



Senate

Policy Name	Graduate Certificates and Diplomas
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Responsibility for Implementation	Dean of Graduate Studies and Professional Studies

Purpose

Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas are intended to allow students to specialize in area of research-based or professional interest, to foster a critical engagement with research as related to professional practice, and to address a specific need at a depth not currently offered by an existing credential. They are normally intended for a defined audience. They may be stand-alone credentials or they may constitute part of a degree program, and often may involve collaboration across programs. Upon completion of certificate or diploma requirements, students may apply to a degree program and may be able to transfer certificate and/or diploma courses towards the degree requirements. Certificates and Diplomas are not intended to provide an abridged version of an existing degree program.

Scope

Certificate and Diploma programs usually are directed at specific domains or are designed to address a specific need. They may also be developed to permit internationally trained individuals to complete a credential that may enable Canadian employer/certification entity recognition of international credentials. The unit value for a Certificate will be 1.5 or 2.0 units and the Diploma will be 3.0 units.

Policy

Policies and Procedures for the Development of New Academic Programs (Approved 2009) must be followed in developing a new certificate or diploma. In addition, the following criteria must be addressed:

Program Identification: Faculty, Department, Program name, Credential (certificate or diploma, and proposed start date must be provided.

Admission Requirements: The basic admission requirement will be an undergraduate degree in a field that provides required background for the certificate or diploma, with a GPA of 3.0 (B) or better. Conditional acceptance may be an option when there is prerequisite academic content. If a required course for the credential has an undergraduate course as a prerequisite, successful completion of the undergraduate course may be set as a condition for admission to the graduate credential.

Course Requirements and Inter-department Collaboration: The course requirements can consist of existing courses, a combination of new and existing courses, or entirely new courses. A new capstone course or project course is normally required for diploma programs. Graduate courses cross-listed with senior-level undergraduate courses can be included as long as the proposal contains a detailed description of the course requirements that distinguish the cross-listed course as a graduate-level course. In instances of inter-program collaboration, at least one of the partners should currently offer a graduate degree.

Online Delivery: Since these programs will often be offered in multiple-access, blended, and totally online formats, evidence of consultation with Distance Learning and Continuing Education must be included, as well as a description of requirements for technology, training, and support to enable online delivery.

Course Scheduling and Sequencing: Given the requirement that graduate students are required to complete a minimum of 1.0 unit per year to maintain registration, a description of course sequencing must be provided, including how many semesters it will take students for complete program requirements, whether students will be able to begin the program requirements at the start of any semester, whether staggered course offerings are being contemplated, and whether courses will be offered in the summer terms.

Student Outcomes and Their Relevance: The expected outcomes, along with the means for achieving them, must be outlined, as well as how experiential learning will be featured. The MPHEC Policy on Quality Assurance: Program Assessment provides an example of how learning outcomes can be linked student learning.

Resource Implications: A description of resource requirements must be included, including any requirements for particular classrooms and/or laboratories, library holdings, software, hardware, personnel, advertising, and any resource requirements needed to start up the program. If additional resources are required, evidence of consultation must be included (e.g., memo from University Librarian, Director of IT&S, Dean). If it is anticipated that the proposed program will have an impact on existing programs, the impact must be described, along with evidence of consultation with affected programs.

Relationship to Other Programs and Institutions: If the proposal includes courses from other programs, evidence of support from relevant Mount programs and/or programs at other universities must accompany the proposal.

Transferability to/from a Degree: The proposal should state whether this is a stand-alone credential or whether there are opportunities to apply to transfer into existing programs. If transfer options are being proposed, please specify:

- To which degree programs could graduates of the certificate or diploma programs apply to enter with transfer credit
- The transfer credit that can be brought into the degree
- How students currently registered in a degree could apply to transfer into this certificate or diploma.

Program Need: The purpose or need that will be met by the program should be described. This may include a market assessment report. The potential audience, including expected enrolment, for the credential should be described, including regional, national, and international demand.

Procedures

The approval process will consist of consideration by the Graduate Studies Program and Policy Committee, the Committee on Academic Policy and Planning, the University Senate, and the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission.