

# **CERTIFICATES OF GRADUATE STUDY**

## **Policies and Operational Procedures Graduate College, University of Vermont**

**Policies effective: May 9, 2012**

**\*Revisions currently in Progress**

### **1. Basic Requirements**

Certificates of Graduate Study were approved as separate degree offerings by the UVM Board of Trustees on January 7, 2004.

Certificates of Graduate Study are intended to enhance the graduate degree programs of UVM (for students already enrolled in graduate programs), as well as provide opportunities for non-matriculated students to develop professional skills that will enhance their career options.

As approved, Certificates of Graduate Study have the following requirements:

- a. The Graduate College is the managing entity for Certificates of Graduate Study.
- b. Certificates of Graduate Study are awarded for academic credit taken at UVM, and all credits towards a Certificate of Graduate Study must be completed at UVM within a 5-year period. Graduate credits taken at other institutions will not transfer into a UVM Certificate of Graduate Study.
- c. Students admitted to Certificate programs must be at the post-baccalaureate level, and must maintain a minimum 3.00 GPA.
- d. A minimum of 15 graded credits of graduate-level course work is required.
  - \* Courses must be in a defined subject area, and drawn around the specific theme of the Certificate title.
  - \* A minimum of 9 of the 15 credits must be identified as core requirements, and chosen from a limited, published list of options.
  - \* Non-core courses must be chosen from a specific, published list of acceptable options.
  - \* As with all other graduate academic programs, course / program requirements for Certificates of Graduate Study must be approved by the Graduate Executive Committee and other University governing boards, after review within College curriculum committees. Revisions must follow similar review processes.
- e. Credits used for a Certificate of Graduate Study may be applied toward an appropriate master's or doctoral degree at UVM, and conversely, credits applied toward a graduate degree at UVM may be applied toward an appropriate Certificate of Graduate Study (i.e., credits may overlap between one certificate and one degree). Credits taken for one Certificate of Graduate Study may not be used to fulfill requirements for another

Certificate of Graduate Study.

## **2. Application to Certificate of Graduate Study Programs**

The policy of the Graduate College is that admission decisions must be finalized prior to the start of a semester (first day of classes in fall, spring, or summer session), and late admission decisions will not be approved retroactively. Applicants must submit all required materials well in advance of the semester in which they wish to matriculate, so that program faculty and chairs have suitable time to review materials and make admission recommendations to the Graduate College before the semester begins. Admission decisions made after the first day of classes in any semester will be for subsequent semesters.

To be considered for admission to a UVM Graduate Certificate Program, applicants should follow one of the four procedures (a, b, c, d) outlined below, depending on their status and goals.

### **a. DUAL GRADUATE DEGREE / CERTIFICATE PROGRAM APPLICANTS: Applicants who are applying at the same time for both a regular graduate degree program and also for a Certificate of Graduate Study at UVM:**

Applicants should follow regular procedures for applying to the UVM Graduate College; see the Graduate College application web pages and information at:  
[https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application\\_instructions](https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application_instructions)

In addition to indicating the Department/Program to which you are applying on pages 1 and 2 of the Graduate College's on-line application form, indicate your interest in obtaining a Certificate of Graduate Study by marking the box on page 3 ("Personal Statement") of the application. Write in the name of the certificate you wish to pursue (for example, "Certificate of Graduate Study in Complex Systems"), and explain in your statement why you wish to study for that Certificate of Graduate Study in addition to your desired graduate degree program.

The regular \$40 fee for on-line applications will be charged. There is no additional application fee for applying to both a regular graduate degree program and also a graduate certificate program simultaneously.

Students who are applying for both a graduate degree program and for a Certificate of Graduate Study will first be evaluated for consideration into the master's or doctoral degree program. If the student is accepted into the graduate degree program, faculty reviewers should indicate their level of support for simultaneous enrollment in the graduate certificate program. Faculty associated with the Certificate program will then review the application and notify the Graduate college of Acceptance or denial of admission to the Certificate program. If a student is denied admission for a degree program, faculty reviewers associated with the Certificate Program should indicate the applicant's suitability for pursuing a Certificate of Graduate Study as a stand-alone program of study.

In either case, the Degree Program and Certificate Program should make two distinct recommendations to the Graduate College regarding the applicant's acceptance into: (a) the

degree program, and (b) the certificate program. Two recommendations are needed for purposes of tracking and enrollment management.

**b. APPLICANTS TO CERTIFICATE OF GRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMS ONLY: Applicants seeking to enroll only in a Certificate of Graduate Study program (and not to a graduate degree program):**

Persons who are not currently enrolled in a UVM graduate program, and who are not seeking to enroll in a masters or doctoral UVM graduate program, but who are seeking admission to a Certificate of Graduate Study program, should follow regular on-line procedures for applying to the UVM Graduate College. These are described and can be accessed at:

[https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application\\_instructions](https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application_instructions)

The regular UVM application fee of \$40 will be charged. Transcripts of prior academic work (including evidence of undergraduate degree completion), description of relevant professional experience, three recommendations, a resume, and any other information required by the program, should be submitted as part of this application.

**c. CURRENT UVM DEGREE PROGRAM STUDENTS: Students who are currently admitted and enrolled in degree programs at UVM who wish to apply for a Certificate of Graduate Study:**

Students currently enrolled in master's or doctoral programs should complete the one-page Certificate Short Form Application that is posted on the Graduate College website under "Faculty and Current Student Resources: For Students." Access this form at:

<https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/CertificateApplicationCurrentStudents.pdf>

Note that some programs require additional information from students at the time of application; often this includes a statement about why you are interested in pursuing a Certificate of Graduate Study. Please see program guidelines for application requirements, and submit all requested materials along with your completed application form to the Graduate College.

This is a paper form that must be signed by the student and the student's advisor in the graduate degree-granting program, and then submitted to the Graduate College Office (330 Waterman) for review by the certificate-granting program and Graduate College. Submit this form before completing more than 9 credits towards a Certificate of Graduate Study, since students must register for and complete at least 6 credits towards a certificate after admission to a Certificate Program.

Once this form has been received by the Graduate College, we will contact the Graduate Program Coordinator of the desired Certificate Program, who – after reviewing the materials with relevant faculty reviewers – will make a recommendation to the Graduate College about whether to admit the student to the Certificate program. The Graduate College will then inform the student and his/her degree-granting program of the decision. There is no additional fee for submitting this form, but the form is need for enrollment tracking and management purposes. As

long as a student is in good standing and is making progress towards a graduate degree, no additional transcripts or recommendations need to be submitted beyond those already previously submitted for admission to the regular master's or doctoral graduate program.

**d. CURRENT UVM MEDICAL STUDENTS OR APPLICANTS APPLYING TO BOTH THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AND A CERTIFICATE OF GRADUATE STUDY: Applicants seeking to enroll in a Certificate of Graduate Study program concurrent with enrollment in the Doctor of Medicine Program:**

Students who are currently enrolled in the UVM Doctor of Medicine Program, or who are applying to the Doctor of Medicine Program and who are seeking admission to a Certificate of Graduate Study program should follow regular online procedures for applying to the UVM Graduate College. These are described and can be accessed at:

[https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application\\_instructions](https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application_instructions)

The regular UVM application fee of \$40 will be charged. Transcripts of prior academic work (including evidence of undergraduate degree completion), description of relevant professional experience, three recommendations, a resume, and any other information required by the program, should be submitted as part of this application. The Graduate College will accept a copy of the student's AMCAS application to the College of Medicine if the student gives the College of Medicine permission to send the graduate College the file and the College of Medicine agrees to provide a copy of the file. The AMCAS file does not substitute for the online application form; it serves only to provide transcripts, resume and letters of recommendation.

### **3. Application Processing**

On-line applications for Certificates of Graduate Study from non-matriculated students or students in or applying to the College of Medicine Doctor of Medicine degree (categories 2a, 2c and 2d above) will be processed by the Graduate College according to standard processes. Graduate Program Coordinators will be notified through gradappl when materials are complete and ready for review.

Programs are expected to coordinate a process of internal review of applications for Certificate of Graduate Study admissions. Typically, small groups of knowledgeable faculty review and deliberate about applications, then make a recommendation to admit or deny to the School / College's Graduate Program Coordinator. The Graduate Program Coordinator or their designee should then make a recommendation to admit / deny to the Graduate College through gradappl. Applicants are typically notified of their status by the Graduate College within two days of receipt of a Program's recommendation.

Paper-based applications for Certificates of Graduate Study from matriculated students (category 2c, above) will be processed by the Graduate College, shared with Schools / Colleges for review and recommendation, and students will be notified by the Graduate College after admission decisions have been made. Students accepted into Certificate of Graduate Study programs must complete all requirements for that program as well as for their regular degree program, in compliance with Graduate College policy.

#### **4. Certificate Program Plans and Coursework**

By the end of the first semester of enrollment in a Certificate of Graduate Study program, a student must complete a *Certificate of Graduate Study Program Plan*, obtain appropriate signatures, and file a copy with their Department / College (and the Department / College of the Certificate program, if different from the regular degree program), and with the Graduate College. The required form for the Certificate of Graduate Study Program Plan is posted on the Graduate College website under “Resources: For Students” and can be accessed at: [http://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/CGSprogramplan\\_0.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/CGSprogramplan_0.pdf)

Each approved Certificate of Graduate Study is intended to cover a substantive, independent body of knowledge that is reasonably distinct from regular coursework in graduate degree programs. Coursework for each Certificate must comprise a logical cluster of courses and learning experiences, grouped into core courses and elective courses. Special topics courses, readings courses, and so on, used for Certificate credit, must be moved to regular course numbering in a timely fashion.

Certificates of Graduate Study represent value-added enhancements and additions to graduate degree programs, and in principle, there should not be a complete overlap between courses taken for a graduate degree and for a Certificate of Graduate Study.

Certificates of Graduate Study require graduate-level coursework (200 or 300-level courses approved for graduate credit). No 100-level courses, or 200-level courses not approved for graduate study, may be used to complete certificate requirements. Courses for Certificates of Graduate Study may not be taught for less than the number of credits regularly required and approved for that graduate course.

Programs must publicize specific lists of core (required) and elective courses on their College website. Certificates of Graduate Study must be identified using that terminology, and websites must indicate that these Certificates are offered by the Graduate College.

All credits counting towards a Certificate of Graduate Study must be taken at UVM. Students must take at least 6 of these credits after admission into a certificate program.

#### **5. Certificate Completion**

For students enrolled in degree programs as well as in certificate programs, the Certificate will be awarded when the coursework for that Certificate has been completed (even if requirements for the graduate master’s, doctoral or Doctor of Medicine degree are met at a later date).

Before the last day of classes in the semester during which a student will complete his or her coursework for the certificate, a student should fill out a *Certificate of Graduate Study Completion Form*, obtain appropriate signatures, and file a copy with his or her degree-granting program, the certificate-granting program (if different from the home Program), and the

Graduate College. Certificate of Graduate Study Completion Forms are available on the Graduate College website under “Resources: For Students,” and can be accessed at: [http://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/CGScompletionform\\_0.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/CGScompletionform_0.pdf)

No Certificates of Graduate Study will be awarded retrospectively – a student must submit an application for admission to a Certificate program by the end of the first semester in which they are taking courses towards that certificate, and they must be formally accepted into a certificate program for credits to accrue towards a certificate. Certificates of Graduate Study are only offered to students who are actively enrolled in a certificate program.

Confirmation that a Certificate of Graduate Study has been completed will be indicated on a student’s transcript. Students will also receive a paper certificate.

## **6. Program Review**

Certificates of Graduate Study are programs of the Graduate College at UVM, and as such, they cannot be offered under other names or independent outreach arrangements. Likewise, it is a University policy that students taking courses pay fees appropriate to the number of listed credit hours for each course in which they enroll.

Certificates of Graduate Study should be evaluated under the auspices of standard program review processes when graduate programs of the College or School that delivers coursework towards a certificate are being reviewed (or every five years). Some Certificate of Graduate Study proposals require yearly internal review. If there are notable changes to certificate curricula, programs must re-submit course change proposals for review by the Graduate College Executive Committee.

## **7. Proposals for New Certificates of Graduate Study**

Proposals for Certificates of Graduate Study 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. Board of Trustees approval must precede formal marketing of the Certificate Program.