



Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs
Preliminary Criteria for Review

DRAFT: November 23, 2021

A certificate is a prescribed set of courses leading to a college-approved credential that is focused on a defined set of skills or subject expertise. Westmont College will offer a judicious selection of post-baccalaureate certificates that are designed to provide intellectual enrichment and the development of a coherent set of skills and aptitudes. Certificates are not degrees, are usually completed in one year or less, and generally consist of 20-32 units of coursework. A certificate issued with the Westmont seal indicates that the student has successfully achieved the objectives of the program. Students must earn a minimum 2.0 grade point average to receive a certificate.

Certificates must be approved by the Academic Senate and by the full faculty via Faculty Meeting and shall meet the following criteria:

- Consistency with the mission of the college.
- The program must reflect and draw upon the liberal arts commitment of the college, primarily in its emphasis on qualities such as interdisciplinary study, civil discourse, and critical and creative thinking.
- The program must engage students in exploring the relationship of Christian thought and practice to the subjects of the certificate.
- Each course must have the academic rigor of upper-division curricula.
- Each course must have 1-3 distinct learning outcomes and a means of measuring students' achievement of those outcomes.
- Each certificate must have an assessment plan outlined in the proposal for evaluating educational effectiveness.
- While it may be necessary to employ some Westmont-approved part-time professors to teach certain courses, certificate courses should generally be taught by full-time Westmont professors so as to preserve the distinctively Westmont nature of the program.

The Academic Senate will reserve the right to ask ~~particular~~ the relevant academic departments to review and provide input regarding courses of a proposed certificate that fit into the department's disciplinary scope. Given the possibility that certificates may change the workload

or course rotation of faculty, department chairs and relevant department members should be consulted in the development of certificate program proposals.

Some additional comments (by Rick Ostrander)

WASC approves particular certificate proposals (such as the one that had been developed by Westmont San Francisco) rather than certificates in general. Thus, if and when Religious Studies has a specific certificate program to propose, that will need approval not only from Academic Senate/Faculty Meeting, but also from WASC. In the meantime, it would seem that this document provides sufficient guidance to departments seeking to develop post-baccalaureate certificates that are in alignment with Westmont's institutional commitments.

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