

MEMO

To: The UVM Faculty Senate

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

Date: November 5, 2020

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

Approval of a request to discontinue the College of Arts & Sciences Online Degree Completion Pathway

In January 2019, the CAC approved a request from the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) to establish a Bachelors of Arts degree completion pathway that included a major in Anthropology and a minor in either Writing or English as well as the University-wide General Education requirements and CAS distribution requirements. Since the pathway did not establish a new curriculum or program, the action did not require formal approval beyond the CAC, but was shared with Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees. Due to significantly lower than expected enrollments (currently seven students), the program is not financially sustainable, and therefore a request to discontinue the pathway was submitted to the CAC in October 2020.

The online degree completion pathway targeted non-traditional students that had completed at least 60 credits of college credits, including courses fulfilling the CAS general distribution requirements. Full-time students enrolled in a degree-seeking program at UVM within the previous two years were not eligible without a special waiver from the Dean.

At the time the pathway was requested, market analysis indicated an enrollment of 40 students in the first year, with 50 additional students in year two. Only seven students are currently enrolled in the pathway. The initial plan was to have faculty that teach the face-to-face versions of the courses to teach online sections on overload. Once enrollment increased, revenue from students in the program would be invested in hiring additional faculty. With such low enrollments, the pathway is not financially stable, and courses cannot continue to be taught on overload basis.

Professors Deborah Blom and Emily Manetta in Anthropology, as well as Amelia Wilcox in the Student Services team in the CAS Dean's office will work with each of the seven current students to develop plans that allow them to complete the program.

A couple responses were received during the public comment period that suggested online degree completion programs may become more attractive considering the current conditions; however no concerns regarding closure of this specific pathway were raised. The suggestion to consider establishment of a more University-wide online degree completion program with broad representation from all colleges/schools was shared with Jennifer Dickinson, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

Approval of New Concentrations in the Interprofessional Health Sciences PhD

The College of Nursing & Health Sciences (CNHS) in conjunction with the Graduate College submitted a proposal to add four concentrations to the existing Interprofessional Health Sciences PhD. Students in the program complete four research rotations, and the new concentrations represent research foci for these rotations. Many students already choose to complete their rotations within a specific research area. Establishing the four concentrations allows this to be documented on a student's transcript. No alterations to the existing curriculum is necessary to establish the concentrations.

The four concentrations are listed below. For each, students must complete three of the four required research rotations in that area, and work with their academic advisor, research mentor, and thesis committee to design appropriate projects. Additional criteria specific to each concentration are noted in the list. Example topics were provided for each concentration in the proposal.

- *Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD)*: three of four research rotations in the Department of CSD or a related field
- *Biomedical and Health Sciences (BHSc)*: three of four research rotations in the Department of BHSc or a related field
- *Rehabilitation and Movement Science (RMS)*: two regular (100 hr.) and one extended (200 hr.) research rotations in the Department of RMS or an RMS-approved research laboratory
- *Integrative Health*: three of four research rotations within and approved Integrative Health research setting and educational elective requirements; students encouraged to take advantage of UVM Integrative Health's membership in the Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine and Health and their Research Working Group

The proposal to add these concentrations was accompanied by letters of support from the CNHS Curriculum Committee and the Graduate College Executive Committee. The letter from the CNHS Curriculum Committee indicates that the proposal was approved by relevant department faculty. During the public comment period, a question was raised as to whether the Biomedical and Health Sciences concentration overlapped with the Cellular and Molecular Biology PhD program. The explanation that establishing the concentrations simply documents what most students already do – complete research rotations within a particular area – and does not alter the existing curriculum for the Interprofessional Health Sciences PhD was acknowledged, and no additional questions or concerns shared with the CAC.