

## Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

### MEMO

**To:** The UVM Faculty Senate

**From:** Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Laura Almstead, Chair

**Date:** April 4, 2019

**Re:** Items approved by the Curricular Affairs Committee that do not require a Faculty Senate vote

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#### Request to transition the existing Master of Science in Dietetics (MSD) to an online program

The Department of Nutrition and Food Science (NFS) in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) submitted a proposal in conjunction with the Graduate College to transition the existing Master of Science in Dietetics (MSD) to an online program. Students will complete their coursework through online classes. As this is an accredited program, the course content will not be changed, only the mechanism of delivery. Additionally, students will still be required to complete supervised research for credit and 1,200 hours of supervised practice, but can do so where they live. A process for identifying preceptors and placing students in practicums outside Vermont has been developed as have mechanisms for advising students from a distance.

Currently, the Master of Science in Dietetics (MSD) is a residential program that includes 30 credits of coursework, evidence-based research credits, and 1,200 hours of supervised professional practice. Recruiting students to the program has been a challenge due to the relatively high cost of living and tuition for out-of-state students. Nationwide, the number of online MDS programs is increasing, and these programs are attractive to students because they have the opportunity to complete their supervised practice where they live. Converting UVM's program to an online format will put UVM in a better position to recruit students as well as expand diversity within the program by making it more accessible and affordable. This is an opportune time for the transition because in 2024 new professional regulations will go into effect that require students to have both a master's and a clinical practicum to become a practicing dietician. The current regulations only require a bachelor's degree and an internship/practicum.

The online format of the program will be available starting fall 2020 to allow the program time to transition courses to an online format and to determine best practices for distance supervision. Once the conversion is complete, only the online curriculum will be offered.

The proposal was supported by the Chair of NFS, Jean Harvey, the Dean of CALs, Thomas Vogelmann, the Dean of Continuing and Distance Education, Cynthia Belliveau, the Associate Dean for Public Health in the Larner College of Medicine, Jan Carney, and the Graduate College Executive Council.

## Substantial revision of the Individually Designed Major, BS Ed. in the College of Education and Social Services

The College of Education and Social Services (CESS) submitted a proposal to substantially revise the existing Individually Designed Major (IDM) available through CESS. The revisions will be in place starting fall 2019.

The IDM is an interdisciplinary program of studies that allows self-motivated students to explore their interests in children, families and communities, and the programs, policies, and processes that shape our communal and individual experiences. Students in the program make connect CESS courses with courses offered in other units to create a major unique to their needs and interests that are not met through other existing CESS majors. Completion of an IDM major leads to a Bachelor of Science in Education, but does not include an endorsement for teacher licensure.

The revisions were developed based on the identified need to provide more direction to students and faculty regarding course selection and to ensure that students will take a sampling of courses from across the three departments in CESS. Additionally, the creation of a capstone experience brings the program into alignment with the recently established UVM assessment planning practices and processes. The revisions also seek to align the program with the High Impact Educational Practices identified by the American Association of Universities and Colleges. The revisions include:

- 1) reducing the overall number of credits required to graduate from 128 to 120, bringing it into line with other CESS majors;
- 2) clarifying the CESS general education requirements and increasing the number of required general education requirements from 15 to 21;
- 3) adding a new requirement for a set of IDM core courses to be taken within CESS (15 to 18 credits);
- 4) requiring students take at least 3 credits of an applied experience (e.g., travel course, service learning or practicum experience) within the 30 credits of self-selected IDM courses;
- 5) requiring that a minimum of 12 self-selected credits be taken at the 100-level or above
- 6) requiring students to take an approved Minor or Undergraduate Certificate from any college within the university;
- 7) adding a requirement for a capstone project (e.g., research, practicum experience with research component) that promotes systematic inquiry into a problem of interest to them

As a whole, these changes will provide students greater clarity on expectations and requirements for an IDM as well as establish a more structured core curriculum. The learning outcomes for students completing the revised IDM are listed below. A mechanism for assessing the program was detailed in the proposal.

- Demonstrate basic skills in research in the behavioral/social sciences;
- Demonstrate ability to think critically and synthesize key concepts within a self-selected area of study;
- Demonstrate ability to ask, seek out, and articulate answers to complex questions about own culture and other cultures;
- Demonstrate ability to undertake a systematic inquiry (e.g., research or other capstone experience) within self-selected area of study;

- Apply a basic understanding derived through an introduction to education, social work, and human development and family studies in a final capstone project involving systematic inquiry into a problem of interest; and
- Clearly communicate results of the systematic inquiry orally and in writing

Appointment of a Faculty Coordinator to oversee program functions will facilitate program delivery. Students' proposed courses of study will require review and approval from a faculty advisor, the Office of Student Services, and the IDM Faculty Coordinator. The faculty advisor and IDM Faculty Coordinator will take responsibility for ensuring that the proposal meets the intended content focus of the IDM, while the review by the Office of Student Services and coordinator will ensure that students are on track to fulfill all major requirements. The letter of support from Interim Chair of Education Michael Giangreco indicated that Department of Education funds, with additional support from the CESS Dean's office, will be used to support the establishment of the new coordinator position and costs associated with instruction of the capstone course. The proposers indicate that there may be a small increase in the number of students choosing to pursue an IDM, but that this will not exceed existing capacity in the courses (support letters from faculty were provided).

In addition to the faculty support letters noted, letters of support were provided by the Dean of CESS, Scott Thomas, the Chair of the Department of Social Work, Jan Fook, the Chair of the Department of Leadership and Developmental Studies, Jan Okech, and the Interim Chair of the Department of Education, Michael Giangreco.