

Integrative Curricular Microcredentials Policy

Integrative Curricular Microcredentials (ICMs) at SUNY Geneseo recognize and document students' work in applying their academic skills. Geneseo encourages students to see learning as something that is integrated and makes connections to experiences beyond the classroom. Microcredentials increase the visibility of skills for employers and graduate schools by giving students a platform for curating examples of their work, articulating connections between different types of experiences, and demonstrating the application of skills in new contexts. An ICM contains: a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 credits of academic course work; at least one high impact, applied learning, or integrative learning experience; and a culminating experience with a self-reflective component that serves as evidence of the application of learning. The high impact, applied learning, or integrative learning component may be achieved through a program-defined curricular or cocurricular experience and may overlap with the required culminating experience.

To declare an ICM, a student must complete a form available in the Office of the Dean of Academic Planning and Advising (Erwin 106) and obtain approval from the relevant ICM coordinator. Completion of ICMs are noted on a student's transcript.

This Academic Policy was passed by Senate on March 10, 2020.

Background

Microcredentials are increasingly common in higher education, serving the purpose of providing students with documentation of the application of academic skills and knowledge in new situations, engagement with specific types of professional or technical skills, and completion of curricular clusters focused on a particular theme or competency. They also provide students with tools to begin construction of an academic portfolio that articulates core skills and preserves concrete evidence of experiences.

Microcredentials can support student success by helping students benchmark achievements as they move through their curricular program and articulate the significance of learning and connections between different types of curricular and co-curricular experiences. Finally, microcredentials help create enrollment pathways for non-matriculated students (particularly adult learners) who may wish to enhance specific professional skills and competencies.

In January 2018, the SUNY Board of Trustees authorized local campuses to create microcredential systems built around the principles of academic quality and including review by local governance structures. Policy highlights are available at <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/academic-affairs/microcredentials/SUNY-Micro-Credential-Policy-Summary.pdf>.

Microcredentials have subsequently been developed at a number of SUNY campuses including the University of Buffalo (<https://www.buffalo.edu/microcredentials.html>), the University of Albany (<https://www.albany.edu/cee/90949.php>), and SUNY New Paltz (<https://www.newpaltz.edu/media/academic-affairs/NP%20Micro-Credentials%20Policy%2008March2019.pdf>). This proposal reflects SUNY's principles, is consistent with other SUNY models, and adheres to Geneseo's mission as a public liberal arts institution. The proposed framework emphasizes academic skills and the integrative/applied learning elements of GLOBE are present in the high impact/applied/integrative learning component.

This proposal emerged out of a year-long process of consultation that included members of the Senate Executive Committee, the Undergraduate Policies Committee, and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, deans and department chairs, interdisciplinary coordinators, and the Provost's Office. During discussions of microcredentials on campus, individual programs were inspired to draft proposals that

reflect microcredential principles, including an ICMs in actuarial sciences generated by faculty in the Department of Mathematics, geographic information systems generated by faculty the Department of Geography, and Irish Studies generated by faculty in the Department of English (drafts attached). Throughout the process of consultation, there was overwhelming support for moving forward with ICMs from students, faculty, and professional staff.

Under this proposal, individual ICMs would be proposed following the same governance process as other curricular revisions. Proposals may be initiated by any academic unit, department, or the coordinator of major or minor programs. Review and approval will be conducted by the relevant Senate Committee (UCC or GAAC) with two readings before full Senate. Approved ICMs would appear in the Undergraduate Bulletin in a format that is similar to academic minors. Each proposed ICM will include a named coordinator who will be responsible for providing advisement to students on the microcredential, documenting and assessing student completion of the high impact/applied/integrative learning and culminating experience component(s) of the microcredential, ensuring that appropriate documentation of student work for non-curricular experiences is preserved in a digital portfolio, confirming completion of requirements through campus information systems, and regularly assessing the viability of the microcredential.