STANDING COMMITTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Approve the Establishment of the Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response in the Interdisciplinary Humanitarian Response Group of the Graduate School

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the Graduate Faculty of the Interdisciplinary Humanitarian Response Group to offer the Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response, effective Autumn Quarter 2019. This will be a state-based program. The graduate certificate program will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled for the 2024-2025 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, a ten-year review cycle would begin.

BACKGROUND

In January 2019, the Graduate School received notification of intent to plan the Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response from the Graduate School Interdisciplinary Humanitarian Response Committee. After tri-campus stakeholder comment, the faculty developed a full proposal that was reviewed and approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Interdisciplinary Humanitarian Response Committee. The final proposal was submitted to the Graduate School in May 2019. On June 6, 2019, the Graduate School Council endorsed the Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response and recommended it be forwarded to the Board of Regents for approval.

The Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response will be a state-based program that provides graduate students from a variety of disciplines with a coherent body of study to gain a better understanding of prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery for crises to ultimately assist those affected by disasters (or living in a disaster-prone area) to recover their “normal” way of life. The curriculum is intended to span a broad range of topics in humanitarian response and assistance, including risk factors and mitigation as well as the economic, social, legal, and health impact of disasters and their relationship to development. The certificate program requires 15 credits and students will generally complete the program in two years.

Worldwide, the number of persons affected by natural and human-made disasters, as well as internally displaced people, refugees, and asylum seekers, has increased significantly over the last decade. These challenges have resulted in a
Academic and Student Affairs Committee

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professionalization of the discipline of humanitarian action, driving strong student demand for specialized training. This certificate program responds to the UW’s current lack of curated, interdisciplinary, or integrated resources that fully support graduate students interested in pursuing a career in a humanitarian-related field. All graduate and professional students who are in good academic standing will be eligible for the certificate program and the core curriculum is designed to welcome students from a range of disciplines.

The certificate program expects to enroll up to five new students per year, with a maximum of 10 enrolled at any one time. The program is built on existing courses and the only additional resources needed are a 10-percent FTE program coordinator and a 5-percent FTE faculty director. These costs will be borne by the Population Health Initiative, which will be the day-to-day administrator of this Certificate.

Upon approval, the Interdisciplinary International Humanitarian Response Committee will be designated the Interdisciplinary International Humanitarian Response Group. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation to approve the Graduate Certificate in International Humanitarian Response.