Professional Development Noncredit Certificate FAQ

**What is a professional development noncredit certificate?**

Graham School noncredit certificates are focused on offering professional development and educational opportunities for students on a variety of topics, including writing and editing, marketing, and project management. Our certificates are rigorous in nature and provide students with the opportunity to dive deeply into an area of interest and to broaden a skill set. Students who enroll in Graham School noncredit certificate programs enjoy similar benefits of being connected to the University— camaraderie with fellow classmates, engaging with instructors who are industry experts, and being part of the alumni community.

A noncredit certificate is a sequence or group of courses focusing on an area of specialized knowledge. The goal of a certificate program is to contribute to a student’s ability to meet standards of competence within a given field. A noncredit certificate is not a degree program, and students do not earn credit toward a graduate degree.

**What is the difference between a professional development noncredit certificate and a for-credit certificate?**

While noncredit certificates offer the opportunity to study a specific subject without applying to a degree program, students do not earn credit for these programs. Although noncredit students may earn grades in the courses they take, the courses are noncredit and cannot be transferred to a credit-bearing or degree program.

Additionally, the application process for noncredit certificates is often less onerous than for-credit programs. Application requirements for noncredit certificates include a resume, a personal statement, and an application fee.

By completing a professional development noncredit certificate, can I earn credit toward a graduate degree?

No, students who complete a professional development noncredit certificate cannot transfer credit toward a graduate degree. Graham School noncredit certificates provide professional education but do not carry credit toward an undergraduate or graduate degree.

**What is the difference between a certificate and a certification?**

Certificate programs provide professional training and are usually awarded by an educational institution. They also do not have to be renewed.

Certifications are awarded by governmental and professional agencies, and often need to be renewed to be kept active.

**What are the benefits of enrolling in a professional development noncredit certificate program?**

Professional development noncredit certificates allow students to further their professional education by gaining skills and knowledge in a targeted field or subject matter. Students can take as many courses as they like in a variety of different subject areas and hone their skills.

The benefits of enrolling in a professional development noncredit certificate program extend beyond the classroom. Students can leverage the connections made in their courses to build their professional networks. Additionally, all Graham School professional development courses are taught by instructors with years of experience in their field.
Are there alumni benefits for noncredit students?
Yes, students who complete a professional development noncredit certificate program do have access to UChicago alumni benefits, including access to networking resources like the alumni directory and alumni clubs, job search resources like the Chicago Career Connection, and additional resources like monthly webinars.

Note: These benefits are only available to students who have completed a certificate program.

Can I take professional development noncredit courses online?
Yes, you can take noncredit courses online. We currently offer three professional development noncredit certificates online: Editing, Medical Writing and Editing, and Clinical Trials Management.

For more information about online certificates, please visit: grahamschool.uchicago.edu/online

How do I register for courses?
You can register for courses online by visiting your specific program page and creating a Graham School account. You can also register by phone at 773.702.1722.

Students who want to apply discounts to their tuition must register by phone.

Do I qualify for financial aid as a noncredit student?
Noncredit students do not qualify for financial aid. However, the financial investment in the Noncredit Certificate Program is significantly less than that of a degree seeking program.

For more information about tuition payments, please visit: grahamschool.uchicago.edu/student-resources/financing-billing

Is there a start date for the professional development noncredit certificate programs?
There is no specific start date for professional development noncredit certificate programs. Students can start taking courses any quarter.

Core courses are typically offered 2-3 times per year, while electives are offered once per year. Students should keep in mind that all courses aren’t offered each quarter, so it’s important to plan ahead to complete the necessary requirements.

Do I have to apply to a specific program to begin taking courses?
No, students do not need to apply to a program to begin taking courses. Students can take up to one course in any professional development program without applying to that program.

However, if students want to complete the certificate, they do need to apply to the program via an application found on the program webpage.

Do the Graham School offer other noncredit certificates?
Yes, the Graham School offers noncredit certificates that focus on personal development, including Arabic Languages and Cultures, Basic Program of Liberal Education for Adults, Board Leadership, and Visual Arts.

Information Session FAQs
grahamschool.uchicago.edu/noncredit