

Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

MEMO

To: Faculty Senate
From: Colby Kervick and Stephen Everse, Co-Chairs of the CAC
Date: 01/05/24
Re: Approval of a proposal to change the credential requirements for the Certificate of Graduate Study (CGS) and Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study (mCGS) submitted by the Graduate College

The CAC approved via electronic ballot, a proposal to revise the credential requirements for the Certificate of Graduate Study (CGS) and Micro Certificate of Graduate Study (mCGS) credentials submitted by the Graduate College.

Rationale

CGS and mCGS at UVM currently carry significantly higher credit requirements than is typical in comparable Graduate Schools. This includes our official institutional peers and aspirant peers: among those that have comparable structures, the minimal credit requirements for a CGS range from 9 (University of Colorado, Boulder, University of Delaware, UMass Amherst, UNC, Tufts) to 12 (UConn, UVA); only UNH still also requires at least 15 credits.

With UVM's credit requirements unusually high, and stackability limited, enrollment in, and completion of, UVM's CGS and mCGS has been very low across both primary target audiences, i.e. currently enrolled degree students and Non-Degree students.

The graduate college would like to adjust the minimum credit requirements for the CGS to competitive levels and include non-course educational activities to count toward completion of a mCGS/CGS, while maintaining most other structural components. The minimum credits for a CGS would be adjusted to 10 credits. The credit cap for an mCGS would be 9 credits maximum.

Overview of Changes

***REVISED LANGUAGE FOR GRADUATE CATALOGUE AS APPROVED BY GEC 12/7/23**

Requirements for Certificates of Graduate Study (CGS)

Certificates of Graduate Study provide opportunities for students currently enrolled in a UVM graduate degree program and /or for Non-Degree students to engage in in-depth understanding of a particular area of interest. Certificates of Graduate Study help students prepare for further graduate study and/or develop their professional skills. The awarding of a Certificate of Graduate Studies will be annotated on the official transcript of a student who successfully meets the requirements set forth for the Certificate.

The general requirements for a Certificate of Graduate study at UVM are:

1. Certificates of graduate study require a minimum of 10 graded credits at the graduate-level. The credits must be in a defined subject area and approved for the specific certificate. A CGS may include requirements for non-course educational activities, such as workshops or projects. At least 6 of the credits must be identified

as core requirements in the curriculum, and the remaining credits must be chosen from a published and approved list of options for that certificate.

2. All credits must be completed at UVM within a 5-year period. Graduate credits taken at other institutions may not transfer into a UVM CGS program. Certificate students who are enrolled in a UVM degree program may transfer up to 4 credits (but not grades) from 5000- or 6000-level courses taken at UVM as a non-degree student into the Certificate.
3. Students who elect to pursue a CGS in conjunction with a master's or doctoral program must apply to the Certificate before registering for the final 4 graded credits needed for the Certificate. Students pursuing a master's or doctoral degree must choose a CGS in a discipline different from that of their graduate degree program.
4. A minimum grade point average of 3.00 must be achieved in the certificate program. At least 4 graded credits taken after admission to the certificate program are required to calculate the Certificate of Graduate Study GPA.
5. Credits used for a Certificate of Graduate Study may be applied toward an appropriate graduate degree at UVM. Credits may overlap between one certificate and one degree program. Credits taken for one Certificate of Graduate Study may not be used to fulfill the requirements of another Certificate of Graduate Study.

Requirements for Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study (mCGS)

Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study indicate familiarity with a specific topic or area. Micro-Certificates may be offered to students currently enrolled in a UVM graduate degree program and / or to Non-Degree students. Micro-Certificates are intended to be flexible and adaptive and to meet the evolving demands of enrollees and other stakeholders. The awarding of a Micro-Certificate of Graduate Studies will be annotated on the official transcript of a student who successfully meets the requirements set forth for the mCGS.

The general requirements for a Micro-Certificate of Graduate study at UVM are:

1. A Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study is comprised of between 4 and 9 credits of which no fewer than 4 must be graded. The credits must be in a defined subject area and approved for the specific Micro-Certificate. Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study may include requirements for non-course educational activities, such as workshops or projects. All credits must be chosen from a published and approved list of options for the Micro-Certificate.
2. All credits must be completed at UVM within a 3-year period. Graduate credits taken at other institutions may not transfer into a UVM Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study program. Micro-Certificate students who are enrolled in a UVM degree program may transfer up to 3 credits (but not grades) from 5000- or 6000-level courses taken at UVM as a Non-Degree student into a Micro-Certificate that requires at least 7 credits total.
3. Students who elect to pursue a Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study must apply to the Micro-Certificate before registering for the final 3 credits needed for the mCGS. Students enrolled in a UVM graduate degree program must choose Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study in areas beyond their degree program.
4. A minimum grade point average of 3.00 must be achieved in the Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study.
5. Credits used for a Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study may be applied toward an appropriate Certificate of Graduate Study, master's degree, or doctoral degree at UVM. Credits may overlap between one Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study, one Certificate of Graduate Study, and one degree. Credits taken for one Micro-Certificate of Graduate Study may not be used to fulfill the requirements of another micro-Certificate of Graduate Study.

The revisions to the credential were developed through an hoc committee of the Graduate Executive Committee GEC. It was shared with the Registrar to ensure alignment on process issues and with PACE, which is strongly supportive of enhanced clarity, competitive requirements, and the strengthened emphasis on

stackability. GEC discussed and unanimously approved the proposal at its meeting on December 7, 2023. The GEC also included an updated guidance draft to support proposer's of new CGS and mCGS. We have recommended that the grad college executive committee also include the CGS and mCGS requirements outlined above as part of the institutional guidance document. They have agreed to do so before the final version is posted to the Faculty Senate Curricular resources page.

Summary

In advancing this proposal, Dean of the Graduate College Holger Hoock stated, "The proposed revisions will better enable UVM to maintain a regularly refreshed certificate ecosystem to advance our mission to offer robustly curated, accessible graduate-level education and training to a wider range of learners in the state of Vermont and beyond."

If the proposal to adjust the credits for the credentials is approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, it would go in effect for the 24-25 catalog year.