Program Delivery How-to: Credentialling, Pathways, and Modes of Delivery

2023-2024 Program Innovation Workshop Series

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Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning & Program Innovation Hub
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The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut’ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).
Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, attendees will understand:

- Various credential structures offered at UCalgary (e.g., laddered, stand-alone),
- Available modes of program delivery (e.g., face-to-face, blended, online) and the advantages of each, and
- What factors to consider when determining which structure and modality makes the most sense for your program.
Credential Overview

• Credit credentials must align with the Alberta Credential Framework (ACF)
  • ACF is based on the Canada Degree Qualifications Framework (CDQF)
• At the University of Calgary, we can offer:
  • Certificates
  • Diplomas
  • Degrees
• Credentials may be either:
  • Stand-alone (i.e., direct entry to that program); or
  • Laddered (i.e., entry though a laddered certificate and/or diploma pathway)
## Certificates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Standard Units</th>
<th>Typical Duration</th>
<th>UCalgary Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-bachelor’s</td>
<td>12-32 units</td>
<td>8-15 months (2-3 semesters)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>12 units (minimum)</td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>• Graduate Certificate in Educational Research</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Certificate in Fundamental Data Science and Analytics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Certificate in Precision Health</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Master’s</td>
<td>12 units (minimum)</td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Doctoral</td>
<td>12 units (minimum)</td>
<td>1 year or less</td>
<td>• Post-doctoral Certificate in Radiation Oncology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Diplomas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
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<th>Standard Units</th>
<th>Typical Duration</th>
<th>UCalgary Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>18 units (minimum)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>• Graduate Diploma in Educational Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Diploma in Data Science and Analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Graduate Diploma in Precision Health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Master’s</td>
<td>18 units (minimum)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>• N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Doctoral</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>1.5 years or less</td>
<td>• Post-doctoral Diploma in Radiation Oncology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Degrees

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
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</table>
| Bachelor’s | 120 units | 6-8 semesters (3-4 years) | • Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)  
• Bachelor of Science (BSc)  
• Bachelor of Arts (BA)  
• Bachelor of Design in City Innovation (BDCI) |
| Master’s | Varies | 1-2 years | • Master of Science (MSc)  
• Master of Arts (MA)  
• Master of Data Science and Analytics (MDSA)  
• Master of Education (MEd) |
| Doctoral | Varies | 3-6 years | • Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)  
• Doctor of Design (DDes)  
• Doctor of Education (EdD) |
Factors to Consider

• Determining the appropriate credential type, consider:
  • Target audience
    • E.g., High school graduates, degree-holders, working professionals, other
  • Research-based or professional program
  • Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
    • How many? What level are they at? What do students need to know?
  • Number of units each credential type requires
    • How many courses/units would it take to meet PLOs?
  • Accreditation requirements (if applicable)
  • Resources
    • What financial, infrastructure, and human resources do you need (and/or already have) to offer the program?
• There are up to three components within a program:
  • Credential
  • Area of Study
  • Specialization

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Credential</th>
<th>Area of Study</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Education</td>
<td>Educational Research</td>
<td>Adult Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>Advanced Nursing Practice I</td>
<td>Oncology Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>Network Security</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Requires approval from the Ministry of Advanced Education

Requires internal UCalgary approval
Approvals Process

Faculty of Graduate Studies Council – Executive Committee

Faculty of Graduate Studies Council

Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPS)

Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (APPC)

Ministry of Advanced Education

Faculty Council

Decision Support Team (DST)

Graduate Programs

Undergraduate Programs

Internal Approvals Process
4 – 8 months

Ministry Approvals Process
4 – 12+ months
Entrance and Progression

• Consider how students may enter and progress through the credential
  • Direct Entry
  • Laddering
• Direct-entry
  • Traditional way of entering and completing a program
  • Student applies to the credential (degree, certificate, diploma), is accepted, completes the requirements, graduates

Student applies & is accepted to MA in Philosophy

Student completes requirements for MA in Philosophy

Student graduates with an MA in Philosophy
Laddering

Laddering

Laddering is the progression of a student through successive credentials, carrying forward the course credit earned in each preceding credential.

Students completing successive credentials through a laddered pathway (e.g., a graduate certificate, then a graduate diploma, and lastly a course-based Master’s) will receive a separate parchment for each credential they complete.

Only approved graduate-level certificates, diplomas, and course-based Master’s degrees can be completed through a laddered pathway.

Students are required to apply for admission for each credential in the laddered pathway. This includes paying a non-refundable application fee and admission deposit for each credential. Students are also required to apply to graduate from each credential before admission to their subsequent one can be finalized.
Laddering Models

- Certificate – Diploma – Master’s

**Graduate Certificate**
- 12 units
- 12 units normally consisting of four 3-unit courses

**Graduate Diploma**
- 24 units
- Eight 3-unit courses consisting of:
  - 12 units of **laddering credit** from the graduate certificate
  - 12 units of new coursework

**Master’s Degree**
- 36 units
- 36 units consisting of:
  - 24 units of **laddering credit** from the graduate diploma
  - 12 units of new coursework
Laddering Models

- UCalgary programs that use the Certificate – Diploma – Master’s model:
  - Master of Education
  - Master of Data Science and Analytics
  - Master of Precision Health
  - Master of Quantum Computing
Laddering Models

- Certificate – Certificate – Master’s

Graduate Certificate
12 units

12 units of coursework

Graduate Certificate
12 units

12 units of coursework

Master’s Degree
36 units

36 units consisting of:
- 24 units of laddering credit from the two graduate certificates
- Plus 12 units of coursework to complete the Master’s
Laddering Models

- UCalgary programs that use the Certificate – Certificate – Master’s model:
  - Master of Social Work (course-based)
  - Master of Nursing (course-based)
  - Master of Information Security and Privacy
  - Master of Transdisciplinary Studies (awaiting Ministry approval)
Example: Transdisciplinary Studies Program

**Graduate Certificate I**
- TDST 600 (1.5 units)
- 12 units of courses in one of the GC I specializations:
  - Social Innovation
  - Social Research Methods
  - Ethics and Sustainability
  - Foundations in One Health

**Graduate Certificate II**
- University of Calgary Graduate Certificate* OR
- 12 units of courses in one of the GC II specializations:
  - Social Innovation
  - Social Research Methods
  - Ethics and Sustainability
  - Foundations in One Health
  - Programming and Implementation of One Health

**Master of Transdisciplinary Studies**
- TDST 601 (3 units)
- TDST 602 (3 units)
- TDST 603/604 (Capstone 6 units)

Total Units: 37.5 units
Laddering: Opportunities and Challenges

Possible Opportunities

- Increased flexibility
  - Students can balance education with work and other commitments
- Potentially expand recruitment pool for master’s degree
- Offer new pathway to (graduate) degree
- Expand accessibility of (graduate) education
- Students get one or more credentials that recognize their work without needing to commit to a full degree
- Students may have the opportunity for career progression earlier than if they were in a degree program
  - Focus on a specific area within a wider profession/discipline (e.g., oncology nursing)

Possible Challenges

- May be more challenging to get high student engagement due to:
  - Possible lack of identity with a larger program or cohort
  - Students at the university for a shorter time
- Supporting students of a potentially different demographic than traditional programs
- Building awareness of the new credentials(s) and/or pathway
  - Prospective student awareness
  - Industry recognition of the credential / its value to the labour market
- Finding a schedule for courses that works best for target audience
- Non-laddered certificates may not appeal to as many students as laddered – particularly if that field/discipline has many non-credit education options available
Defining Modes of Delivery

- **In-Person**: All instructional content for a course will be delivered in an in-person format. These courses are expected to have all GFC hours scheduled and assigned to space. This includes all assessments and supervised academic activity. Instructional methods may include traditional, problem-based learning, active learning, collaborative learning and flipped classroom approaches.

- **Blended Learning**: Blended learning methods include both in-class and web-based components of instruction. GFC hours should be met by using a combination of in person and online instruction. A component of a course may be taught a scheduled number of hours per week in-person and then the remaining hours online using instructor lead discussion, online work and/or other methods of online facilitated instruction.

- **Web-Based Instruction**: To be used for courses taught entirely online with no in-person component including assessments. Web-Based Courses may be taught synchronously, asynchronously or hybrid as indicated in the class notes and scheduling details.
### Reflective Questions for Mode of Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modality</strong></td>
<td>What mode of delivery makes the most sense for students and instructors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Design</strong></td>
<td>How many new courses will be designed for the program, and in what modalities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructional and Administrative Staffing</strong></td>
<td>How many instructors, TAs, instructional designers, and administrative staff are required to support the delivery of the program?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td>What type of funding has been allocated to the program, and what constraints or conditions are associated with the funding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definitions</strong></td>
<td>Have we clarified what constitutes face-to-face, online, blended, or hybrid modality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consistency</strong></td>
<td>How much of the program will be offered in-person, online, or blended? How will this impact students and instructors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Demographics of Learners</strong></td>
<td>Who are the anticipated students for the proposed program, and what are their needs in terms of program modality? How and at what stage are students (future/current) being consulted?</td>
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Considerations for Program Modality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Intention</th>
<th>Meeting Needs</th>
<th>Flexibility</th>
<th>Resource Requirements</th>
<th>Program Delivery</th>
<th>Logistical Planning</th>
<th>Switch Challenges</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-Person</strong></td>
<td>Local, traditional students, those seeking on-campus experiences</td>
<td>Community-focused, seeking social interaction and hands-on experiences</td>
<td>Personalized attention, real-time feedback, hands-on activities</td>
<td>Structured, less flexibility in schedule or content</td>
<td>Classroom space, equipment, faculty, support staff</td>
<td>Face-to-face instruction, hands-on activities, group projects</td>
<td>Focus on physical space, scheduling, class sizes</td>
<td>Disruption to routine, reliance on physical infrastructure</td>
<td>Rich in-person interactions, hands-on learning, community building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online</strong></td>
<td>Global, working professionals, adult learners, those with scheduling constraints</td>
<td>Flexible, accessible to remote or busy individuals, emphasis on convenience</td>
<td>Flexibility, accessibility, asynchronous learning, multimedia resources</td>
<td>Highly flexible, adaptable to different learning styles and paces</td>
<td>Learning management system, online tools, faculty training, tech support</td>
<td>Asynchronous and synchronous learning, discussion boards, virtual meetings</td>
<td>Emphasis on tech infrastructure, online tools, faculty training</td>
<td>Technical issues, learning curve for online tools</td>
<td>Global reach, accessibility, innovative teaching methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blended</strong></td>
<td>Varied, including local and remote students, professionals seeking upskilling</td>
<td>Offers benefits of both online and in-person, appealing to a wider range</td>
<td>Tailored approach, combines benefits of in-person and online, caters to diverse needs</td>
<td>Balanced, intentional mix of in-person and online components</td>
<td>Both physical and online resources, faculty for both modalities, tech support</td>
<td>Mix of in-person and online activities, scheduled classes, self-paced components</td>
<td>Balancing physical and online components, coordinating schedules</td>
<td>Balancing both modalities, managing student expectations</td>
<td>Customized learning experiences, flexibility, innovative approaches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Design and Modality: Take-Aways

Modality decisions are central to ideation and program design

Online and blended courses require significant time, planning, and resources to design and deliver

Adequate instructional support and staffing are essential for sustainable program design
QUESTIONS
• Alberta Credentials Framework (ACF)
  o [https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/5ac5c687-2824-4bf0-92e5-9ac5303a94b0/resource/5c13293e-fe73-4119-b16b-f8975ee0cb2f/download/ae-alberta-credential-framework-2023.pdf](https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/5ac5c687-2824-4bf0-92e5-9ac5303a94b0/resource/5c13293e-fe73-4119-b16b-f8975ee0cb2f/download/ae-alberta-credential-framework-2023.pdf)

• Canadian Degree Qualifications Framework (CDQF)

• Conversation Starters for New Online Academic Program Design