MEMORANDUM

TO: Amy Nielsen, Executive Secretary
Faculty Senate

FROM: Becky Bitter, Registrar’s Office

FOR: Academic Affairs Committee and Graduate Studies Committee

DATE: 21 March 2018

SUBJECT: Proposal to Establish New Revise Rule 119, Requirements for Official Certificates

At their meetings on March 20, 2018, AAC and GSC approved a proposal to establish new Rule 119, Requirements for Official Certificates. While the academic regulations contain specific information about earning undergraduate and graduate degrees, the requirements to earn official certificates at both the levels have not been included in the rules.

The following new rule represents a synthesis of the requirements for undergraduate and graduate certificates that were approved at the Faculty Senate on February 1, 2001 (for undergraduate certificates), and on February 12, 2004 (for the revised requirements for graduate certificates).

The Registrar’s Office and the Graduate School are respectfully requesting that the following rule be added so that basic requirements for official certificates are readily available.

119. REQUIREMENTS FOR OFFICIAL CERTIFICATES

Official certificates generally represent a body of coursework that demonstrates proficiency in a subset of skills or knowledge that have useful application in a variety of professions. They are formally recognized by the university and convey that students have developed mastery of course material.

An officially recognized certificate is a document issued by WSU, displaying the WSU seal and president’s signature, which is issued to students who have completed a course of study that meets the guidelines outlined below and has been approved by the Faculty Senate. Officially recorded certificates also appear on the WSU academic transcript.

For certificate completion, the following criteria apply:

Undergraduate Certificates:

1. Admission and Certification requirements: Students who are admitted to the university must be certified by the academic unit to seek an official certificate. Not all undergraduate certificates are available on all campuses. The requirements for each certificate, including specific certification criteria, are listed in the catalog under the unit offering the certificate.

2. Credit hours: A minimum number of 15 credit hours is required, with the exact number specified by the academic unit offering the certificate.
3. **Transfer credits:** The maximum number of credit hours earned at other institutions that may apply towards a particular WSU certificate shall not exceed ¼ of the total number of credit hours required for the certificate. Acceptance of particular courses from other institutions for WSU certificate credit will be at the discretion of the department or program offering the certificate.

4. **Grading:** The number of credit hours that students may elect to take Pass/Fail shall not exceed one-fourth of the total number of credit hours required for the certificate.

5. **GPA requirement for completion:** The minimum cumulative GPA based on all graded coursework required to earn the certificate is 2.0.

6. **Accumulation of credits towards undergraduate degree:** Credit hours earned in certificate program may be applied toward a degree.

7. **Application for the undergraduate certificate:** Students may apply for the certificate as soon as they are certified by the academic unit offering the certificate. The academic unit is responsible for checking that all requirements are met. Upon successful completion of the requirements and payment of the certificate fee, the certificate will be conferred following the same schedule as is used for undergraduate degree conferral (see rule 125). Once conferred, the certificate is posted to the official WSU transcript and an official certificate is mailed to the student. Students apply online at myWSU.edu under apply to graduate.

**Graduate Certificates:**

1. **Requirements for the Graduate Certificate:** vary but typically consist of 9 to 12 credits of graded coursework. Once admitted as a part-time graduate certificate student, the student can take graduate certificate courses and/or graduate courses but must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Students currently enrolled in regular graduate degree programs (master’s or doctoral) may concurrently enroll in graduate certificate programs with the approval of their committee.

2. **To qualify as a formal graduate certificate program,** the program must conform to existing Graduate School academic standards and to existing policies outlined for graduate degree programs, including Faculty Senate approval and the following:
   a) Graduate certificate programs must use approved undergraduate or graduate coursework, with no more than one-third of the coursework being at the undergraduate (400) level.
   b) Student may be admitted to the Graduate School as a Graduate Certificate Student and have completed all appropriate prerequisite classes to take graduate coursework.
   c) Courses graded S/F cannot be used toward major or supporting work for any degree program.
   d) The maximum time allowed for completion of a certificate is 6 years from the beginning date of the earliest course applied toward the certificate. Students may request an extension of this time as described in the Graduate School’s Policies and Procedures Manual Chapter 6, Section F.
   e) A certificate fee is assessed at the time of completion of the certificate. The student must be enrolled the semester in which he/she applies for a graduate certificate.

At this time, Faculty Senate review and approval is recommended, to be effective fall 2018.