

RESPONSE TO:

Comments for revision of Organic Agriculture Certificate Proposal (# 100609)
OSU Graduate Council
November 5, 2018

Each comment remains as provided by the Graduate Council with the responses below each comment in bold.

1. Please clarify the relationship between this proposed graduate certificate in Organic Agriculture and the Undergraduate Certificate in Organic Farming – this relates to item 6 (a) of the most recent proposal. We ask for this clarification to assist the Graduate Council and future committees (e.g., Curriculum Council) to clarify there are no redundancies.

There is no current proposal for an undergraduate certificate in organic farming. We can't show that program outcomes will not overlap with outcomes that may be formulated in the future as a part of a program proposal. Any future programs would need to indicate that new program outcomes do not overlap with the outcomes of previously established programs.

We have added the following statement to section 6(b) of the proposal for this program:

“A graduate certificate in Organic Ag will also be complimentary to an undergraduate program, should a program be proposed and approved, building on concepts learned at the undergraduate level and considering slash courses where appropriate.”

2. Please identify the director of the certificate program who will be responsible for annual program assessment and review.

The following statement has been added to 1(b) of the program proposal:

“The proposed Director for this Program is Valcho Jeliazkov (Crop and Soil Science), who wrote the supportive grant to initiate program development. Dr. Jeliazkov will be responsible for organizing program assessment and review.”

3. Please identify the graduate faculty associated with the certificate in 1 (e) and the graduate faculty to which they belong. All instructors of graduate courses must be nominated to a graduate faculty (see <https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/faculty/membership>).

Of the faculty already teaching courses available that would be a part of this proposed certificate program, all are graduate faculty. For the courses in development, it will be for the Department Heads to determine who will be in charge of course instruction. It has been agreed, and this statement has been added to the proposal in section 1(e) that: “All courses will be taught by Graduate Faculty.”

Additionally, the individual faculty associated with program development have been included and listed by Department.

4. Please describe in 1 (f), how, given the large number of estimated matriculated students (20-60) in #4a, there will be enough faculty mentors to support the capstone projects in 1(c). The CPS system identifies only 8 faculty which suggests a substantial investment of time by these 8 faculty members.

The statement identifying faculty in part 5(c) as “project faculty” in descriptions of practical capstone has been changed to “project mentors”.

In the 3rd paragraph of part 5(b), the proposal states “Students will propose and execute an independent study project with the supervision of a faculty member, professional, or other mentor which will be evaluated by the capstone course instructor...” It is not intended that only the 8 faculty members can serve as mentors for capstone projects, but that mentors can be found from a wide range of options either identified by the students (and approved by the course instructor/program director), or with assistance from the program coordinator and associated faculty.

The following statement has been added as a fourth paragraph in that section to further clarify: “Capstone mentors can be found from a wide range of options either identified by the students (or approved by the course instructor/program director), or with assistance from the program coordinator and associated faculty.”

5. Program Assessment and #5 (a) Expected learning outcomes of the program
It is not clear how the curriculum in Section 1 (c) supports the identified learning outcomes. For example, LO-1 and LO-3 are related to regulations and marketing but no courses suggest they incorporate this material. LO-5 identifies communication of scientific, economic and environmental impacts but there are no courses in communication or economics. Please revise to clarify how the curriculum supports the learning outcomes.

Learning outcome #1 will be addressed primarily in the core courses, especially in the Overview of Organic Food Production course (which has been approved and will be offered in winter 2019). In addition, each course focused on a specific area of production interest will discuss the specific regulations as needed. For example, Organic Livestock Production systems will cover the regulations that govern production and handling of organic livestock, as well as labeling (this topic is also covered briefly in AGRI 520). Elective courses will support this outcome as well, as it relates to course subject matter.

We were unsuccessful in adding courses in economics to the program curriculum, as there are no graduate level economics classes appropriate to subject material that do not require extensive prerequisites. As credits are limiting in a certificate program (18 credits), we feel this would be better addressed in a Master’s program. We have removed outcome #3.

Learning outcome #5 will be addressed in the final capstone for each student. Each student will need to plan and execute a capstone project and complete a presentation, demonstrating effective communication of the regulations, practices, and the effects on production, the environment and/or social perspective encompassed in the capstone project. Instruction and mentoring on presentation will be provided as part of the instruction for the capstone course. In addition, other courses in the program may require presentations from students, allowing for greater development of these skills.

The outcomes in the program proposal have been revised and now read, section 5(a):

- a. Expected learning outcomes of the program.
 1. Evaluate the rules and regulations on the production, handling, labeling and enforcement of organic products;
 2. Analyze the complex interactions in organically produced food systems across multiple perspectives and disciplines;
 3. Integrate knowledge of conceptual and practical production management in the areas of organic crops, soils, livestock, and societal impacts;
 4. Effectively communicate scientific, economic, and environmental impacts of organic products.

6. Quality Assessment and #5 (b) Methods by which learning outcomes will be assessed and used to improve curriculum and instruction
Please identify specific data that will be used to assess each of the program's learning outcomes in 5(a).
The proposal states that program learning outcomes will be assessed within individual courses. Please either revise or clarify how that will happen since assessing course learning outcomes is not the same thing as assessing program learning outcomes.

The final paragraphs of section 5(b) of the proposal have been revised to clarify:

Student learning outcomes for the program outcomes will be assessed with targeted assignments in required capstone project. A capstone project will be completed by each student in the program before completion of Certificate program, requiring students to integrate and apply topics and themes in a practical setting. Students will propose and execute an independent study project with the supervision of a faculty member, professional, or other mentor which will be evaluated by the capstone course instructor and the mentor following a final presentation of the capstone project results.

Capstone mentors can be found from a wide range of options either identified by the students (or approved by the course instructor/program director), or with assistance from the program coordinator and associated faculty. The program mentors will inform student assessment and evaluation with the course instructor and program coordinator.

Specifically, each learning outcome will be assessed as follows:

Learning outcome #1: Correct recognition, description and integration of regulations for project

Learning outcome #2: Provision of accurate analysis of the scientific, environmental, and social interactions impacted by work on capstone project

Learning outcome #3: Effective integration of knowledge required to provide comprehensive information on capstone area of study, and any others related

Learning outcome #4: Presentation of completed capstone body of work to general audience for review, communicated in one of several options of chosen communication styles (written, oral presentation, video, podcast, etc.)

7. Quality Assessment and #5 (c) Nature and level of research /scholarly work expected of program faculty and indicators of success.

Please clarify how the program supports faculty scholarly work beyond the program director and how those contributions will be assessed annually. The paragraphs describe student work and 2 synthetic manuscripts likely associated with the director. It is difficult to understand the link between faculty scholarship and student projects and the metrics/indicators by which the contributions of this program to all participating faculty research will be assessed. This is especially confusing since, according to the proposal, 8 faculty will be supporting 20+ independent projects each year. If this program performs as expected, it's hard to see how that much advising will support faculty research.

Again, the expectation is not that the program faculty will be supporting the capstone projects; see response to comment #4.

**The following statement has been added to the program proposal in section 5(c):
“This is an interdisciplinary graduate program and not a new department, and thus faculty will not be developing research programs as a part of this program. Faculty research and scholarly activity will remain within faculty home departments.”**