

Mason LIFE Program Policy Brief  
Graduation and Certificates  
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Students completing their four years with The Mason LIFE Program will graduate with a George Mason Certificate of Completion with a catalog concentration and a work specialty area. Breaking this down in pieces, there are three main areas of importance. First, the Certificate of Completion is only awarded to those students who have been enrolled in the Mason LIFE Program for four years or eight semesters within a five year period. The coursework is determined by Person Centered Planning meeting with the following courses required for at least one semester for completion: Human Sexuality and Personal Relationships Fundamentals, Mason Exploration, Developing Self-Regulation Strategies, Employment, Independent Living, Fitness, Literature, Writing, Mathematics, and Banking. These are all offered the fall of the freshman year. Community Access can be taken anytime during the eight semesters. Those students who have mastered travel training can opt out of this class and the requirement can be waived. The last requirement is the Senior Seminar class that is mandatory the spring of senior year. Students must make sufficient academic progress as marked by their equivalent grade point average to stay as an enrolled member of the university.

The second area of importance is the catalog concentration. Students have the ability to participate or audit in catalog or special topics classes beginning the second semester of their first year. Some students will participate in one course a semester while other will be enrolled in two classes. This is contingent upon the student and his/her goals. With successful finishing of each course, as noted by test scores, work products, performances (when appropriate), and homework, the grade will be entered on the academic record or transcript. The selection of each special topics class is determined at the Person Centered Planning Meetings with the goal to establish an area that the student would like to study while at the university. These special topics classes fall under the Exploration Component, with the idea being that the students are free to explore areas of knowledge. A support staff attends the class with the student and the student is also enrolled in a two hour support class where homework and projects can be accomplished. It is this process that creates the catalog concentrations. There are three, four, and five class concentrations noted on the Certificate of Completion. So, for example, a student has audited three classes in the discipline of theatre, the student would have the three course Theatre and Performing Arts Concentration noted on their Certificate. If a student participated in four communications classes, the student would have the four course Communications Concentration noted on their Certificate. A five class concentration is denoted as a Comprehensive Concentration. Students have the ability to have more than one concentration.

The last importance component of the certificate is the work specialty area. During the first semester, students are enrolled in a classroom based employment class, to refine resumes and work behaviors as well as discuss various positions. After successful completion, students begin to have work experiences. Most students are placed on-campus with a support staff member and then by their third and fourth year, the students have the opportunity to explore off campus placements. It is through these experiences that student begin to cluster skills to form the work specialty area. Some specialty areas that are currently being pursued are Public Works, Community Outreach, Office/Clerical, Customer Service, and Child Care.