UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

PRESENTED BY: Susan Detmer, chair, academic programs committee

DATE OF MEETING: March 19, 2020

SUBJECT: Degree-level certificate in Medical Language

COUNCIL ACTION: For Information Only

SUMMARY:
Approval for new degree-level programs for which an approved template exists has been delegated to the academic program committee by University Council. The College of Arts and Science has an approved template for certificate programs.

At its February 12, 2020 meeting, the academic programs committee approved the following motions:

- That the Academic Programs Committee approve degree-level certificate in Medical Language, effective May 2020.

The new certificate is designed to help students develop their proficiency in defining and understanding medical terminology. Those completing this certificate program will be well-versed in the linguistic skills needed to understand medical terms and to ensure appropriate and correct usage.

The recognition that a degree-level certificate provides to this training in medical language will benefit students as they prepare for admission to health science programs in professional colleges and at the graduate level.

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Proposal for Academic or Curricular change – Degree-level Certificate in Medical Language
PROPOSAL IDENTIFICATION

Title of proposal: Degree-level Certificate in Medical Language

Field(s) of Specialization: Medical Language

Level(s) of Concentration: Degree-level Certificate

Degree College: Arts & Science

Contact person(s) (name, telephone, fax, e-mail):

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306-966-1645

Proposed date of implementation: May 2020

Proposal Document

The Certificate in Medical Language is designed to help students develop their proficiency in defining and understanding medical terminology. Students in numerous programs – including nursing, biology, kinesiology, physiology and pharmacology – regularly encounter complex medical terms throughout the course of their studies, and the training provided by this certificate will enable them to recognize and define those terms quickly and easily whenever they are encountered. Likewise, students who complete the certificate will be well-versed in the linguistic skills needed to understand the medical terms that they will come across in postgraduate studies and future medical careers.

For most students, the entry point into the certificate will be CLAS 103: Medical Terminology, a course which has achieved persistently high enrollments largely due to word-of-mouth recommendations, as upper-year students tell their lower-year counterparts about how valuable the skills and knowledge that they gain from CLAS 103 are for other courses in their programs. Students who enroll in CLAS 103 tend to be self-selected, in that most are seeking entry into
medical school or other competitive programs in the healthcare field, and thus are dedicated both to learning the material (which will help them in the future careers) and to achieving the high grades that are necessary for acceptance into their desired programs. This makes for a highly motivated and dedicated core of students, many of whom do quite well in the course.

The grading structure of CLAS 103 is objective rather than subjective (more like what one would encounter in a mathematics course than a typical humanities course), meaning that students are required to have a very detailed and precise knowledge of the material and that those who do not have an excellent grasp on the subject matter lose marks rapidly on the tests and exam. This tends to result in a class average which resembles an inverse bell curve, with an above average percentage of high and low grades, with an atypically low percentage of grades in between. The upshot of all of this is that students who succeed in CLAS 103 have developed a thorough understand of the material, which means that they will be well-prepared to excel in the other courses required by the certificate.

The certificate aims to build upon both the demand for CLAS 103 and the value that it provides to students by presenting them with a selection of courses designed to help them to further develop this skillset. Specifically, in CLAS 203: Advanced Medical Terminology students learn how to define increasingly complex medical terms, and furthermore, there is an increased focus on the important corpus of anatomical names known as the *Terminologia Anatomica*, which is comprised entirely of Latin phrases. And it is to better prepare students to translate these phrases that the certificate also includes both semesters of introductory Latin (Latin 112 and 113). To round out the certificate, students choose one additional course to either: further develop their knowledge of Latin (LAT 202), explore Greek, the other language from which medical terminology derives much of its vocabulary (GRK 112), expand beyond medical terminology into the related field of Scientific Terminology (CLAS 101), or contextualize their understanding of the origins of medical terminology by examining the field within which it first developed – Ancient Medicine (HIST 273).

It also bears mentioning that the certificate will contribute to the university’s goals for interdisciplinary learning by encouraging the students who enroll in CLAS 103 (who are typically science majors) to consider additional humanities courses, thereby broadening the scope of their education. Relatedly, the certificate will serve to demonstrate the ways that the skills and knowledge base learned from traditional humanities courses, such as Latin, can be relevant to innovative scientific disciplines, such as medicine.

**Impact on the Department:**

This certificate is not anticipated to have a significant impact on the department, as the certificate is comprised of courses that are already regularly taught by the department.

**Resources:**

This certificate will not require any new resources, as it is comprised of courses that are already regularly taught by the department.
College Statement
From Jack Gray, Vice-Dean Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work and Acting Vice Dean Academic

I am pleased to confirm that the College of Arts and Science supports the development of a Degree-Level Certificate program in Medical Language.

The College of Arts and Science is working to provide innovative program options that meet student need and demand. This program will give students an opportunity to develop proficiency in medical terminology, which is particularly valuable for students who will apply for admission to health related programs in professional colleges and at the graduate level.

The Academic Programs Committee (BA, BFA, BMus) approved the proposal on November 18, 2019, as did the College Faculty Council on February 4, 2020.
Program Description

Degree Level Certificate in Medical Language

The Certificate in Medical Language provides students with a credential recognizing their proficiency in medical terminology, including etymology, word formation, and the conventions of contemporary usage.

During the process of completing the required courses for this certificate, students will develop not only the necessary skills to define medical terms (including the Latin phrases that comprise the international corpus of anatomical names known as the *Terminologia Anatomica*), but also to coin original terms to describe new medical conditions, procedures, and discoveries accurately and succinctly.

Major Average

The major average in the Certificate in Medical Language includes the grades earned in:

- All courses eligible to be used in the program.

Residency Requirements

To receive a Certificate in Medical Language, students must complete at least two-thirds of the following coursework (to the nearest highest multiple of 3 credit units) from the University of Saskatchewan.

- Minimum credit units required in the program.

See Residency for additional details.

Requirements (15 credit units):

- CLAS 103.3 Medical Terminology
- CLAS 203.3 Advanced Medical Terminology
- LATN 112.3 Latin for Beginners I
- LATN 113.3 Latin for Beginners II

Choose 3 credit units from the following:

- LATN 202.3 Intermediate Latin I
- GRK 112.3 Greek for Beginners
- CLAS 101.3 Introduction to Scientific Terminology
- HIST 273.3 History of Ancient Medicine
Notice of Intent – Certificate in Medical Language

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Student demand for training in this field is clear from the consistently large enrollments in CLAS 103: Medical Terminology. See chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Delivery Method</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>In-Person</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2018</td>
<td>In-Person</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2018</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2017/2018 total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>641</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>In-Person</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2019</td>
<td>In-Person</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2019</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2018/2019 total:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>717</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These persistently high enrollments are largely due to word-of-mouth recommendations, as upper-year students tell their lower-year counterparts about how valuable the skills and knowledge that they gain from CLAS 103 are for other courses in their programs. The certificate aims to build upon both the demand for this course and the value that it provides to students by presenting them with a selection of courses designed to help them to further develop this skillset. Specifically, in CLAS 203: Advanced Medical Terminology students learn how to define increasingly complex medical terms, and furthermore, there is an increased focus on the important corpus of anatomical names known as the *Terminologia Anatomica*, which is comprised entirely of Latin phrases. And it is to better prepare students to translate these phrases that the certificate also includes both semesters of introductory Latin
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This certificate is not projected to have a significant effect on other programs offered by the college, beyond likely spurring a modest increase in the enrollment numbers for the first-year Latin courses (from students in scientific programs who would be unlikely to enroll in them without the impetus of the certificate). It also seems reasonable to predict an increase in retention between LAT 112 and LAT 113, given the incentive provided by the certificate (which requires the completion of both courses).

Beyond the University of Saskatchewan, a similar certificate to the one being proposed here is offered by McMaster University, which began offering its Concurrent Certificate in the Language of Medicine and Health in July 2018. While the brief amount of time that has passed since its implementation does limit the conclusions that can be drawn, based on the available data, the certificate at McMaster does seem to be attracting student interest, with 33 students so far having completed (or registered for) both Advanced Medical Terminology and first-year Latin, suggesting an annual uptake of around 16 students for the certificate (given that students are unlikely to enroll in both unless they are planning to complete the certificate). Given that the medical terminology courses offered at McMaster are taught using the methodology (and textbooks) originally developed here at the U of S, it seems likely that the certificate would attract similar levels of interest among medical terminology students here as well.

No additional resources will be required for this certificate, as the required courses are already offered by the department on a regular basis.

The anticipated start date for the certificate would be May 1st 2020 (although the earlier that it can begin, the sooner that current CLAS 103 students can be encouraged to consider enrolling in the relevant courses for next year or even next semester).