

ESTABLISHMENT OF A GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the establishment of a new graduate certificate program in Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Mike Ilitch School of Business, effective Spring semester 2017.

Background

The Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation (GCEI) is designed to provide students with the specialized knowledge and skills required to develop and launch a new venture. Entrepreneurs and innovators are critical to the long-term health and prosperity of our economy and society, and students are significantly and increasingly interested in avenues which will help them understand the opportunities and acquire the skills and access to networks needed to succeed. Nationally and regionally, there has been a growth in entrepreneurship and innovation course offerings and academic program options, with both the University of Michigan and Michigan State University having recently introduced campus-wide initiatives in response to these trends. While WSU has numerous relevant initiatives, including those offered through TechTown, the Office of Technology Commercialization, and the Anderson Engineering Ventures Institute, our current educational offerings are limited to isolated courses throughout the university, an undergraduate certificate in engineering entrepreneurship and an interdisciplinary undergraduate certificate in entrepreneurship and innovation offered by the Ilitch School of Business, starting in January 2017. The proposed certificate will significantly enhance our academic offerings and fill a key niche by providing training in entrepreneurship and innovation to a broader range of students.

Program Description

The Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation is a 15-credit graduate certificate offered by the Mike Ilitch School of Business. To earn this certificate, students will complete core courses offered by the Ilitch School, and select from an approved set of elective courses currently offered by several disciplines within the Ilitch School and other participating colleges at Wayne State University, including the College of Fine, Performing & Communication Arts, College of Engineering, and School of Medicine.

The target audience for this Graduate Certificate is individuals working toward or holding a graduate degree who wish to create or grow a new venture, join with others engaged in this effort, or enter the entrepreneurial ecosystem in another capacity to pursue their own career and contribute to the development of our economy and society. Students can add this certificate on to an existing graduate degree program or earn it as a post-graduate student. Thus, the program will be available to all current graduate students, as well as those holding graduate degrees from Wayne State and other accredited universities who are working in or who wish to enter the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Students are encouraged to complete the program in 3 consecutive semesters. Students must first complete an introductory course which provides an overview of the integrative framework, processes and tools which must be mastered, as well as opportunities to explore resources

available to them in the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. After successful completion of this course and obtaining an approved plan of work from the program advisor, students then complete a set of electives matched to their talents and interests. This presents the student with some flexibility and several options as they develop a deeper understanding and explore opportunities for additional applications of the framework and tools. In the third and final semester students will be engaged in a project-intensive learning experience in the Detroit entrepreneurial ecosystem. This capstone course is designed to help the student deepen their understanding of and appreciation for what it takes to translate ideas into reality. The capstone experience also provides students an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on their passion and ability to launch and support startups of both a technical and non-technical nature.

Admissions Requirements

The Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation is open only to those students who can meet the graduate admission requirements of the university. Further, those admitted to this certificate program are: 1) currently enrolled WSU graduate students who have completed at least 6 graduate credit hours and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above; or 2) students who possess a graduate degree from an accredited college or university. Students must also successfully complete an introductory course and gain approval for their elective selection and plan of work. Students can develop a full plan of work with the program advisor before registering for the introductory course, and are strongly encouraged to do so.

Curriculum Requirements

The student must complete 15 credits, with 6 credits from the core, and 9 elective credits selected from an approved list. At least one 7000-level course is required. Electives which will count toward the completion of the certificate program are open to students who have satisfactorily completed the introductory course and who have been admitted to the program. A subset of the list of elective courses will carry no additional pre-requisites, thereby broadening accessibility to non-business students. The list of approved elective courses will also include restricted-electives, courses which may require completion of discipline-specific course prerequisites. As has been determined by the curriculum committee, approved restricted-elective courses will meet several criteria: (1) the course learning objectives, content and activities must be explicitly and substantially correlated with the GCEI program learning goals; (2) the course incorporates one or more of the foundation framework elements and/or skill and tool kit components; (3) the student has satisfied pre-requisites for these courses; (4) the student completes these courses after having been admitted to the certificate program; and (5) the credits earned in these courses must also satisfy the degree requirements of the student's graduate degree program.

The list of approved elective courses will be expanded upon review and approval by the faculty curriculum committee and program director. Courses may be added as existing courses are modified, or as new courses are developed and offered, and as the partnership with other disciplines grows. The open-ended nature of the GCEI is intentional; we wish to offer a set of courses and options so students will be able to draw upon the full catalog of courses available through the program and the academic partners as they pursue the combination of electives and experiences which will best suit their talents, stage of development and interests.

Students must complete 12 approved credits (which include the credits provided by the

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introductory course) before enrolling in the capstone course. Transfer credit will not be accepted for the graduate certificate.

Graduation Requirements

A grade of 'B' or better must be achieved in each course applied towards the degree requirements. Students must obtain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher in all courses applied to the certificate. All coursework must be completed in accordance with Graduate School and the regulations governing graduate scholarship and degrees. Students may enroll on a full-time or part-time basis but must complete requirements within three years of admission.

Program Administration

The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program Area within the Mike Ilitch School of Business will provide oversight, make admissions decisions, and provide advising to students in the program. This program area will also be responsible for collecting and analyzing data on student progress and outcomes to evaluate program effectiveness and make modifications based on that information. Administrative oversight, including the assignment of faculty, will be provided by Director of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programs, and supported by the Office of the Dean.

Federal Student Aid Eligibility

The program is not seeking Title IV federal student aid eligibility. Students seeking the certificate after graduating will need to self-fund. We expect the typical student to be simultaneously pursuing a Graduate degree, carrying a minimum of 6 credit hours, and in good academic standing and thus there will be no need to pursue financial aid eligibility separately for the certificate program.

Budget and Resource Requirements

The program will use current faculty, facilities, and resources in the Mike Ilitch School of Business. No new resources are anticipated.

Accreditation

The program will be held to similar standards of quality as other programs offered in the Mike Ilitch School of Business, which are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). However, the AACSB does not accredit certificate programs.

Approvals

This Graduate Certificate in Entrepreneurship and Innovation program has been approved by the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Program Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Education Policy Committee, the Faculty Senate, the Executive Committee and the Office of the Dean of the Mike Ilitch School of Business, the New Programs and Program Review Committee of the Graduate School, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Office of the Provost.