

# Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

## MEMO

**To:** Faculty Senate  
**From:** Stephen Everse, Co-Chair Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate  
**Date:** April 9, 2024  
**Re:** Approval of a proposal for a new Micro-certificate of Graduate Study in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching submitted by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the Graduate College

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The CAC unanimously approved (19-0-0) a proposal for a new Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the Graduate College at our April 4, 2023 meeting. During the 15-day public comment period no comments were received. If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, this micro-certificate will be implemented starting with the FY 24-25 catalog.

Responsible Academic Unit: College of Nursing & Health Sciences (CNHS) & Rehabilitation and Movement Sciences (RMS) department  
Program Director: Karen Westervelt PhD, PT, ATC, NBC-HWC  
Faculty: Susan Whitman, Karen Westervelt, Kelly Tourville  
The proposed starting date is Fall Semester 2024.

### ***Program Description and Rationale***

The Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study is an interprofessional, 9 credit micro-Certificate in Graduate Studies to prepare students with the skills needed to practice Integrative Health & Wellness coaching with or without integration into another professional skillset. Students will learn how to work with individuals and groups to achieve self-determined goals related to health and wellness. Students will complete coursework necessary for National Board of Health and Wellness Coaches ((NBHWC) Certification Exam eligibility. It is a fully online program.

### ***Justification and Evidence for Demand***

The mCGS will provide students with a skill set that can stand alone or be integrated into many professions providing students with a valuable dual qualification upon graduation. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected a 13% growth from 2019 to 2029, faster than the average for all occupations. Based on these data, the mCGS in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching is a strategic move to capitalize on both interest and workforce need while drawing on the strengths and reputation of CNHS and the Osher Center for Integrative Health at UVM. The addition of this mCGS will give UVM a leading edge in attracting students.

### ***Relationship to Existing Programs***

The proposed mCGS is closely related to an undergraduate program, 2 PACE certificates and several graduate programs. Currently CNHS offers an undergraduate minor in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching, while there are also two certificates offered by PACE: a PACE Certificate in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching and a non-credit Certificate in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching. They are proposing adding a mCGS to fill the growing interest in the field but at the graduate level to better serve our graduate students at UVM. The goal of the mCGS is to provide students with the opportunity to take a small set of core courses in Integrative Health and Wellness Coaching that can either stand alone as an independent credential or accompany several existing graduate programs. The only program that would absorb the mCGS credits toward degree would be the newly established Masters in Nursing (MEPN).

## **Curriculum**

Students begin the curriculum with an all-day retreat to create a learning contract and build connection with faculty and peers. They then have 2 semesters of lecture/lab-based courses where they meet weekly to learn introductory health coaching skills initially. These skills are pulled together in the second semester as students really focus on learning the health coaching process. Throughout the curriculum students are learning health education and integrative health practices. The program is bookended with a second all day retreat to consolidate the learnings of the year.

At the beginning of the curriculum students have the opportunity to be coached by a student in the cohort above so they can experience the process. They practice coaching skills with students within their cohort starting in the first semester. By the second semester they are ready to put the skills into the full coaching process and practice coaching a new student in the cohort behind. The Simulation Lab is used twice in the year to bring in simulated clients and have the students practice coaching more challenging clients. Each student must successfully demonstrate 3 or more complete health and wellness coaching sessions and receive at least 20 minutes of individual synchronous feedback on each coaching session from a NBCHWC faculty member.

## **Required Courses**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Credits</b>
HLTH 5850	Health & Wellness Coaching (new)	4
HLTH 5860	Health & Wellness Coaching Advanced	4
HLTH 5880	Professional Preparation for the Health & Wellness Coach (new)	1

HLTH 5860 (4 credits) already exists and is co-located with HTLH 3860. Two new courses are being created for this mCGS and will be co-located with existing courses.

## **Admission Requirements and Process**

All graduate students are eligible to apply for the proposed mCGS. Students must apply and be accepted into the mCGS before taking the courses. Selection will be based on program of study, academic performance, expression of interest statement.

## **Anticipated Enrollment and Impact on Current Programs**

The anticipated enrollment for the next 5 years is approximately 4 graduate students a year. This is a conservative estimate. Some of the students in the new MSN program may want to take this mCGS. They will also actively market the proposed mCGS to other graduate programs in the College (for example, PAWS and OTD) and across the University.

## **Advising**

Students will be advised by their home academic unit advisors. Students' curricular questions specific to the mCGS will be addressed by the Program Director who is a member of the Graduate College Faculty or designee.

Additionally, since the newly established Masters in Nursing (MEPN) will be the only program that would absorb the mCGS credits toward a degree, CNHS will include a financial disclosure statement to the mCGS catalogue that clearly and explicitly states that courses that do not count toward the graduate degree (core or elective) will not be covered by financial aid, and will result in additional cost to the student at standard published graduate tuition rates.

## **Assessment Plan**

As an approved educational program UVM must go through a rigorous process following published standards for curriculum, instructional hours, practical skills development and assessment. Faculty teaching the curriculum must meet the standards established by the NBHWC and UVM which involve being a NBC-HWC with greater than 200 hours of experience, and a master's degree or higher. As an approved educational

program UVM holds their students to high expectations for learning. A student must pass a final practical skills assessment successfully demonstrating a complete 20 min coaching session. The grading rubric for this practical skills assessment has been reviewed and approved by the NBHWC. Every year we must submit an updated faculty list and report any changes to our curriculum and attest to meeting the required educational standards. This program is now in year 3 of the cycle and in addition to providing the National Board with an updated faculty list, curriculum changes and attestation will have a site visit (which happen every 3 years).

#### ***Staffing Plan, Resource Requirements, and Budget***

Existing faculty and staff resources are adequate to support this mCGS. In the future if there is evidence of enrollment demand and / or we are no longer able to collocate undergraduate and graduate courses additional faculty will be needed. An additional teaching assistant and NBC- HWC examiner will be needed to address the larger class size.

No extra resources are required.

#### ***Evidence of Support***

This proposal has been discussed with the program directors of PAWS, OTD, MSN and the Chairs of Rehabilitation and Movement Science and Nursing. Letters of support from these leaders were to this proposal. There is also a letter of support from Provost Prelock.

#### ***Summary***

This 9-credit Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study responds to growth projections for the field of certified Health and Wellness coaches of 17% by 2030. It complements existing for-credit and non-credit offerings in Health and Wellness Coaching offered by CNHS and is targeted at current UVM graduate students, especially in these programs: Interprofessional Health Science PhD; MENP; DNP; Physical Activity and Wellness (distinct from the proposed mCGS); and OTD. Students will complete coursework required for National Board of Health and Wellness Coaches Certification exam eligibility.