

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



SENATE POLICY:  
V-128

VANCOUVER SENATE  
c/o Enrolment Services  
2016 - 1874 East Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z1

**Number & Title**

V-128: *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*

**Effective Date:**

1 September 2023

**Approval Date:**

15 February 2023

**Review Date:**

This policy shall be reviewed five (5) years after approval and thereafter as deemed necessary by the *Responsible Committee*.

**Responsible Committee:**

Curriculum

**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:**

This policy is designed to:

- 1) Define *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*;
- 2) Establish categories for and associated admission requirements for *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*;
- 3) Outline criteria for establishment of *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*;
- 4) Delineate an approval process for *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*;
- 5) Define where Academic and Administrative responsibilities for *Academic-Credit Certificates* lie, and
- 6) Define the parameters for double-counting of credits, *Laddering* opportunities, and concurrent registration.

**Applicability:**

This policy is applicable to all *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*, approved on or after the effective date of this policy, offered by the University through the faculties of the Vancouver campus.

**Exclusions:**

This policy does not apply to non-credit programming.

**Definitions:**

For the purposes of this policy:

*Academic-Credit Certificate Program* shall mean a *Course of Study* approved by the Vancouver Senate that conforms to the requirements of this policy.

*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 Vancouver Senate.

*Course of Study* shall mean a sequence of *Courses of Instruction* and other requirements approved by the Vancouver Senate to constitute a degree, diploma, certificate or other academic program, or part thereof, such as a major, minor, or specialization.

*Laddering* shall mean the application of credit earned as part of a completed *Course of Study* towards a specified *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 registration 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 *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*
  - a. Undergraduate Certificate
    - i. Minimum admission requirements are normally equivalent to UBC Vancouver general undergraduate-level admission requirements including the English Language Admission Standard, and program-specific admission requirements.
    - ii. Program completion should normally require 9-29 undergraduate course credits (those numbered 100 to 499). Where course credits are outside this range, proponents must provide an academic rationale for the variation.
    - iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to UBC's undergraduate degree programs.
  - b. Post-baccalaureate Certificate
    - i. Minimum admission requirements are normally equivalent to UBC Vancouver general undergraduate-level admission requirements, including 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 9-29 upper-division course credits (those numbered 300 to 499). Where course credits are outside this range, proponents must provide an academic rationale for the variation.
    - iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to the upper-division (300- or 400-level) of UBC's undergraduate degree programs.

- c. Graduate Certificate
  - i. Minimum admission requirements are normally equivalent to those of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for admission to a master's program.
  - ii. Program completion should normally require 9-15 course credits, of which at least 50% must be numbered 500 to 699. Where course credits are outside this range, proponents must provide an academic rationale for the variation.
  - iii. Academic rigor and assessment level should be equivalent to UBC's graduate degree programs.
  - iv. Academic regulations will normally follow Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies policies.
- d. The formal title of any *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* must include the title of the *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* category to which it belongs.

## 2) Establishment Criteria

- a. In order to be considered for Senate approval, a proposed *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* must:
  - i. Consist of subject matter appropriate to university-level teaching;
  - ii. Align with an *Academic-Credit Certificate 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;
  - v. Clearly indicate credit requirements and any *Transfer Credit* regulations, and required timeframe to completion; and
  - vi. Be operationally viable, as determined by the Dean(s) of the responsible faculty or faculties and the Office of the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.

## 3) Approval Process

- a. *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* require the approval of the proposing faculty or faculties, Senate Curriculum Committee

(program requirements), Senate Admissions Committee (admission requirements), Senate, and Board of Governors.

- b. *New Courses of Instruction* that will form part of an *Academic-Credit Certificate 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 an *Academic-Credit Certificate 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 *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* must appear in the Academic Calendar.
- 5) Credit Recognition and *Transfer Credit* to an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*
- a. *Previously-Earned UBC Credit* and *Transfer Credit* from external institutions will be accepted as determined by the receiving *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* in accordance with University regulations. At least 50% of the credits applied towards an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* must be UBC credits.
- 6) Administrative Responsibility
- a. Administrative responsibility for undergraduate and post-baccalaureate *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* offered by the faculties will be held by the proposing faculty.
  - b. Administrative responsibility for graduate-level *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* will be held by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Responsibilities may be delegated to other units, according to the procedures included in this policy.
- 7) Academic Responsibility
- a. Academic responsibility for undergraduate and post-baccalaureate *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* offered by the faculties will be held solely by the faculties.
  - b. Academic responsibility for graduate *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* will be held by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral

Studies. Responsibility for development and delivery of academic instruction will be held solely by the faculties.

8) Student Rights and Responsibilities

- a. Students registered in *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* have all the rights and responsibilities of UBC students as set out in the *University Act*, RSBC, c 468, and University policy and regulations.
- b. For purposes of tuition and fee regulation and services provided, individuals registered in *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* shall be registered as students in the appropriate credential category and classification.

9) Conferral

- a. Upon successful completion of an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*, a notation on the student's academic transcript will be made indicating that the *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* has been completed.
- b. Indication of the *Academic-Credit Certificate 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 *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* categories identified in this policy in the title of the *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*.
- c. Graduates of *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* are granted a certificate by Senate and will receive a certificate issued and signed by University representatives, typically representatives of the faculty or faculties offering the *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*.
- d. Graduates of *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs* do not attend the convocation ceremony.

10) Double-Counting of Credits

- a. Credits earned in *Courses of Instruction* applicable towards an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* may only be applied towards another *Course of Study* with the approval of Senate, the faculty or faculties offering the *Course of Study*, and the faculty or faculties offering the *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*. Normally, credits must be earned within five years of commencement of the *Course of Study*. A request to apply credits completed more than

five years prior to the start of the *Course of Study* will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the faculty or faculties offering the *Course of Study*, or in the case of graduate programs, the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

- b. Credits that have been applied towards an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* may not be counted towards another *Academic-Credit Certificate Program*.
- 11) *Laddering from an Academic-Credit Certificate Program*
- a. A successfully completed *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* may only be laddered into a related *Course of Study* if permitted by the receiving *Course of Study* regulations and not otherwise prohibited by any University, campus, faculty, program, or other policy or regulation. If so permitted by the receiving *Course of Study*, some or all credits may ladder, at the discretion of the receiving *Course of Study*. Successful completion of an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* does not guarantee admission into any other *Course of Study*.
- 12) *Concurrent Registration in an Academic-Credit Certificate Program and another Course of Study*
- a. A student registered in a *Course of Study* may concurrently register in an *Academic-Credit Certificate Program* if allowed by the regulations of each *Course of Study* and not otherwise prohibited by any University, campus, faculty, program, or other policy or regulation.

**Calendar Statement:**

There are no calendar statements under this policy.

**Consultations:**

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

Standing Committees of Senate

Academic Policy

Admissions

Curriculum

Enrolment Services

Registrar

Student Support & Advising

Student Financial Services

Records & Registration  
Undergraduate Admissions

Office of the President and Vice-Chancellor

Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic

Office of the Vice-President, Students

The Faculties and Schools of UBC Vancouver

Vantage College

Alma Mater Society

Graduate Students Society

Office of the University Counsel

University Librarian

Director of Continuing Education

Office of the Ombudsperson for Students

International Student Initiative

First Nations House of Learning

Committee of Deans

**History:**

The Vancouver Senate approved “Guidelines for the Establishment of Diploma and Certificate programs” in 1977. These guidelines were supplemented by the “Senate Policy on Diploma Programs” approved in 1994, and the Senate “Policy on the Approval of Certificate Programs” approved in 2005 and amended in 2008.

**Related Policies:**

V-127: *Diploma Programs*

**Appendix:**

There is no appendix to this policy.

**Procedures:**

- 1) Establishing alternative agreements for administrative responsibilities for graduate-level *Academic-Credit Certificate Programs*.
  - a. The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may delegate aspects of administrative responsibility for the certificate to the offering academic unit or other administrative unit, through the development of a written agreement. The agreement must detail how administrative responsibilities will be fulfilled and resourced and be signed off by the Dean and Vice-Provost, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and other relevant heads of unit.