

Comparison of Graduate Program Options, Concurrent Degrees, Certificate, and New Degree Programs

The development of graduate program options, certificates, concurrent degrees and new degree programs all require the approval of the Graduate School. This guide is intended to help you distinguish between the options and determine the process and requirements for approval. Printer friendly version click [here](#) (pdf).

	• Program Option	• Graduate Certificate*	• Concurrent Degree**	• New Degree
	• details	• details	• details	• details
• Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “Program option” is also known as a track, pathway, specialization, concentration, or area of emphasis. • An area of study that is generally less than one-half of the total credits needed for the upper-division major or graduate program. An option, track, or pathway can be distinguished from a new degree in that full designation of the degree title—including level, type, and major—does not change when a new option is added. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs of study that normally require less than one-quarter of the credits required for a degree program at a similar level (with a minimum of 15 credits). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curriculum established by two participating departments resulting in either two graduate degrees or a graduate and a professional degree. Graduate School policy permits a student to proceed in a coordinated way toward sequential completion of both degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any proposed degree which differs from any other offered by the proposing department or unit on one or more of the three degree title specifications (level, type, or major). A program leading to a new degree (as defined above), even if constituted entirely of existing courses, requires review and approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB).
• Enrollment Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment depends on agreements made between academic units, but usually program options are for students in closely related fields. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate, professional, or graduate non-matriculated student status is required for admission to graduate certificate programs. • In addition, enrollment depends on how the certificate program is structured, but certificate programs are usually open to students from varying departments, programs, or interest areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are admitted and enrolled in both programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are admitted and enrolled per program guidelines.
• How Recognition is Given	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The option, track, or pathway is noted on the official transcript but not on the diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful completion of the program results in a certificate and notation of the certificate on the official transcript. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student receives 2 separate degrees, noted on both the transcript and the diploma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student receives masters or doctorate.
• Approval Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary meeting to discuss with Academic Programs staff (Optional). • Office of Academic Programs reviews draft and provides suggestions for revisions. • Department/Unit submits revised proposal to Academic Programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary meeting to discuss with Academic Programs staff (Optional). • Office of Academic Programs reviews draft and provides suggestions for revisions. • Department/Unit submits revised proposal to Academic Programs. • Administrative review within the Graduate School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary meeting to discuss with Academic Programs staff (Optional). • Office of Academic Programs reviews draft and provides suggestions for revisions. • Department/Unit submits revised proposal to Academic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary meeting to discuss with Academic Programs staff (Optional). • Office of Academic Programs reviews draft and provides suggestions for revisions. • Department/Unit submits revised proposal to Academic Programs. • Submission of proposal with approval of the College/Dean.

	• Program Option	• Graduate Certificate*	• Concurrent Degree**	• New Degree
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative review within the Graduate School. • Dean of the Graduate School approves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate School Council review. • Board of Regents review & approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs. • Administrative review within the Graduate School. • Dean of the Graduate School approves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Review Committee. • Written comments from external reviewers are required; a site visit is scheduled if appropriate. • Review Committee submits report. • Unit response to report. • Graduate School Council review. • HECB review & approval. • Board of Regents review & approval.
• Subsequent Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in each unit's program review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in each unit's program review if possible or reviewed independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in each unit's program review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed in 5 years.
• Minimum Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must include an area of study that is generally less than one-half of the total credits needed for the upper-division major or graduate program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There must be a clearly defined and published admission process through which participants identify themselves as certificate students before fulfilling the requirements. • A minimum of 15 student credit hours, nine of which must be earned in courses numbered 500 and above. • In addition, 9 student credit hours must be earned in graded courses. • Certificate programs for matriculated graduate students cannot be simply a subset of courses required for their degree. • Programs for matriculated students must add significant breadth to degree requirements. • The program director and core faculty must be members of the Graduate Faculty, and courses must be taught by instructors holding UW appointments. • Successful completion requires a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above for courses required for the Certificate and a grade of 2.7 or above for each course counted toward the Certificate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires completion of all requirements for both graduate degrees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must involve intensive study in the major field, preparation in the use and conduct of research, and/or a field or internship experience; professional programs generally prepare individuals for professional fields (e.g., law, medicine). • The program director and core faculty must be members of the Graduate Faculty, and courses must be taught by instructors holding UW appointments. • Masters Degree Requirements • Ph.D. Requirements
• Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nanotechnology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Trade, Transportation, & Logistics (GTTL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Affairs MPA/Forest Resources MS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built Environment Ph.D.

* UW Educational Outreach also offers certificate programs that are not affiliated with a graduate program and therefore are not *graduate* certificates.

**There is an Informal Concurrent Degree option for students choosing to pursue two degrees from different departments simultaneously. These programs have not been approved as formal concurrent programs, but students complete the same requirements as in the formal concurrent programs. Students choosing this option must complete an [Informal Concurrent Degree Application](#). It is available on-line or from the Graduate Student Services Office, G1 Communications. For more information, please see: <http://www.grad.washington.edu/stsv/gradpol2.htm>.