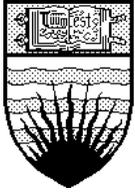


# THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



March 13, 2008

**CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**  
**Vancouver Senate**  
2016 - 1874 East Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z1

To: Senate  
From: Senate Curriculum Committee  
  
Re: Policy on the Approval of Certificate Programs

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## **Policy on the Approval of Certificate Programs**

Changes to the Policy on the Approval of Certificate Programs were approved by Senate at the 27 February 2008 meeting. The document which follows more clearly defines the criteria for the establishment of a Certificate Program by describing what is meant by “university-level” (Section II.1).

**Motion:**        *“That the proposed revisions to the Policy on the Approval of Certificate Programs be approved.”*

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Marshall, Chair  
Senate Curriculum Committee

## POLICY ON THE APPROVAL OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

### I. Definition of a Certificate Program

1. A Certificate Program normally consists of specialized, certificate-credit courses offered at a university level. It may also draw from University degree-credit courses. Student assessment in certificate-credit courses should be consistent with University standards.
2. The program of study should be equivalent to a minimum of one-half year (approximately 150 hours) and a maximum of one-full year of University study. The hours that make up the program may include classroom study, online course work and special projects or practicum placements.
3. Minimum admission requirements should be secondary school graduation with some exceptions for mature students where appropriate records of equivalent life/work experience are provided and deemed acceptable by those evaluating admissions. Normal admission requirements may require some post-secondary education or professional work experience.

### II. Criteria for Establishment of Certificate Programs

1. A Certificate Program may be initiated only when the subject matter is appropriate to university-level teaching and research. University level can include: 1) programs that develop applied skills in a theoretical context; 2) preparatory or transitional programs that support strategic goals of the university, such as encouraging access for under-represented student groups. Programs may be developed collaboratively among academic units and Continuing Studies, or with appropriate program partners external to the University that bring added value to the Certificate Program.
2. A Certificate Program must have clearly defined educational objectives and may be oriented toward career development or achievement of professional standing.
3. A Certificate Program must be developed and maintained under the guidance of an Advisory Committee with representation from appropriate academic units as dictated by the program content. The Advisory Committee may also include representation from Continuing Studies, other academic institutions, employers, professional associations, labour groups, or others as appropriate. The Advisory Committee must consult with any academic unit affected by the proposal and include the results of that consultation with the program proposal.
4. The role of the Advisory Committee is to review the proposed Certificate Program with respect to curriculum, program format, evaluation procedures, admission criteria, assessment of internal and external resources (including library collections and student services), financial feasibility and market demand.

### III. Program Approval Process

1. The proposed Certificate Program must be approved in principle by the appropriate Dean (or his/her designate) within the academic units involved or the Director of Continuing Education. Faculties may establish their own internal approval processes in addition to those outlined in this policy.
2. Upon approval by the Advisory Committee, the full program proposal is forwarded to the academic units involved or the Director of Continuing Education, as appropriate, for approval and the summary report is forwarded to the Senate Curriculum Committee for final approval. The Curriculum Committee will normally require that a budgetary impact form and the results of any consultation be submitted with the proposal.

#### IV. Program Administration and Management

1. Implementing and maintaining appropriate administrative policies and procedures, student support services, financial administration and marketing activities are the responsibility of the academic unit that has consented to administer the program. Given the experience and infrastructure within Continuing Studies, academic units are encouraged to work with Continuing Studies in this regard.
2. Admission requirements should be clearly specified for each Certificate Program, including the appropriate academic background and life/work experience required. A process for students to appeal refused entry to a program should also be specified. Each associated academic unit is responsible for upholding the rigor of the admissions process to ensure integrity and equitable treatment in the selection of students.
3. Grading systems and completion requirements should be clearly delineated for the individual courses that make up the Certificate Program and for the program as a whole. The University grading system or another system deemed appropriate for a particular program may be used, but in all cases the assessment criteria must be available for review by students applying for the program and registering in courses within the program.
4. Standards for student conduct (deportment in the classroom when relating to fellow students and instructors, appropriate use of learning technologies, etc.) must be clearly specified for each Certificate Program. Consequences of failing to uphold these standards should also be specified. Appeals should be limited to progression through three levels: instructor, program director and finally the Director of Continuing Education or Faculty Dean as appropriate.

#### V. Program Review Process

To ensure continuing quality and relevance, each Certificate Program is subject to review by Continuing Studies and/or by the academic unit offering the program within a specified time period not to exceed five years.

#### VI. Awarding of Certificates

Certificate Program graduates are not conferred a certificate by the Senate and will not attend congregation. However, program graduates will receive a certificate signed by appropriate officers of the University.

#### VII. Program Partnership Considerations

1. Certificate Programs may be offered through partnerships established between two or more academic units. The sponsoring units will determine their respective academic and administrative responsibilities. Agreements on all financial arrangements should be reached prior to program commencement.
2. Certificate Programs may also be offered via partnerships established between a UBC academic unit and one or more external organizations. The sponsoring partners will determine their respective administrative responsibilities; however primary academic responsibility must reside with the UBC academic unit that sponsors the program. Agreements on all financial arrangements should be reached prior to program commencement. Programs are awarded by the UBC academic unit, but may include reference to external sponsors through such means as sponsor logos on official documents and/or marketing materials.