GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

1. Definition

A graduate certificate program is a related cluster of credit bearing graduate courses that constitutes a coherent body of study within a discipline or set of related disciplines.

2. Purpose

A graduate certificate program must reflect the educational mission of The University of Central Missouri. The purpose of a graduate certificate program is to provide students with a concentrated, cohesive area of study. Successful completion should help participants achieve specified learning objectives and competencies in a defined field of study. It is designed to increase the education of matriculated graduate students or to provide continuing education to graduate non-degree seeking students.

3. Curriculum

A graduate certificate program requires a minimum of twelve and a maximum of twenty-one graduate credit hours unless it meets state/accrediting body guidelines/criteria. At least 6 hours of the graduate coursework must be at the 5000 level or above.

All courses must be taken for an earned grade of A, B, C, D, or F. No graduate course may be taken for Pass/Fail credit. Completion of the certificate program requires a graduate GPA of 3.0 in the certificate program with no grade below a C.

Graduate certificate courses cannot be satisfied by life experience or previous work experience. Upon approval by the department and Graduate School, a student may transfer a maximum of fifty percent of the required hours of graduate credit from another institution to a graduate certificate program. Requirements for transfer credit include:

- Course must have been taken for graduate credit
- Course must have been taken at an accredited institution recognized by Central that offers a master’s degree
- Course must be applicable toward a graduate degree at the University granting the credit
- Course must not have been used to satisfy requirements for a degree granted by another institution
- Course must reflect a grade of B or higher
- The department and The Graduate School must approve the transfer credit.

All applicable policies of The Graduate School apply to students enrolled in graduate certificate programs. Please see The Graduate Catalog for all policies.
4. Instructors

Graduate certificate program courses will be taught by graduate faculty members of the University.

5. Student Admission Process

Students interested in a graduate certificate program must meet the following admission criteria:

- Completion of an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution recognized by the University of Central Missouri
- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.0.
- A cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 on coursework taken at Central.

Departments may impose additional admission requirements for certificate programs. All course prerequisites must be met unless waived by the department.

All students wishing to pursue a graduate certificate must submit an application for a graduate certificate and pay the application fee required of all non-degree seeking students.

A student who also wishes to seek admission to a degree program simultaneously or at a later date must file an application for admission to The Graduate School and pay the required application fee.

A student may not retroactively apply for admission to a graduate certificate program and use courses from a degree already awarded by Central.

Completion of a graduate certificate does not guarantee admission into a graduate degree program.

Students who have been placed on academic probation are not eligible to enroll in a certificate program.

Federal regulations require international students to be in a degree program. Admission into a graduate certificate program does not meet student visa requirements and students will not be issued an I-20 for certificate programs alone. However, they may enroll in a degree program and a certificate program concurrently.

6. Financial Aid

Students in certificate programs are not eligible for graduate assistantships unless they are also accepted into a degree program. In some circumstances, students may be eligible for federal financial aid for a certificate program. Eligibility for federal financial aid is
determined by the Student Financial Assistance office. Scholarships offered through The Graduate School are available only to degree seeking students.

7. Graduate Certificate Completion

The Graduate School requires that a student must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the certificate program with no grade below a C in the cluster of courses required for the certificate.

The cluster of courses must be completed within four years.

At the beginning of the semester when the student will complete the requirements for a graduate certificate, the student will submit a Graduate Certificate Completion Form to the department. Once the certificate/graduate program coordinator has verified the student has/will complete all requirements for the certificate, he/she shall forward the form to The Graduate School for approval. It is the responsibility of the department to verify any remaining requirements and note them on the form.

The Graduate School will cause the student’s transcript to be updated to reflect completion of the certificate program and a certificate to be mailed by the Registrar.

There is no graduation process for any graduate certificate. Commencement ceremonies are reserved for degree programs.

8. Transcripts

The name of the certificate earned and the grades of participants in a graduate certificate program shall be recorded on a permanent transcript stored at the University.