

## Standards for micro-Certificate of Graduate Study

August 2022

### **Description and Purpose**

Certificates of Graduate Study (CGS) are intended to enhance the graduate degree programs of UVM students already enrolled in graduate degree programs, as well as provide an opportunity for new graduate students to acquire knowledge and develop professional skills that will enhance their career options. A CGS is comprised of 15-21 credits of coursework, including a minimum of 9 credits of core courses. The micro-Certificate of Graduate Study (mCGS) is similar in intent but comprises fewer courses (9-14 credits). The goal of the mCGS is to provide students with the opportunity to take a smaller, more specific core set of courses that can either stand alone as an independent credential or be used towards the completion of a Certificate of Graduate Study.

Each mCGS will comprise a core subset of 6 credits that all students must take and a minimum of 3 additional prescribed or recommend elective credit; one to 5 additional elective credits may be included in a mCGS, depending on the total number of credits required. The total number of credits required for the mCGS and which courses comprise the required 6-credit core are specified at the time of approval and are not variable within the program.

In all cases, 9 graded credits taken after admission and matriculation into the mCGS are required to issue the mCGS and all credits for a mCGS must be taken at UVM. For a 9-credit mCGS, no credits may be transferred in that were taken as a nondegree student at UVM. For a 10-14 credit mCGS, a student would be able to take 1-5 credits towards the mCGS as a UVM nondegree student; once the student enrolled in the mCGS, these would transfer as non-graded (TR) credits, provided they meet the guidelines for transfer of graduate credit. Similarly, if the mCGS is a subset of courses required for a CGS, a student could stack the mCGS with additional UVM coursework to get a more powerful credential.

### **Proposals for micro-Certificates of Graduate Study**

Proposals for a new stand-alone mCGS use the standard Faculty Senate Proposal for New Academic Program template and must have a New Program Proposal Coversheet. Proposals for a new mCGS originate with interested faculty on campus, and must follow standard program proposal and review procedures. These include development and deliberation of a proposal at the Program and College level, and approval by relevant Program and College committees; submission of a proposal to the Graduate College for review and deliberation by the Graduate College Executive Committee; upon approval, submission of the proposal to the Provost, who requests review by the Faculty Senate Curricular Affairs Committee; upon approval, submission to the Board of Trustees for consideration and approval.

If a new mCGS is proposed that is affiliated with an existing CGS, the proposal should be in the form of a memo that includes specific rationale for the mCGS, any other information that would be different for the CGS and its own New Program Proposal Coversheet and abstract. Letters of support from the unit curriculum committee, the unit dean, and the Graduate Executive Committee must also be included along with a copy of the catalogue entry for the existing CGS should accompany the memo.

Proposers of a new mCGS will be encouraged to consider proposing a parallel CGS that the mCGS would feed into at the same time. The accompanying CGS proposal requires its own Cover Sheet and Abstract, but otherwise can follow the instructions in the preceding paragraph for a new mCGS affiliated with an existing CGS.

## **General Guidelines**

Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study have the following requirements:

1. The Graduate College is the managing entity for micro-Certificates of Graduate Study.
2. micro-Certificates of Graduate Study are awarded for academic credit taken at UVM, and all credits towards a mCGS must be completed at UVM within a 3-year period.
3. A faculty director administering the program and responsible for admissions and advising for the program must be a member of the UVM Graduate Faculty.
4. Students admitted to mCGS programs must be at the post-baccalaureate level, be admitted to the Graduate College before taking the final 9 credits of a mCGS, and must maintain a minimum 3.00 GPA in the mCGS curriculum to obtain the credential.
5. Students must complete a minimum 9 graded credits in the mCGS after admission to the Graduate College. Graduate credits taken at other institutions will not transfer into a UVM CGS, but up to 5 graduate level credits taken as a nondegree student at UVM will be considered for transfer for an mCGS with greater than 9 required credits.
6. A minimum of 9 and graded credits of graduate-level course work is required; however, a mCGS may require up to 14 credits.
7. Courses must be in a defined subject area, and drawn around the specific theme of the mCGS title.
8. A minimum of 6 credits must be identified as core requirements taken by every

- student.
9. Non-core (elective) courses must be chosen from a specific, published list of acceptable options.
  10. Students submit a Program Plan upon admission to the mCGS and must submit a Program Completion form to the Graduate College to initiate awarding of the credential.
  11. The mCGS will not be awarded retrospectively – a student must apply for admission to the mCGS prior to taking the final 9 credits. Micro-Certificates of Graduate Study are only offered to students actively enrolled in a mCGS program.
  12. Credits used for a mCGS may be applied toward an appropriate Certificate of Graduate Study, master's or doctoral degree at UVM, and conversely, credits applied toward a graduate degree at UVM may be applied toward an appropriate mCGS (i.e., credits may overlap between one mCGS and one degree or CGS). Credits taken for one mCGS may not be used to fulfill requirements for another mCGS.
  13. Confirmation that a micro-Certificate of Graduate Study has been completed will be indicated on a student's transcript, but will not appear in Commencement records.

## **Program Review**

micro-Certificates of Graduate Study are evaluated under the auspices of the standard academic program review processes when graduate programs of the College or School that delivers coursework towards a mCGS are being reviewed. Biannual review of the curriculum by the program faculty should be completed to determine whether the curriculum is meeting its learning outcomes. Substantial revisions must follow the Faculty Senate process; minor revisions are approved through the Graduate Executive Committee.