Guidebook for Certificate Programs
Stand-Alone & Embedded Certificates

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Introduction

This guidebook is intended to serve as a reference item for faculty, advisors, and registrars navigating the different types of certificates offered at the University of West Georgia. Students who stumble across this resource may also find it helpful. However, the Academic Catalogs and Academic Advisors should be the first point of reference for students seeking answers to their questions about certificates.

This guidebook will cover the two distinct types of certificates offered at the University of West Georgia.

Stand-Alone Certificates are those certificates that comprise a prescribed program of study that may or may not be associated with a degree, major or minor. These certificates represent a cohesive program of study of a smaller size than a degree program and provide more flexibility to those looking to pursue continued education, including a means for professionals to renew and retrain due to an ever-changing workforce.

Embedded Certificates are those certificates where the courses required to earn the certificate are embedded into a major or degree program and are only awarded at the completion of a specific degree program. These certificates are intended to encourage students to use the elective requirements in their degree program to form a coherent concentration of coursework in a specified area.

An inventory of certificate programs offered by the University of West Georgia is located here.
Stand-Alone Certificates

University System of Georgia Board of Regents Policy

Stand-Alone Certificates

University System of Georgia institutions offer a variety of certificate programs. Many of these certificates are not associated with degrees, but are a prescribed program of study at the postsecondary educational level. The following guidelines are provided to assist institutions with the development of certificate programs.

- Certificates proposed and offered by an institution should be consistent with the mission of the institution.
- Certificates shall be consistent with degree programs offered by the institution.
- The institution offering the certificate will maintain enrollment and completion data as part of the students’ record.
- Certificates should be greater than 9 hours, but no more than 59 semester-credit hours.
- Certificates require that students meet the admission requirements of the institution and that the courses offered will not exceed the level of courses offered by the institution (e.g., a two-year institution may not award a graduate certificate).

The definitions listed below describe types of certificate programs in the USG. These definitions are the same as those used in reporting data to the federal government. In the definitions, pre-baccalaureate (undergraduate), post-baccalaureate (graduate), post-master’s, and post-first professional, refer to the level of courses in the curriculum, not the qualifications or background of the student.”

Undergraduate Certificates (CER0, CER1)

- Fewer than 30 semester credit hours (less than one year). The degree acronym is CER0.
- From 30 to 59 semester credit hours (at least one year, but less than two). The degree acronym is CER1.

Graduate Certificates (CERG, CERM)

- Post-Baccalaureate Certificate – a certificate beyond the bachelor’s degree that does not meet the requirements for a master’s degree. The degree acronym is CERG.
- Post-Master’s Certificate – a certificate beyond the master’s degree that does not meet the requirements for a doctoral degree. The degree acronym is CERM.
- Post-First Professional Certificate – a certificate beyond the first professional degree. The degree acronym is CERP.

Source - BOR: Certificate Guidelines
UWG Guidelines for Creating and Managing Stand-Alone Certificates

Curricular Requirements and Approvals

1. Stand-alone certificate programs must have clearly stated missions, program goals, and learning objectives. The curriculum is created in such a way as to foster the developmental growth of the student over the course of the certificate program.

2. Stand-alone certificate proposals and modifications are submitted and approved through the faculty governance procedures for establishing or modifying programs of study. Stand-alone certificates require notification to the Board of Regents and are listed on the Degrees and Majors Authorized (DMA) inventory. Enrollment and awards are reported to the Board of Regents during Academic Data Collection (ADC) census.

3. The Undergraduate Programs Committee (UPC) or the Graduate Programs Committee (GPC) of the Faculty Senate shall review proposed stand-alone certificate programs with respect to these standards and criteria.

4. The certificate program must comprise of at least 10 semester hours in a coherent program of study. Undergraduate stand-alone certificates must have at least 6 hours of courses at the 3000 level or above. Graduate stand-alone certificates must have at least 6 hours of courses at the 6000 level or above. Certificate programs are not to exceed 59 hours.

5. All courses applied towards the stand-alone certificate will also fulfill and share with any other requirement for the student’s degree unless otherwise stated in the certificate program of study.

6. Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum of a 2.00 GPA in their certificate courses. Graduate students must maintain a minimum of a 3.00 GPA in their certificate courses.

7. Courses included in the certificate program of study may require pre-requisites not included in the certificate program of study.

Admissions

1. Students may be admitted to a stand-alone certificate program in conjunction with a degree program or as a non-degree seeking student.

2. Stand-alone certificate programs must include requirements for admission into the certificate which at a minimum must meet the entrance requirements for undergraduate or graduate students at UWG.

3. Pre-requisite courses may be required prior to admission into a stand-alone certificate program.

4. Admission requirements for stand-alone certificate-seeking students are listed in the description of the Certificate in the Catalog.
Completion

1. Students are required to apply to graduate with stand-alone certificates through the Office of the Registrar. Students are required to apply for certificate graduation in accordance with the Graduation Application Deadlines set in the Academic Catalogs. Students who are concurrently pursuing a stand-alone certificate and a degree must apply to graduate at the same time as their degree. Students may graduate with their degree and re-admit as a non-degree seeking student to complete requirements for a stand-alone certificate.

2. Students who are awarded a stand-alone certificate will have their accomplishment noted on their official academic transcript and will receive a certificate of completion.

Management of the Program

1. The availability of a stand-alone certificate should be noted in the Catalog, at least by title, under the appropriate sponsoring academic unit. The sponsoring academic unit offering the certificate shall publish and make available to students the requirements for the certificate. Stand-alone certificates shall be listed in the catalogs as “Stand-Alone Certificate in...”

2. Students are tracked in the student information system (Banner) through a curricula record as majors, concentrations, and minors are. The Office of the Registrar manages enrollment and completion data.

3. Each sponsoring academic department, college, or school will be responsible for maintaining program quality subject to periodic program assessment and reaffirmation.

4. The Office of the Registrar will post the award of the Certificate to the academic record (transcript), and the Registrar’s Office will issue a certificate of completion. The design of the certificate of completion will be uniform across the university and will be managed as other diplomas are managed.

University Policy

Specific Requirements for Stand-Alone Certificates (Undergraduate Catalog)

1. Students must be admitted into a stand-alone certificate program by meeting the minimum requirements set forth by the certificate program.

2. Students may enroll in conjunction with a degree program or as a non-degree seeking student.

3. Unless otherwise stated in the certificate program of study, all courses applied towards the stand-alone certificate will also fulfill and share with any other requirement for the student’s degree.

4. Complete a minimum of 10 semester hours of required coursework for the approved certificate program.

5. A minimum of 6 semester hours must be numbered 3000 and above.
6. Students must attain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 in courses used to satisfy the certificate.

7. Students are required to apply to graduate with stand-alone certificates through the Office of the Registrar and by the Graduation Application Deadlines outlined in this catalog. Students who are concurrently pursuing a stand-alone certificate and a degree must apply to graduate at the same time as their degree. Students may graduate with their degree and re-admit as a non-degree seeking student to complete requirements for a stand-alone certificate.

8. Students who are awarded a stand-alone certificate will have their accomplishment noted on their official academic transcript and will receive a certificate of completion.

**Specific Requirements for Stand-Alone Certificates (Graduate Catalog)**

1. Students must be admitted into a stand-alone certificate program by meeting the minimum requirements set forth by the certificate program.
2. Students may enroll in conjunction with a degree program or as a non-degree seeking student.
3. Unless otherwise stated in the certificate program of study, all courses applied towards the stand-alone certificate will also fulfill and share with any other requirement for the student’s degree.
4. Complete a minimum of 10 semester hours of required coursework for the approved certificate program.
5. A minimum of 6 semester hours must be numbered 6000 and above.
6. Students must attain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in courses used to satisfy the certificate.
7. Students are required to apply to graduate with stand-alone certificates through the Office of the Registrar and by the Graduation Application Deadlines outlined in this catalog. Students who are concurrently pursuing a stand-alone certificate and a degree must apply to graduate at the same time as their degree. Students may graduate with their degree and re-admit as a non-degree seeking student to complete requirements for a stand-alone certificate.
8. Students who are awarded a stand-alone certificate will have their accomplishment noted on their official academic transcript and will receive a certificate of completion.

**Procedures for Stand-Alone Certificates**

The following describes the procedures that students and administrators will take to ensure that students are able to declare, track and earn stand-alone certificates.

1. Students may pursue stand-alone certificates as a degree-seeking student or non-degree seeking student.
   a. Students intending to pursue a stand-alone certificate as a **non-degree seeking** student must apply for admission into that certificate through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions or Graduate Admissions.
b. Students intending to pursue a stand-alone certificate alongside their degree (degree-seeking) should speak with the certificate program coordinator regarding declaring intent to pursue the stand-alone certificate. If approved, the certificate program coordinator will submit the Stand-Alone Certificate Declaration Form for Degree Seeking Students to the Registrar’s Office (graduation@westga.edu) for processing.

2. Once the student is admitted as a non-degree seeking student through admissions or the certificate declaration form is processed by the Registrar’s Office, advisors and students can track their certificate completion progress in Wolf Watch (Degree Works).

3. Students must apply to graduate with their stand-alone certificate according to the Graduation Application Deadlines listed in the Academic Catalogs. Students will apply online in Self-Service Banner.

4. The Registrar’s Office will audit the student’s record for certificate completion. The student will appear on the Faculty Approval list sent each semester. Upon completing all requirements, the Registrar’s Office will formally award the certificate and order the student a certificate of completion.
Embedded Certificates

University System of Georgia Board of Regents Policy
Embedded certificates, those certificates that are only awarded to a student upon completion of a degree and are a self-contained set of courses embedded in a major or stand-alone degree, do not require notification and are not listed separately on the Degrees and Majors inventory.

Source - BOR Policy 2.3.8

UWG Guidelines for Creating and Managing Embedded Certificates

Curricular Requirements and Approvals

1. Embedded certificate programs must have clearly stated missions, program goals, and learning objectives. The curriculum is created in such a way as to foster the developmental growth of the student throughout the certificate program.
2. Embedded certificate proposals and modifications are submitted and approved through the faculty governance procedures for establishing or modifying programs of study. Embedded certificates do not require notification to the Board of Regents and are not listed on the Degrees and Majors Authorized (DMA) inventory.
3. Each sponsoring academic department, college, or school will be responsible for maintaining program quality subject to periodic program review and reaffirmation.
4. The Undergraduate Programs Committee (UPC) or the Graduate Programs Committee (GPC) of the Faculty Senate shall review proposed embedded certificate programs with respect to these standards and criteria.
5. The certificate program must comprise at least 9 semester hours in a coherent program of study. Undergraduate embedded certificates must have at least 6 hours of courses at the 3000 level or above. Graduate embedded certificates must have at least 6 hours of courses at the 6000 level or above.
6. Embedded certificates are not limited to requiring credit-bearing courses. Co-curricular activities may also fulfill requirements for embedded certificates. Academic units are responsible for verifying the completion of co-curricular activities that are included as certificate requirements. All credit-bearing courses applied towards the embedded certificate will also fulfill and share with any other requirement for the student’s degree.

Admissions

1. Students must be admitted and enrolled at the University of West Georgia in a degree-seeking status to pursue an embedded certificate.
2. Students are required to declare their intent to pursue an embedded certificate. Students must declare their intentions to pursue an embedded certificate to the department that offers the certificate prior to or in conjunction with applying for graduation and should also notify their academic advisor to assure proper academic advising.

3. Embedded certificates may have additional limitations regarding who is eligible to pursue a certificate. These limitations may include but are not restricted to: major, minor, level, GPA, class, or academic standing.

Completion

1. Embedded certificates are not stand-alone programs and can only be awarded in conjunction with a degree. Students may not re-enroll to complete an embedded certificate without completing a degree program concurrently.

2. Students who are awarded an embedded certificate will have their accomplishment noted on their official academic transcript in the same semester their degree is awarded.

3. Each sponsoring academic department, college, or school may choose to generate and send the student a physical certificate.

Management of Embedded Certificates

1. Each embedded certificate is established, administered, tracked, and awarded by the sponsoring academic department, college or school. Sponsoring academic units are responsible for establishing the requirements for admission into the certificate, the number of credit hours, and the minimum GPA requirements for the embedded certificate.

2. The availability of an embedded certificate should be noted in the Catalog, at least by title, under the appropriate sponsoring academic unit. The sponsoring academic unit offering the certificate shall publish and make available to students the requirements for the certificate. Embedded certificates shall be listed in the catalogs as “Embedded Certificate in...”

3. Sponsoring academic units are responsible for notifying the Registrar’s Office of students eligible for an embedded certificate by the day after the grade submission deadline of the students’ intended semester of graduation.

University Policy

Specific Requirements for Embedded Certificates (Undergraduate Catalog)

1. Embedded certificates are not a stand-alone program; students must be enrolled in the major, minor, or degree program in which the certificate is embedded. Embedded certificates are only awarded in conjunction with the completion of a degree.

2. Students are required to declare their intent to pursue an embedded certificate. Students must declare their intention to pursue an embedded certificate to the department that
offers the certificate prior to or in conjunction with applying for graduation and should also notify their academic advisor to assure proper academic advising.

3. Complete a minimum of 9 semester hours of required coursework for the approved embedded certificates.

4. A minimum of 6 semester hours of the courses must be numbered 3000 and above.

5. All credit-bearing courses applied towards the embedded certificate will also fulfill and share with any other requirement for the student’s degree.

6. Students must attain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 in courses used to satisfy the embedded certificate.

**Procedures for Embedded Certificates**

The following describes the procedures that students and administrators will take to ensure that students are able to declare, track, and earn embedded certificates.

1. **Student Applies for the Embedded Certificate:** Students must apply for embedded certificates through the online Embedded Certificate Application form: https://www.westga.edu/academics/undergraduate-certificate-application.php

2. **The attribute is placed on the student’s record:** Depending on which certificate the student chooses, an email is triggered to the Designated Advisor responsible for applying the attribute in Banner. Attributes are applied using Banner form SGASADD. A directory of Designated Advisors and Banner Attributes is found in the UWG Certificates Directory. Once the attribute is assigned in Banner, the student’s record in EAB SSC (Student Success Collaborative) will automatically update to show the appropriate certificate in the Category section of SSC. This will aid advisors during the academic advising process.

3. **Awarding Embedded Certificates:** Two weeks prior to graduation, the Graduation Team in the Registrar’s Office will send a reminder email to all Department Program Coordinators requesting that they review students who have potentially earned the Embedded Certificate. To complete this task, Department Program Coordinators should do the following:
   a. **Run the Embedded Certificates Report in Argos:** Department Program Coordinators should find those students who have applied for Embedded Certificates by running Argos STU1050 – Embedded Certificates Report. This report pulls a list of students by Banner Attribute who have applied to graduate. See Appendix II – How to Run the Embedded Certificates Report and Appendix III – Sample Embedded Certificates Report
   b. **Review Certificate Requirements:** Department Program Coordinators and Department Chairs are responsible for reviewing each student to ensure the student has met the requirements for the Embedded Certificate. Student academic records may be viewed in Wolf Watch (degree audit) or in Banner (SHACRSE).
The Registrar’s Office is not responsible for reviewing embedded certificates for course completion.

i. **Embedded Certificates Report:** Each student on the Embedded Certificates Report should be marked as “YES” or “NO” depending on if they have completed the requirements for the Embedded Certificate.

ii. Departments with more than one certificate may include multiple certificates on the same report.

iii. The report must be signed by the Department Chair or Certificate Program Coordinator and submitted to the Graduation Team by 5:00PM on the day after final grades are due.

c. **Notation on Academic Transcript:** Departments send the Embedded Certificate Report to the Registrar’s Office, and the Graduation Team (graduation@westga.edu) is responsible for ensuring that the transcript comment is placed on the academic transcript when the student’s degree is awarded. See an example of the transcript notation in Appendix IV.

d. **Printed Certificates:** Academic departments are responsible for printing and mailing certificates for students who earn embedded certificates. The Registrar’s Office will send the Department Program Coordinator a list of the students’ diploma mailing address no later than 10 business days after the grade submission deadline.
## Appendix I: Certificate Comparison Chart

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stand-Alone Certificate</th>
<th>Embedded Certificate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Prints on Transcript</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counts in Degrees &amp; Certificates Awarded for USG Data Collection</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prints on a Degree-Verification Letter</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracked in Wolf Watch (Degree Works)</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires Comprehensive Program Review (CPR)</td>
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<td>Audited &amp; Awarded by Registrar</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Audited &amp; Awarded by Department</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar Sends Certificate of Completion</td>
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<td>Department Sends Certificate of Completion</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can by earned by any major or as a non-degree seeking student.</td>
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<td>No</td>
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</table>
Appendix II: How to Run the Embedded Certificates Report

Prior to running the Embedded Certificates Report, users should verify they have access to the Argos Reporting System. Users can request training through ITS. The report for pulling Embedded Certificates is in the STU1050 – Currently Enrolled or Active Students with Student Attributes in the ALL CAMPUS folder. This dashboard allows a user to pull a list of students by Student Attribute. Since Embedded Certificates are tracked by student attributes in Banner, this dashboard is ideal for tracking students pursuing Embedded Certificates.

Connected to this dashboard is a custom report (Embedded Certificate Report) used for pulling students who have the Embedded Certificate Attribute AND have applied for graduation.

To pull the Embedded Certificate Report, follow these steps:

1.) Make sure the current term is selected in the “Begin Term” drop-down menu. This is the term the report uses to find students who have applied to graduate. If you select a future or past term, you will not receive the correct population of students.

2.) Select the certificate attribute(s) that you wish to pull on this report. If your department awards more than one certificate, you may pull more than one attribute at a time. Only one report is needed.
3.) Select “Embedded Certificates Report” from the report drop-down at the top of the page. Click the “Save” button to download the PDF report.

4.) Choose a location to save the report and click “OK” when the PDF Setup dialogue box appears. No additional set up is required.

View All Students Enrolled in the Embedded Certificate
You may want to view all students who are enrolled in your Embedded Certificate program. To do so, repeat steps 1 & 2 above. Instead of running a custom report, click the red “Run Report” button on the dashboard to populate all of the students with the Embedded Certificate attribute.
Students Not Populating in STU1050 or Embedded Certificates Report

If you know of students who have inquired about or have completed the requirements for the Embedded Certificate and that student is not appearing in STU1050 or the Embedded Certificates Report that student will need the Embedded Certificate attribute applied in Banner. Once the student has the attribute applied in SGASADD (Banner) the student will immediately appear in the STU1050 dashboard and the Embedded Certificates Report.
Appendix III: Discipline-Specific Writing Certificate

College of Arts and Humanities & College of Science and Mathematics

A student may elect to double the basic DSW requirements [ENGL 1101 and ENGL 1102 and two 3000/4000 level W-classes], passing 12 hours of writing-intensive courses. These additional courses need not be in the student’s major, unless the department specifies otherwise. Students who elect this option and earn a grade of C or above in each of their writing-intensive classes will receive a Discipline-Specific Writing certificate.

**Banner Batch Job RS4250** is used to pull students who have applied for graduation and have taken or are enrolled in 12 or more hours of courses with the WRIT (writing-intensive) attribute. To pull this report:

1.) Access RS4250 in Banner Batch Jobs

2.) Enter the current term, choose “undergraduate applied” for the outcome status, and enter the college code.

3.) Choose COMMA for the display type to export the data to Microsoft Excel (.csv)
4.) Evaluate each student’s completion record and submit the file of those who completed the DSW requirements to the Registrar’s Office (graduation@westga.edu) by the deadline.

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# Appendix IV: Sample Embedded Certificates Report

## Embedded Certificates Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate Program: Research Skills Cert. - RSCT</th>
<th>Graduation Term: 202005</th>
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<tr>
<td>917 Strozier, Student</td>
<td>Requirements satisfied</td>
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<th>Certificate Program: Social Diversity Cert. - SDCT</th>
<th>Graduation Term: 202005</th>
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<td>917 Cerullo, Student</td>
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<th>Graduation Term: 202005</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>917 Strozier, Student</td>
<td>Requirements satisfied</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Certificate Program: Social Services Cert. - SSCT</th>
<th>Graduation Term: 202005</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>917 Trammell, Student</td>
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<td>YES</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Certificate Approver Information

Please check to make sure every student listed on this report is indicated as earning the certificate (yes) or did not meet the certificate requirements (no). You are not required to submit a checklist of requirements to the Registrar’s Office. However, if you want the checklist to be imaged to the student’s academic record, you may submit those lists with this report. This report is due to the Registrar’s Office (graduation@westga.edu) no later than 5:00 PM on the day after final grades are due. Electronic signature preferred.

Certificate Approver (please print): __________________________ Signature: __________________________
Appendix V: Certificates on Academic Transcripts

**Embedded Certificates** appear on a transcript as an aspect of the degree. In the Dept. Honors portion of the academic transcript. Dept. Honors will not appear on a transcript unless there is also a corresponding degree awarded.

```
Degrees Awarded Bachelor of Science 27-JUL-2020
  Ehrs: 0.00 GPA-Hrs: 0.00 Pts: 0.00 GPA: 0.00
Primary Degree
  College: College of Social Sciences
  Major: Psychology
  Minor: Criminology
  Dept. Honors: Data Analytics Certificate
```

**Stand-Alone Certificates** appear on a transcript separate from any other degree.

```
Degrees Awarded Post-Baccalaureate Certificate 27-JUL-2020
  Ehrs: 0.00 GPA-Hrs: 0.00 Pts: 0.00 GPA: 0.00
Primary Degree
  College: College of Social Sciences
  Major: Data Analys & Eval Certificate
```
Appendix VI: Stand-Alone Certificate Declaration Form for Degree-Seeking Students

Stand-Alone Certificate Declaration Form
for Degree-Seeking Students

Instructions:
Complete and submit this application to the Graduation Team in the Office of the Registrar by sending the form to graduation@westga.edu. An electronic or physical signature is required on this form.

This form should only be submitted for students who are also pursuing a degree at UWG. Non-degree seeking students must contact the Office of Undergraduate Admissions or Graduate Admissions for information on being formally admitted into a Stand-Alone Certificate program.

Student Information:

UWG Student ID: __________________________ Last Name: __________________________

First Name: __________________________

Current Degree Program: __________________________

Stand-Alone Certificate Program: __________________________

Catalog Year for Stand-Alone Certificate Program: __________________________

Student Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Program Advisor Information:

Name: __________________________

Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Registrar Use Only:

Degree Seeking Verified: [ ] Catalog Year: __________________________ Signatures Verified by: __________________________

Coded in Banner by: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Once this form is processed in Banner, a copy of this form will be emailed to the student. This form will be archived to the student’s academic record. This form is not an application for graduation. The student is responsible for applying for graduation with a stand-alone certificate in accordance with university policies. For more information, visit http://www.westga.edu/graduation.