Graduate Certificate Programs
General Guidelines and Formal Review Processes

An academic program organizes courses and related activities for the achievement of specific learning outcomes. Academic programs are of several levels (such as undergraduate, graduate and professional) and types (including degrees, majors, minors, certificates, etc.).

This document presents guidelines for the development, submission, and review of graduate certificate programs at Butler University, including new certificate program initiatives, certificate program modifications, and certificate program terminations. It encourages a collaborative process engaging the expertise of faculty, departments, colleges, Faculty Senate, and academic administrative leadership to ensure substantive and sustainable graduate certificate offerings at Butler.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES
A post-baccalaureate or post-master’s certificate program is a program of study at the graduate level offered apart from a graduate degree; however, courses in a graduate certificate program may be applied toward a graduate degree program. A minimum of 9 semester credit hours at the graduate level must be earned for certificate completion.

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1. Ideas for new academic programs, such as graduate certificates, come from many sources. Faculty are encouraged to work with their departments and colleges and other Butler offices in identifying these opportunities. The elements below should be considered in assessing a certificate program’s viability and may assist in developing information required in the proposal:

   • Are the program’s goals and student learning outcomes clear?
   • Is the program consistent with the mission and strategic plan of the University?
   • Is the program consistent with the strengths and core competencies of the department?
   • Can the department offer this program within existing resources while maintaining its current curricular responsibilities?
   • Does the program involve other departments, or colleges that support this new initiative?
   • Is the program free from duplication or competition with a current or planned program within the University?
   • Does the program have characteristics that are distinctive from similar programs offered by competitor institutions?
   • What is your timeline for submission, review, and preferred implementation of the certificate program?

2. The following factors should be considered in program design, as they will affect graduate certificate program eligibility for federal financial aid and timing of program implementation. Completion of all steps may require as much as 18 months.

   • A new certificate program that includes 50% or more new courses may require review by the Higher Learning Commission prior to final approval and implementation.
While individual courses may be of varied length, graduate certificate programs must require at least 10 weeks of student enrollment and must include ‘regular and substantive interaction between student and instructor.’ (From Federal Student Aid Handbook, 2013-14)

For students to receive federal financial aid, certain documents must be processed prior to program implementation. Additional information about federal reporting requirements for “Gainful Employment” which must be met for all new, aid-eligible stand-alone certificate programs is available in the Appendix. The required documentation must be submitted to the Financial Aid office as soon as possible after the program has received Butler approval.

3. For the certificate program to be compatible with existing Butler administrative and student systems, graduate certificate programs should be designed so that:

- Start and stop dates of classes which fit within the existing academic calendar structure (16 week terms in the academic year; 7 week terms in the summer. Parts of term, such as 8 week courses with a 16 week term, are workable. Refund and Drop/Add dates derived from established term/parts of term
- Billing dates and payment derived from established term/parts of term
- Students are admitted to the program through regular channels, such as non-degree.

4. Note: when exploring certificate program marketability, enrollment capacity, resource needs and impacts, please consult colleagues in Enrollment Management and/or Student Financial Aid, Butler Libraries, the Center for Academic Technology, and Marketing and Communications.

NEW GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM PROPOSALS

A new graduate certificate program submission form should be completed by the department submitting the proposal; the proposal itself (elements described below) and other supporting documentation should be attached. Review proceeds in several stages:

- **Provost’s Advisory Council** (PAC) for basic program review and to assess opportunities for cross-college collaborations, viability and sustainability, and resource and budget impact, and any program interconnections/redundancy.

- **University Curriculum Committee/Faculty Senate** for curricular review.

- **Provost/VPAA** for final review and academic administrative implementation

**Required Proposal Elements:**

1. **General information**
   a) New Graduate Certificate Submission Form (link)
   b) Executive summary: A brief overview of the program, highlighting reasons for the program, program goals, and description of resource requirements (2 pg. max.)
2. Curricular Review Documents (For UCC/FS review and PAC information)
   a) Program Description consisting of the following elements:
      • Goals of the proposed program.
      • Rationale for instituting this program.
      • How program advances the mission and strategic goals of university and college or school.
      • Curricular and other requirements students must meet.
      • List of courses to be offered in the program, indicating which currently exist and those which must be added to curriculum.
      • Educational goals and student learning outcomes.
      • How the new program incorporates aspects of Butler distinctive learning emphases (experiential learning, community engagement, internship opportunities, and undergraduate research).
      • Constituency served/intended student market.
      • Time line and scheduling for the new program initiation.
      • Impact on existing curriculum, accreditation.
      • List of current faculty who will be teaching in this new certificate program.
      • Describe the additional resources, if any, that are needed to offer this new degree program.
      • Special needs associated with program.
      • Indicate if off campus site(s), hybrid, or online pedagogies will be used to teach associated program courses.
      • Indicate courses external to department offering the program.

   Programs utilizing courses offered by other departments or colleges will include in the proposal a letter(s) from the department chair(s) or college dean(s) that support inclusion of their course(s) for the new program and identify resource implications

   b) Assessment Plan
      All new graduate certificate program proposals will include an assessment plan.
      Assistance in developing student learning outcomes and outcome assessment can be obtained by contacting an associate dean of the respective college or the Office for Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA).

      Expected elements of an assessment plan include:
      • Student learning outcomes.
      • Direct and indirect methods of measurement of student outcomes.
      • Performance indicators and/or thresholds.
      • Process by which regular measurement will be conducted, analyzed and shared within the department.
      • Description of how evaluation information will be used to make program changes.
      • Projected identifying indicators of program quality to be achieved within five years.

3. Academic Administrative Review Documents (for Provost’s Advisory Council)
   a) If no University new resources nor additional space nor instructional supports are required to offer the proposed certificate program, the following are required in lieu of the more detailed analysis described in part b) below:
      • A statement that no new resources are needed.
      • Enrollment projections for the initial five years must be included.
      • Impact on other programs and courses external to the department
b) **New graduate certificate programs requiring new resources, reallocation of resources, or additional space will include in written detail for all sections listed below:**

1) **Market Demand and Enrollment Analysis**

The unit creating a new certificate program will develop a baseline market demand and enrollment impact analysis. Cover the following basic market-related information:

- Describe the **target market of students** intended to be serviced by the new program (age, qualifications, career goals, disciplines, etc.)
- List and explain the various external and internal factors that suggest adequate **demand** for this program.
- Address **competitive programs** that seek to serve the same target market of students and what their enrollment performance has been.
- Suggest how the proposed program is **distinctive** from competing programs (e.g., quality, geography, financial aid, etc.).
- Address how the new program will affect enrollment in existing programs and offering of current courses, if applicable. Where programs in other colleges are impacted, statements of support from the respective dean will be included.
- Document the extent of student demand for the proposed program. Include data collected.

2) **Business Analysis**

A business analysis summary will be submitted which addresses all areas of resource impact listed below that are pertinent to the proposed program:

- Faculty hiring and start-up costs
- Other administrative resources (special admission or registrar procedures), etc.
- Additional space requirements and renovation cost
- Academic technology needs
- Library resources
- Courses external to department offering the program.
  
  *Programs utilizing courses offered by other departments or colleges must include in the proposal a letter(s) from the department chair(s) or college dean(s) that support inclusion of their course(s) for the new program and identify resource implications*
- Advertising and promotional material

4. **Sunset Clause**

The new certificate program, if approved, will be reviewed within 5 years of its implementation; among those factors considered will be achievement of student learning outcomes, enrollment goals, revenue targets, and contributions to University and college strategic considerations. Programs which are deemed unsuccessful may be terminated.
APPENDIX 1 : Department of Education Federal Reporting Requirements Guide

In order to be federal aid eligible, all new graduate certificate programs must lead to Gainful Employment (GE) in a recognized occupation (in the US Standard Occupational Classification) and agree to federal reporting regimens. Graduate certificate programs must be 10 weeks or greater in length and include ‘regular and substantive interaction between student and instructor.’ (From Federal Student Aid Handbook, 2013-14)

The Office of Financial Aid will work with the sponsoring department to obtain federal aid approval for the graduate certificate program. The parameters of this effort are:

- Butler University must provide notification to the U. S. Department of Education (DOE) at least 90 days prior to the first day of class.

- The institution must have HLC approval for the certificate program or documentation that the program is included in current accreditation.

- If the institution does not give notice at least 90 days before the first day of class, it must wait for DOE approval before students enrolled in the new GE program may receive funds. Students must be aware that the institution has not received the DOE’s approval for the program to be eligible for federal student aid.

- An institution’s notification to the DOE of its intent to offer a new GE Program must include information to support the institution’s determination of the need for the program, as required by the regulations at 34 CFR 600.20(d)(2). Butler’s Office of Financial Aid office provides this notification, but must be provided the information below by the sponsoring department or college.

The information requested below must be submitted to the Director of the Office of Financial Aid for all stand-alone graduate certificate programs seeking federal aid eligibility. This may be in the form of the program documentation submitted for University approval. The institution must retain documents that support development and approval of the program for review or submission to the U.S. Department of Education upon request.

- Program Name(s) and Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code(s) supported by this program. CIP code can be obtained by contacting OIRA.

- Listing of all occupations by name and SOC code (US Bureau of Labor & Statistics Standard Occupational Classification) that the student will be prepared to enter. SOC codes may be obtained using the CIP code via O*NET OnLine at www.onetonline.org/crosswalk.

- Narrative description of how the institution determined the need for the program. For example, describe what need this program will address and how the institution became aware of that need. If the program will be offered in connection with, or in response to, an initiative by a governmental entity, provide details of that initiative.

- Narrative description of how the program was designed to meet local, regional, or national market needs. For example, indicate if Bureau of Labor Statistics data or State labor data systems
information was used, and/or if State, regional, or local workforce agencies were consulted. Include how the course content, program length, academic level, admission requirements, and prerequisites were decided; including information received from potential employers about course content; and information regarding the target students and employers.

- Narrative description of any wage analysis the institution may have performed, including any consideration of Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data related to the new program. The institution must retain copies of analysis documents for review and submission to the Department upon request. Helpful resources may be the Bureau of Labor and Statistics Occupation Outlook Handbook [www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh) and O*Net OnLine [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org).

- Narrative description of how the program was reviewed or approved by, or developed in conjunction with, one or more of the following:
  - Business advisory committees
  - Program integrity boards
  - Public or private oversight or regulatory agencies
  - Businesses that would likely employ graduates of the program

  For example, describe the steps taken to develop the program including relevant details of any proposals, correspondence generated, and/or process used to evaluate the program.

- Scheduling information:
  - The first day or term the program was or will be offered by the institution
  - The day or term financial aid funds (Title IV) are desired to be available to students enrolled in the program
  - Program academic calendar including in which term(s) students can begin program
  - Explicit confirmation that the program is conforming to traditional term scheduling parameters and structure

- Documentation the program has been approved by the institution’s accrediting agency or is otherwise included in the institution’s accreditation.

**Gainful Employment (GE) reporting requirements**

The sponsoring department must work with the Office of Financial Aid to ensure these statistics are calculated and disseminated to meet Federal regulations. Contact the Director of the Office of Financial Aid upon University program approval for further direction.

- Listing all occupations by name and SOC code (US Bureau of Labor & Statistics Standard Occupational Classification) that the student will be prepared to enter
- Normal time to complete program
- On-time graduation rates for completer
- Tuition, fees, room and board, and books and supplies
- Placement rate for completers
- Median loan debt
- Links to online occupational profiles

Appendix 1 is correct at time of publication September, 2014 and subject to change to meet Federal regulations.