offering the program, UGC, and the Graduate School	"University Graduate Certification in..."	<del>GR</del> <u>GR</u>	Name change

#### View Academic Programs:

You may view *Academic Programs* for the updated language with regard to the approved changes.

Academic Program Terminology –

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=112#s507>

Graduate Certificate Programs –

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s2244>

Policy and Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs -

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/Read/UCC/gradcert.pdf>

Specific questions regarding Graduate Certificate programs may be directed to Doug McKenna, Associate Registrar for Certification Services, [mckenn62@msu.edu](mailto:mckenn62@msu.edu) or 3-7283.

cc: Kim Wilcox, Provost  
 Karen Klomparens, Associate Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School  
 Doug Estry, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
 Dugald McMillan, Acting University Registrar  
 Linda Good, Chairperson, University Committee on Curriculum  
 Doug McKenna, Associate Registrar for Certification Services  
 Traci Gulick, Associate Registrar for Academic Records  
 Joy Speas, University Curriculum Administrator