



## Certificate and Diploma Guidelines



## University of Saskatchewan Certificates and Diplomas

Certificate and diploma programs have become increasingly recognized for their ability to create exceptional learning opportunities. These programs satisfy a variety of functions at the U of S, including providing students with specialized and professional skills, encouraging postgraduate study, providing opportunities to ladder into degree programming, facilitating unique interdisciplinary opportunities, and generally encouraging a population of life-long learners. While they share characteristics with minors and concentrations, certificates and diplomas offer unique opportunities to enrich degree programming.

Certificates and diplomas fit into the curricular landscape, as follows:

**Certificate programs** offer students an opportunity to acknowledge their efforts in a focused area of study. Often including a capstone course, they signify the attainment of a distinct skill set and, with the exception of those offered at the community level, are awarded at the U of S Convocation Ceremony. They may be completed alongside degree programs, or as stand-alone programs.

**Diploma programs** also provide students with education in a focused area, but they normally require more rigorous study than certificates. Typically requiring two years of study, these programs are always offered at the degree level, are presented at the U of S Convocation Ceremony, and often ladder into degree programs. They are often completed as stand-alone programs.

**Concentrations** allow students to cultivate expertise and specialized training in one aspect of their major field of study. In contrast to certificates and diplomas, these programs must be completed alongside a degree program. They are not awarded at the U of S Convocation Ceremony, but are acknowledged on transcripts.

**Minors** signify a student's interest in a field of study that may or may not be related to their major field of study. These programs typically require students to complete a range of 18 to 24 credit units in the minor field of study, but generally do not require completion of a capstone course. Students must complete minors alongside their degree programs. While they are not awarded at the U of S Convocation Ceremony, they are acknowledged on transcripts.



## Certificate and Diploma Guidelines

**Contact:** Registrarial Services

**Approval:** University Council, November 16, 2017

This document outlines terminology, policies, and key programmatic features associated with certificate and diploma programs at the U of S. Taken together, these components are intended to function as a set of guidelines, rather than as a prescriptive template. Faculty are encouraged to consider this information as they develop certificate and diploma programs that enhance their degree programming and satisfy the unique needs of their colleges.

The U of S offers the following types of certificate and diploma programs:

**Degree Level Certificate** Under the authority of University Council and the Academic Programs Committee, these certificates signify the completion of a recognized program of degree-level courses and imply the attainment of a degree-level standard of proficiency, achievement, or promotion. These programs may be completed alongside a degree program, or as a stand-alone program. Programs in this category are classified as follows:

- Certificate (Cert.)
- Post-Degree Certificate (P.D.C.)
- Postgraduate Degree Specialization Certificates (P.G.D.S.C.)

**Degree Level Diploma** Under the authority of University Council and the Academic Programs Committee, these programs include degree-level courses, and completion implies the attainment of a university-level standard of achievement which is fully transferable into certain degree-level programs.

- Diploma (Dipl.)
- Postgraduate Diplomas (P.G.D.)

**Non-Degree Level Certificate** These programs are approved by the vice-president academic & provost following consultation with the registrar and the Academic Programs Committee. This term is used to signify the successful completion of a course or program of courses appropriate for post-secondary training but not classified as degree-level courses. The topics covered in these courses may be similar to topics covered in degree-level courses, but the distinguishing features are normally differences in the breadth and depth of understanding required for successful completion. Implies the attainment of a standard of proficiency, achievement or promotion appropriate for post-secondary training. Non-degree level certificates not under the authority of a college shall fall under the authority of an identified administrative unit.

**Community Level Certificate** These programs are approved by the vice-provost, teaching and learning or the dean of a college, after consultation with the provost & vice-president (academic). This term is used to certify satisfactory attendance at a community-level, non-academic course or program of courses sponsored by vice-provost, teaching and learning or a college at the university. It does not imply attainment of a standard of proficiency, achievement or promotion, and is comprised of non-academic courses numbered 001-009.

For information on all aspects of the approval of certificate and diploma programs, including the admission requirements and tuition rates, please consult the Academic and Curricular Changes Authority Chart: [http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/governing-bodies/council/committee/academic\\_programs/index.php](http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/governing-bodies/council/committee/academic_programs/index.php)



### Certificate and Diploma Framework

<b>Level of Study</b>	<b>Program(s)</b>	<b>Admission Requirements</b>	<b>Course Numbering</b>
<b>Community Level</b>	Community Level Certificate	None	Generally include 001-009
<b>Undergraduate Non-Degree Level</b>	Non-Degree Level Certificate	High School Completion	Generally include 010-099
<b>Graduate Non-Degree Level</b>	Non-Degree Level Certificate	Must meet minimum graduate-level admission requirements	Generally include 800 and/or 900-level
<b>Undergraduate Degree Level</b>	-Degree Level Certificate -Degree Level Diploma	Must meet minimum undergraduate-level admission requirements	Generally include 100-499 levels
<b>Post-Degree Undergraduate Level</b>	Post-Degree Certificate	Completion of undergraduate degree is required for admission	Generally include 100-599 levels; majority of courses often fall within 500-level range
<b>Graduate Degree Level</b>	-Degree Level Certificate -Postgraduate Diploma	Must meet minimum graduate-level admission requirements	Generally include 800-level
<b>Postgraduate Degree Level</b>	Postgraduate Degree Specialization Certificate	Completion of graduate degree is required for admission	Generally include 800-level



**University of Saskatchewan Certificates and Diplomas – Current Practices**

	<b>Course Numbers</b>	<b>Credit Units</b>	<b>Admission Requirements</b>	<b>Academic Standards</b>	<b>Transcripts</b>	<b>Convocation</b>
<b>Community Level Certificate</b>	Course numbers are 001 - 009	No specified credit unit amount	Open admission	Not accepted for credit toward any certificate or degree	Not listed on transcripts	Not awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Undergraduate Non-Degree Level Certificate</b>	Course numbers are 010 - 099	Range of 15 - 30 non-degree level credit units	High school diploma required for admission	Majority of courses are at the non-degree level. No capstone course requirement.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Degree Level Certificate (Undergraduate)</b>	Course numbers are 100 - 499	<p>Range of 15 - 30 degree-level credit units</p> <p>Rationale: 15 credit units are equivalent to one full term of courses; 30 credit units are equivalent to two full terms of courses. The program can be completed in one year.</p>	Must meet minimum admission requirements for the college of ownership	Credit units for the program include necessary prerequisite courses. Students must pass all courses of the program according to approved grading system, promotion and graduation standards. Inclusion of senior-level (200-level or above) capstone or core course (to ensure that the program provides a distinct set of learning objectives and is not just a collection of courses). May be pursued as stand-alone program or concurrent with degree program.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Degree-Level Diploma (Undergraduate)</b>	Course numbers 100 – 499	Minimum of 60 credit units (equivalent to two full years of courses)	Must meet minimum admission requirements for the college of ownership	Credit units for the program include necessary prerequisite courses. Students must pass all courses of the program according to approved grading system, promotion and graduation standards. Courses often ladder into undergraduate degree-level programming.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony



	<b>Course Numbers</b>	<b>Credit Units</b>	<b>Admission Requirements</b>	<b>Academic Standards</b>	<b>Transcripts</b>	<b>Convocation</b>
<b>Post-Degree Certificate (Undergraduate)</b>	Courses are numbered at the undergraduate level (100-599 levels). Usually, a majority of courses are numbered at the 500-level.	Range of 15 - 30 degree-level credit units  Rationale: 15 credit units are equivalent to one full term of courses; 30 credit units are equivalent to two full terms of courses. The program can be completed in one year.	Must have completed an undergraduate degree for admission	Students must pass all courses of the program according to approved grading system, promotion and graduation standards. Inclusion of senior-level capstone or core course (to ensure that the program provides a distinct set of learning objectives and is not just a collection of courses).	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Graduate Non-Degree Level Certificate</b>	Courses are generally numbered at the 800 and 900-levels, but carry 0 credit units	Courses are generally numbered at the 800 and 900-levels, but carry 0 credit units	Must meet minimum graduate-level admission requirements	Must be taken concurrently with degree program.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Degree Level Certificate (Graduate)</b>	Comprised of 800-level courses	Range of 6-9 credit units	Must meet minimum graduate-level admission requirements	May be pursued as stand-alone program or concurrent with degree program. Students must pass all courses of the program according to approved grading system, promotion and graduation standards.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony



	<b>Course Numbers</b>	<b>Credit Units</b>	<b>Admission Requirements</b>	<b>Academic Standards</b>	<b>Transcripts</b>	<b>Convocation</b>
<b>Postgraduate Diploma (Graduate)</b>	Comprised of 800-level courses	Minimum of 30 credit units, at least 18 credit units at the 800 level in the same field of study	Must meet minimum graduate-level admission requirements	Research is not a basic part of such programs, although candidates in some fields may be given the opportunity to become acquainted with research techniques. Students must pass all the courses of an approved program with a grade of at least 60% in each course and an average of at least 65% for all courses.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony
<b>Postgraduate Degree Specialization Certificate (Graduate)</b>	Comprised of 800-level courses	Minimum of 26 credit units	Completion of graduate-level degree	Specialized postgraduate professional training programs. Designed to emphasize areas of competence in a particular field. Students must pass all courses of the program according to approved grading system, promotion and graduation standards.	Listed on transcripts	Awarded at Convocation Ceremony

For a list of University of Saskatchewan certificates and diplomas, please visit the Academic Programs Committee of Council website:

[http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/governing-bodies/council/committee/academic\\_programs/index.php](http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/governing-bodies/council/committee/academic_programs/index.php)

For background information on the development of these guidelines, including reports and decisions of the Joint Subcommittee on Certificates; the U15 Comparative Study on Certificates; and a 2017-18 survey of U of S certificates, diplomas, minors and concentrations, please see [University Council, November 16, 2017](#)

### Related Documents

**Academic and Curricular Nomenclature:** <http://www.usask.ca/secretariat/documents/nomenclature.php>

**Academic Courses Policy:** <http://policies.usask.ca/policies/academic-affairs/academic-courses.php>

**Arts & Science Template for Certificate of Proficiency,** [University Council, November 15, 2012](#)