

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 32-19 (Voting Units: Full Senate)

Replace Senate Policy 411.1: Graduate Certificates

Submitter: Graduate School, on behalf of the Graduate Faculty Council

Background/Rationale

Michigan Tech's current policies on Graduate Certificates are more restrictive than our benchmark institutions and preclude innovations in graduate education such as microcredentials and stacking such microcredentials to achieve a macrocredential such as a Masters degree (coursework option). The policy proposed below will rectify this situation.

Proposal

A Graduate Certificate is a defined collection of courses which form a coherent program of study, which recognizes the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a given field. Graduate Certificates are an academic credential, awarded by Michigan Technological University, and will be granted to students who have completed the Graduate Certificate requirements. Graduate Certificates will be noted on official transcripts, and a certificate will be awarded to the student upon completion of the requirements. The Graduate School will administer the Certificate Programs.

Graduate Certificates approved prior to the adoption of this Policy are still governed by Senate Policy 411.1.

Specific requirements and procedures for Graduate Certificates are outlined below.

- I. Curricular Requirements
 1. Graduate certificates shall be a minimum of nine credits.
 2. Two thirds (2/3) of the credits in a Graduate Certificate must be at the graduate level (5000/6000). With appropriate justification from the proposing unit, the remaining credits (1/3) may be 3000 or 4000 level classes.
 3. Graduate certificates may not include co-op (UN 5000-5004) or research credits. Independent study courses which are specifically directed to the topic of the certificate (or a closely related area) may be included with appropriate justification from the proposing unit. Inclusion of an internship or practicum experience in a Graduate Certificate may be accomplished by proposing a dedicated course with specific, defined learning outcomes and must be administered through the appropriate unit. (Units proposing Graduate Certificates may consult the Graduate School for examples.)

4. A minimum of two thirds (2/3) of the credits used in a Graduate Certificate must be taken at Michigan Tech. A maximum of one third (1/3) credits may be transferred from another University. Credits used for a previously earned degree at another Institution or to satisfy requirements for a Michigan Tech undergraduate degree may not be applied towards a Graduate Certificate. (Students who earn a Masters degree at Michigan Tech and continue in a PhD program at Michigan Tech, may apply credits from the Masters degree to satisfy requirements for a Graduate Certificate earned in the PhD program. Credits which are double counted for undergraduate and Masters degrees as part of an accelerated Masters program may be used to satisfy requirements of a Graduate Certificate.)
5. To earn a Graduate Certificate, the cumulative grade point average for all courses used to satisfy its requirements must be a B (3.0) or better. All grades for certificate courses must be a C (2.0) or higher. More stringent requirements may be imposed by units proposing Graduate Certificates.
6. All credits in a Graduate Certificate earned at Michigan Tech may be used to satisfy the requirements in a Masters or PhD program. Credits from multiple Graduate Certificates earned at Michigan Tech may be stacked to satisfy requirements of a Masters or PhD.
7. One third (1/3) of the credits for a Graduate Certificate may be used to satisfy requirements for other Graduate Certificates earned at Michigan Tech. Two thirds (2/3) of the credits for a Graduate Certificate may not be used to satisfy requirements for any other Graduate Certificate. As noted above, all credits for a Certificate may be used to satisfy requirements for a Masters or PhD.
8. All Graduate Certificates must have clearly defined and articulated Learning Outcomes with appropriate assessment plans. Graduate Certificates must be sufficiently distinct in their course structure so as to ensure clearly differentiated Learning Outcomes.

II. Admission and Completion

1. Applicants to a Graduate Certificate program must have a Bachelors degree or equivalent. Individual Graduate Certificate programs may have additional admission requirements.
2. Michigan Tech degree-seeking graduate students who wish to earn a Graduate Certificate must be enrolled in a degree program in the semester they complete their Graduate Certificate, and submit the appropriate Degree schedule, available through the Graduate School. Michigan Tech degree-seeking graduate students who wish to earn a Graduate Certificate should declare their intent to do so as soon as is possible.
3. Non-degree seeking students who earn Michigan Tech credits prior to formal admission to a Graduate Certificate program can apply those credits to satisfy up to 1/3 of the credit requirements for the certificate. Non-degree seeking students should update their

enrollment to certificate-seeking prior to earning more than 1/3 of the coursework credits required for the certificate. If all credits to be counted toward a Graduate Certificate are earned in a single semester, the students must apply prior to earning any of the credits.

4. All credits used to satisfy the requirements for a Graduate Certificate must have been earned in the five years previous to the date on which the certificate is awarded.

III. Management of the Graduate Certificate Programs

1. The Learning Outcomes for all Graduate Certificate programs will be assessed annually. In addition to the annual assessment of Learning Outcomes, all certificate programs will be associated with a department and reviewed during that department's scheduled internal and external academic program/department reviews.
2. Any Graduate Certificate program that has no current students and has not awarded a certificate in the previous five years will be shelved. The program may be continued if a case is made through the approvals process.