

## Stackable Graduate Certificate Programs

### Additional Considerations for Non-Degree-seeking Students

- Seeking Admission to a Degree-Seeking Program: A graduate non-degree-seeking student who later wishes to seek a graduate degree must meet the **requirements for admission**, submit all required materials and items by the program's deadline, and pay the usual application fee.
  
- Limits on Employment and Financial Aid: Non-degree-seeking students are ineligible to hold graduate student academic appointments including teaching assistants, assistant instructors, graduate research assistants, academic assistants, assistants (graduate), or tutors (graduate). In addition, non-degree-seeking students who are admitted to the University for the purpose of earning a stackable graduate certificate will not be eligible to receive federal financial aid.
  
- Using Certificate Coursework Taken in Non-Degree Status To Satisfy Requirements of a Graduate Degree: Graduate School policy normally allows a maximum of 6 credit hours of graduate coursework taken in non-degree status to be applied to graduate degree requirements. Upon request and recommendation of a Graduate Studies Committee, the Graduate School will allow the greater of 18 credit hours or 50% of the total hours required for a degree to be satisfied with coursework completed for a graduate certificate while the student was enrolled in the non-degree status, inclusive of:
  - a. Transfer credits (maximum of 6 credits hours),
  - b. Undergraduate credit hours reserved for graduate credit (maximum of 12 credits), and
  - c. Credits hours accrued as a non-degree seeking student.

In other words:

{the cumulative sum of transfers credits }+ {undergraduate credit reserved for graduate credit} + {credit hours accrued as a non-degree seeking certificate student} ≤ 18 credit hours or 50% of the total hours required for a degree.

Example: If a student comes into a 48-hour MA degree program with 3 transfer hours and 0 undergraduate hours, up to 21 hours of credit earned as a non-degree-seeking certificate student may be applied to the program of work for the student's degree, if approved by the appropriate GSC.

This represents a *de facto* limit of the "stackability" of coursework taken in a non-degree certificate (plus any transfer credits or reserved credits) toward a regular degree program. This rule ensures that an appropriate number of credit hours are earned while a student is enrolled as a degree-seeking student.

The program-based exception is available only to students who are formally admitted to graduate degree-seeking status after completing requirements of a graduate certificate program. This exception will be applied at the time of degree certification and will not impact students who do not complete degree requirements.

If later admitted to graduate degree-seeking status, students who utilize certificate coursework completed in non-degree seeking status to satisfy graduate degree requirements will be limited by the "six year" rule (i.e., no courses on the degree program of work older than 6 years may be counted toward the new degree program)