

3.13 Graduate Certificate Programs

A. Definition

A Graduate Certificate Program (GCP) is a prescribed set of related graduate-level academic courses, designed by an academic department or program. To receive a certificate, non-degree-seeking students must submit an application and fee through the Graduate School and obtain admission, whereas enrolled graduate students are required to submit the Graduate Certificate Plan Entry form. Certificates cannot be conferred retroactively for students not continuously enrolled in a graduate degree program when the required coursework was completed. Upon completion, the GCP will be designated on the student's transcript and the student shall receive a certificate from Registration and Records entitled "Graduate Certificate in..." Students enrolled in graduate certificate programs may be eligible for federal financial aid. Contact the Financial Aid Office (<https://online-distance.ncsu.edu/cost/financial-aid/>) for more information.

B. Minimum Requirements for Graduate Certificate Programs

1. All students enrolled in a GCP must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education; the transcript of this degree indicating conferral date must be submitted to the Graduate School.
2. All GCP coursework must be taken at NC State. **Transfer credit from other institutions is not allowed.**
3. The minimum number of credits required for a GCP is 12.
4. For most GCP, required courses must be regular graduate-level academic courses; 400-level courses may only be used for those certificates where a course at that level has been approved by the Administrative Board as part of the GCP's approval process.
5. All courses should be letter graded, although three credits of S/U-graded coursework can be used where the courses are relevant to the certificate and S/U is the only grading option.
6. GCP students do not have the option of taking the courses for "credit only" if they intend for the course to be part of their GCP.
7. To receive a Graduate Certificate, a student must have a minimum 3.000 grade point average (GPA) on all certificate coursework. All grades on courses taken towards the certificate program in courses numbered 400 and above are included in the GPA.
8. A minimum grade of a C- is required to receive certificate credit for a course, although departments/programs may require a higher minimum and the overall GPA requirement must still be maintained.
9. GCPs must be completed within four years, beginning with the date the student commences courses applicable to the GCP, unless a more restrictive time limit has been established by the program or academic college/school.
10. Students can obtain multiple certificates from NC State. Each certificate must have at least nine credit hours that are unique to it; see Section C for certificates taken by students in a degree program.

C. Graduate Certificates and Graduate Degree Program

1. Internal and Shared Credit
 - a. Graduate certificate courses taken while enrolled in a degree program may be double-counted with the degree courses to the extent that the courses unique to the degree remains eighteen hours for a master's or thirty-six hours for a doctorate.
 - b. Interinstitutional courses count as NC State courses.
 - c. Certificate and graduate minor coursework shall not be shared, i.e., a student getting a minor using a set of coursework may not also get a certificate using that same coursework.
2. Transferring Certificate Coursework into a Degree Program
 - a. Up to 12 hours of certificate credit taken prior to enrollment in an NC State master's or doctoral degree program may be transferred into that degree program so long as eighteen hours remain unique to the master's and thirty-six hours to the doctorate.