SENATE POLICY: O-127

Number & Title

O-127.2: Diploma Programs

Effective Date:

1 September 2024

Approval Date:

16 May 2024

Review Date:

This policy shall be reviewed five (5) years after approval and thereafter as deemed necessary by the Responsible Committee. The review should be completed concurrently with the reviews of policy O-128: Academic-Credit Certificate Programs and policy O-129: Non-Credit Credentials.

Responsible Committee:

Senate Curriculum Committee

Authority:

University Act, S. 37(1)

“The academic governance of the university is vested in the senate and it has the following powers:

...(f) to consider, approve and recommend to the board the revision of courses of study, instruction and education in all faculties and departments of the university...

and,

...(h) to provide for and to grant degrees, including honorary degrees, diplomas and certificates of proficiency, except in theology;”...
University Act, S. 40

“A faculty has the following powers and duties:

...(d) to determine, subject to the approval of the senate, the courses of
instruction in the faculty”...

Purpose and Goals:

The purpose of this policy is to:

1) Define Diploma Programs;
2) Establish categories for and associated admission requirements for Diploma Programs;
3) Outline criteria for establishment of Diploma Programs;
4) Delineate an approval process for Diploma Programs; and
5) Define the parameters for double-counting of credits and Laddering opportunities.

Applicability:

This policy is applicable to all Diploma Programs, approved on or after the effective date of this policy, offered by the University through the Faculties of the Okanagan campus.

Exclusions:

None.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy and all other Okanagan Senate policies in which they are not otherwise defined:

- Course of Instruction shall mean a course assigned a credit value and designated by an alpha-numeric course code which is offered by a Faculty and approved by the Okanagan Senate or Vancouver Senate.

- Course of Study shall mean a sequence of Courses of Instruction and other requirements approved by the Okanagan Senate or Vancouver Senate to constitute a degree, diploma, certificate or other academic program, or part thereof, such as a major, minor, or specialization.
- **Diploma Program** shall mean a *Course of Study* that conforms to the requirements of this policy and is approved by the *Okanagan Senate*.

- **Laddering** shall mean the application of credit earned as part of a completed *Course of Study* towards a different *Course of Study*.

- **Previously-Earned UBC Credit** shall mean academic credit earned at the University of British Columbia (Okanagan or Vancouver campuses) prior to a Student’s enrollment in a *Course of Study*.

- **Transfer Credit** shall mean academic credit earned at a post-secondary institution other than The University of British Columbia (Okanagan or Vancouver campuses) or through a program other than one offered by The University of British Columbia (Okanagan or Vancouver campuses) for which credit applicable towards the completion of a *Course of Study* is granted.

**Policy:**

1) Categories of *Diploma Programs*

   a. Post-baccalaureate Diploma
      i. Typical minimum admission requirements are equivalent to UBC Okanagan general undergraduate-level admission requirements including the English Language Admission Standard, and program-specific admission requirements. An undergraduate degree from a recognized post-secondary institution will also normally be required.
      ii. Program completion should normally require 30 to 60 upper-division (300-400) level credits.
      iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to the upper-division of UBC’s undergraduate degree programs.

   b. Graduate Diploma
      i. Typical minimum admission requirements are equivalent to UBC Okanagan graduate-level admission requirements including the English Language Proficiency Requirement, an undergraduate degree from a recognized post-secondary institution, and program-specific admission requirements.
      ii. Program completion should normally require 30 to 60 graduate-level credits.
iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to UBC’s graduate degree programs.

iv. As graduate-level diplomas are similar in length to professional masters (course-based) programs, graduate-level diplomas are discouraged unless a compelling rationale is provided by the proposing Faculty or Faculties.

v. May be combined with masters or doctoral degrees to create dual degree/diploma programs.

c. Post-graduate Diploma
   i. Typical minimum admission requirements are equivalent to UBC Okanagan graduate-level admission requirements including the English Language Proficiency Requirement and program-specific admission requirements. A graduate degree from a recognized post-secondary institution will also normally be required.
   ii. Program completion should normally require 30 to 60 graduate-level credits.
   iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to that of UBC graduate degree programs.

d. The University may approve only Diploma Programs that comply with the requirements of one of the above listed categories. The formal title of any Diploma Program must include the title of the Diploma Program category to which it belongs.

e. Diploma Programs at the lower-division undergraduate-level (100-200 level) shall not be approved.

f. Non-credit Diploma Programs shall not be approved.

2) Establishment Criteria

a. In order to be considered for Senate approval, a proposed Diploma Program must:
   i. Consist of subject matter appropriate to university-level teaching;
   ii. Align with a Diploma Program category as defined in this policy;
   iii. Focus on a clear purpose, such as skills acquisition, disciplinary or interdisciplinary knowledge enhancement, career progression and professional development, or a combination of the aforementioned.
   iv. Demonstrate a cohesive theme through an integrated sequence of learning opportunities and include a coherent organization around clearly-defined learning
objectives and outcomes, assessed in an academically rigorous manner that is consistent with University standards (i.e. simply bundling the requisite number of credits using existing Courses of Instruction does not qualify as a diploma);

v. Clearly indicate credit requirements and any Transfer Credit regulations, and required timeframe for completion; and

vi. Be operationally viable, as determined by the Dean(s) of the responsible Faculty or Faculties, the College of Graduate Studies (for graduate Diploma Programs only), and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.

3) Approval Process

a. Diploma Programs require the approval of the proposing Faculty or Faculties, the College of Graduate Studies (for graduate Diploma Programs only), the Senate Curriculum Committee (program requirements), Senate Admissions & Awards Committee (admission requirements), Senate, and Board of Governors.

b. New Courses of Instruction that will form part of a Diploma Program must be approved in the manner by which new Courses of Instruction are typically approved.

c. Proposals to create new Courses of Instruction that will form part of a Diploma Program must demonstrate academic rigor equivalent to that which is normally required for a Course of Instruction.

4) Academic Calendar Inclusion

a. Admission and program completion requirements of approved Diploma Programs must appear in the Academic Calendar.

5) Credit Recognition and Transfer Credit to a Diploma Program

a. Previously-Earned UBC Credit and Transfer Credit from external institutions will be accepted as determined by the receiving Diploma Program in accordance with University regulations.
6) Administrative Responsibility

a. Administrative responsibility for post-baccalaureate Diploma Programs offered by the Faculties will be held by the Registrar.

b. Administrative responsibility for graduate and post-graduate Diploma Programs will be held by the College of Graduate Studies unless administration by one or more Faculties is approved by the Senate Academic Policy Committee and Senate.

7) Academic Responsibility

a. Academic responsibility for post-baccalaureate Diploma Programs offered by the Faculties will be held solely by the Faculties.

b. Academic responsibility for graduate and post-graduate Diploma Programs will be held by one or more Faculties with the support of the College of Graduate Studies.

8) Student Rights and Responsibilities

a. Students registered in Diploma Programs have all the rights and responsibilities of UBC Students as set out in the University Act, RSBC 1996, c 468, and University policy and regulations.

b. For purposes of tuition and fee regulation and services provided, individuals registered in Diploma Programs shall be registered as Students.

9) Conferral

a. Upon successful completion of a Diploma Program, a notation on the Student’s academic transcript will be made indicating that the Diploma Program has been completed.

b. Indication of the Diploma Program category (academic level), as defined in this policy, should be noted on the academic transcript, and parchment. This is accomplished by including the title of one of the Diploma Program categories identified in this policy in the title of the Diploma Program.

c. Graduates of Diploma Programs are granted a diploma by Senate and will receive a diploma parchment issued and signed by University representatives, typically representatives of the Faculty or Faculties offering the
program or of the College of Graduate Studies.

d. Graduates of Diploma Programs do not attend the convocation ceremony.

10) Double-Counting of Credits

a. Credits earned in Courses of Instruction applicable towards a Diploma Program may also be applied towards a degree program with the approval of Senate, the Faculty or Faculties offering the degree program, or in the case of graduate programs, the College of Graduate Studies, and the Faculty or Faculties offering the Diploma Program. Normally, credits must be earned within five years of commencement of the degree program. A request to apply credits completed more than five years prior to the start of a degree program will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Faculty or Faculties offering the degree program and, in the case of graduate programs, the College of Graduate Studies.

b. Credits that have been applied towards a completed Diploma Program may not be counted towards another Diploma Program.

11) Laddering from a Diploma Program

a. A successfully completed Diploma Program may only be Laddered into a related degree program if permitted by the receiving degree program regulations. If so permitted by the receiving program, some or all credits may Ladder, at the discretion of the receiving program. Successful completion of a Diploma Program does not guarantee admission into any other Course of Study.

Calendar Statement:

There are no calendar statements under this policy.

Consultations:

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy:

Enrolment Services
    Registrar
    Deputy Registrar
    Records &
    Registration
History:

This is the second version of this policy for the Okanagan campus. This version removes the Senate Admissions & Awards Committee as a responsible committee, clarifies the role and responsibility of the College of Graduate Studies, and makes minor editorial amendments. The first version was approved and effective 17 May 2018.

Related Policies:

O-128: Academic-Credit Certificate Programs
O-129: Non-Credit Credentials

Appendix:

There is no appendix to this policy.

Procedures:

None.