



University Policy Statement

UPS 411.100

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES: COURSES

This document includes guidelines and procedures pertaining to the following:

- I. Proposal and Approval Cycles
- II. Regular Courses
- III. Experimental Courses
- IV. Variable Topic Courses
- V. Graduate Courses
- VI. 700-701 Course Numbers
- VII. 900-999 Course Numbers
- VIII. Course Changes
- IX. Course Modality Changes
- X. Course Retirement

Note: For Online Instruction also refer to UPS 411.104.

I. PROPOSAL AND APPROVAL CYCLES

The development of the curriculum begins with a faculty member creating a new course proposal that is evaluated at the academic unit, college, and university levels. The university-level approval process occurs once per semester. Course proposals and course changes approved in the fall semester shall be implemented in the following fall semester and shall appear in the subsequent annual university catalog. Course proposals and course changes approved in the spring semester shall be implemented in the following spring semester and shall appear in the subsequent annual university catalog.

II. REGULAR COURSES

Regular courses are those which constitute an integral part of the university curriculum and which appear in the university catalog and master plans for degree programs.

Note: All references to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) within this policy also apply to the Graduate Education Committee for Processing 500- to 900-level courses and 400-level courses offered for graduate credit. If a 400-level course offered for graduate credit is challenged, then the course shall be reviewed by the UCC if the challenge is sponsored by an academic unit on behalf of an undergraduate program and by the Graduate Education Committee if the challenge is sponsored by an academic unit on behalf of a graduate program. If the challenge occurs on behalf of both an undergraduate and a graduate program, then the course shall be reviewed by both the UCC and the Graduate Education Committee.

A. Sequence of Development and Review: All new course proposals shall be subject to the following process:

1. *Initiation:* New course proposals may be initiated by academic units, as defined by UPS 100.250, or by individuals or groups within the university community. Individuals and groups shall secure the sponsorship of an academic unit, which shall be responsible for entering the new course proposal together with a sample course outline into the online curriculum system.
2. *Academic Unit Review:* It shall be the responsibility of the proposing academic unit to thoroughly check whether there is any overlap between the newly proposed course and any existing course(s) in the university curriculum. Should there be any overlap, the proposing academic unit shall consult with the academic unit(s) that offer(s) the existing course(s) in order to avoid conflict that may end in a challenge or challenges. In addition, academic units are encouraged to review the online curriculum system on a regular basis and to initiate consultation with the proposer if needed. Evidence of consultation, whether initiated by the proposer or another academic unit, shall be included in the course proposal.
3. *College Review:* Upon receipt of a new course proposal from an academic unit housed in a college, it shall be reviewed by the college curriculum committee and the college dean. If the proposing academic unit is not housed in a college, the UCC shall substitute for the college curriculum committee and the appropriate Associate Vice President (AVP) shall substitute for the college dean. The subsequent stipulations of this document shall be understood in this sense, as appropriate.

Deadlines for review within each college will be set to ensure the college review process is completed by the end of each semester when course proposals are to be submitted to the office of the appropriate AVP.

The college review process shall include:

- a. verification that the new course proposal forms are accurate and complete, and that appropriate consultation has taken place;
- b. verification that the syllabus meets the minimum requirements set forth in UPS 300.004 (Policy on Syllabi);
- c. verification that Online Courses (including Hybrid Courses) meet the additional requirements set forth in UPS 411.104;
- d. evaluation of the curricular merit of the proposal including its appropriateness for the students for whom it is intended (general education, undergraduate majors, graduate students, etc.);
- e. consideration of jurisdictional issues with other academic units;
- f. consideration of queries raised by faculty;
- g. consultation with the dean and proposing group to resolve any issues regarding a.-f. above in the college review process; and
- h. recommendation to the dean. The recommendation shall include a tally of the vote of the college curriculum committee.

4. *Dean's Recommendation:* The college curriculum committee shall return the new course proposals with its recommendations to the college dean, who shall append his or her own recommendation. The college dean shall forward the proposal and recommendations to the office of the appropriate AVP.
5. *Publication:* Each cycle begins with a campus announcement to all university faculty of a list of proposed courses and their catalog descriptions together with a deadline for raising challenges. Course proposals shall be available for examination through the online curriculum system.
6. *Questions and Challenges:* A question is a written inquiry by an academic unit about the appropriateness of including a course in the university curriculum. A challenge is the conversion of a question into a formal request to disapprove a course proposed on specific jurisdictional or academic grounds. Questions and challenges shall be submitted according to the cycles below.

A question shall be submitted to the proposing academic unit, the Chair of the UCC, and the office of the appropriate AVP.

The academic units involved, and their respective deans, are expected to seek a resolution of the question(s) through consultation. Evidence of such consultation shall be included in the challenge should it occur.

A challenge must be submitted in writing to the office of the appropriate AVP and the Chair of the Academic Senate, with copies to the dean(s) of the college(s) where publication occurred and the challenge originated, and to the chair/coordinator of the proposing academic unit.

In addition, challenges shall be submitted to the Chair of the UCC.

7. *Fall Cycle Deadlines:* The fall cycle begins on September 1 with the campus announcement of the list of proposed courses by the office of the appropriate AVP. Questions and/or statements of intent to challenge must be submitted to that AVP office by 5 pm on September 15. Challenges, if any, must then be submitted in full by 5 pm on September 30. Courses that are not questioned or challenged by September 15 shall be sent by the AVP office to the Academic Senate by 5 pm on the next business day. The Academic Senate shall send its recommendations to the President by the end of the fall semester.

If a course has been challenged, the Chair of the UCC shall inform the Chair of the Academic Senate and the proposing academic unit of the challenge within five business days. The Chair of the UCC shall further inform the proposing academic unit of its right to submit a rebuttal to the committee within 10 business days. If deemed necessary by the UCC, it may hold a public hearing on the challenged course. This hearing is designed to serve as a space for all parties to engage in a collegial dialogue. All parties should have access to any materials or evidence presented prior to the hearing. Such a hearing shall be held no later than November 15 and shall be announced to the involved parties and the university community at least 10 business days before it convenes. The UCC shall send its recommendation regarding the challenged course to the Academic Senate with a copy to the college deans no later than November 30. The Academic Senate shall send its recommendation regarding the challenged course to the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs (Provost), who shall send its recommendation to the President by the end of the fall semester.

If any deadline falls on a weekend or holiday that deadline is 5 pm the next business day.

8. *Spring Cycle Deadlines:* The spring cycle begins on February 1 with the campus announcement of the list of proposed courses by the office of the appropriate AVP. Questions and/or statements of intent to challenge must be submitted to that AVP office by 5 pm on February 15. Challenges, if any, must then be submitted in full by 5 pm on February 28. Courses that are not questioned or challenged by February 15 shall be sent by the AVP office to the Academic Senate the next business day. The Academic Senate shall send its recommendations to the President by the end of the spring semester.

If a course has been challenged, the Chair of the UCC shall inform the Chair of the Academic Senate and the proposing unit of the challenge within five business days. The Chair of the UCC shall further inform the proposing academic unit of its right to submit a rebuttal to the committee within 10 business days. If deemed necessary by the UCC, it may hold a public hearing on the challenged course. This hearing is designed to serve as a space for all parties to engage in a collegial dialogue. All parties should have access to any materials or evidence presented prior to the hearing. Such a hearing shall be held no later than April 15 and shall be announced to the involved parties and the university community at least 10 business days before it convenes. The UCC shall send its recommendation regarding the challenged course to the Academic Senate no later than April 30. The Academic Senate shall send its recommendation regarding the challenged course to the Provost, who shall send its recommendation to the President by the end of the spring semester.

If any deadline falls on a weekend or holiday that deadline is 5 pm the next business day.

9. *Recommendations:* Recommendations may include approval, disapproval, or further consideration.
10. When deliberating on their recommendations regarding a challenged course, the UCC and the Academic Senate shall consider the academic jurisdiction guidelines laid out in UPS 411.102 Section II.
11. *Upper-Division Writing Courses:* Proposal and approval of upper-division writing courses shall also follow UPS 320.020.
12. *General Education (GE) Courses:* Only courses previously approved for the university curriculum shall be eligible to be incorporated into the GE Curriculum. Policies, procedures, and timelines for the review of GE courses are stated in UPS 411.200.
13. *Teacher Credentialing Courses:* Proposal and approval of teacher credentialing courses are additionally subject to UPS 411.400.
14. *Academic Senate Approval:* The Academic Senate shall receive the master lists of new courses from the office of the appropriate AVP and of courses approved for General Education from the GE Committee, together with all recommendations. The Academic Senate shall recommend to the Provost the courses that it approved for incorporation into the university curriculum, who shall send its recommendation to the President.

B. Implementation: Following the President's approval of incorporation of courses into the curriculum, the office of the appropriate AVP shall be responsible for implementing the curricular decisions.

1. *Courses proposed to meet the upper division writing requirement* shall be forwarded with recommendations to the University Writing Proficiency Committee. The University Writing Proficiency Committee shall decide whether these courses shall be used to fulfill university upper division writing requirements and shall transmit the proposals and all recommendations to the appropriate AVP. Copies of the recommendations shall be sent to the dean of the college where publication occurred and to the chair/coordinator of the proposing academic unit.
2. *When approval of a new course would mean a change in the graduate program of the academic unit accepting the course*, the program change shall be referred to the Graduate Education Committee. The Graduate Education Committee shall review and recommend concerning the program change, and shall transmit the proposal and all recommendations to the appropriate AVP. Copies of the recommendations shall be sent to the dean of the college where publication occurred and to the chair/coordinator of the proposing academic unit.

C. College Curriculum Committees

1. *Composition:* The college curriculum committee shall be representative of the academic units within the college and shall be comprised of at least five faculty members from the college. The chair of the college curriculum committee shall be selected from among the faculty members serving on the college curriculum committee. A description of the selection process used in each college shall be forwarded to the office of the appropriate AVP and the Academic Senate Office.
2. *Selection:* Faculty members of the committee shall be elected by the college faculty in a manner which they have determined. Faculty members' terms should be overlapping in order to ensure continuity.
3. *Responsibilities:* Each college curriculum committee shall be responsible for reviews and recommendations concerning new course proposals and course changes as described in section II.A.4. of this document. In addition, it may advise the UCC or the college dean upon request.

III. EXPERIMENTAL COURSES

- A. The experimental course category is intended to provide academic units with the opportunity to offer limited numbers of courses that have not become a regular part of the curriculum. Such courses may fall under one or more of the following categories:
 1. Experimental courses that may subsequently be submitted as new course proposals for inclusion in the regular curriculum.
 2. Courses that are anticipated to become integral portions of degree programs but that have not been submitted in time to be included in the review cycle for new courses.
 3. Courses that are not intended to become permanent, e.g., courses offered by visiting professors, courses offered as a part of a grant project.

New Courses that have been proposed and reviewed for inclusion in the regular curriculum and were rejected by the Academic Senate (or its appropriate committees) shall not be offered as experimental courses.

B. Experimental courses may be offered in the regular program subject to the following guidelines:

1. Experimental courses shall be approved by the chair or equivalent of the sponsoring academic unit after consultation with its faculty, by the college dean, and by the office of the appropriate AVP.
2. Experimental courses shall be recorded by the office of the appropriate AVP.
3. Once approved, the experimental course may be offered up to four times within five years.

No more than one section of an experimental course may be taught in a given term.

4. An experimental course shall be identified in the online campus course offering schedule as an “experimental course.”
5. It shall be the responsibility of the proposing academic unit to thoroughly check whether there is any overlap between the newly proposed experimental course and any existing course(s) in the university curriculum. Should there be any overlap, the proposing academic unit shall consult with the academic unit(s) that offer(s) the existing course(s) in order to avoid conflict that may end in a challenge or challenges. Evidence of such consultation shall be included in the challenge should it occur.

College deans, or the appropriate AVP in the case of courses not housed in colleges, shall examine proposed experimental courses with regard to violations of academic jurisdiction. If the course content substantially overlaps the offerings and/or impinges on the mission of other units, as laid down in UPS 411.102 Section II they shall seek evidence of appropriate consultation. The appropriate AVP shall deny approval of these courses when doubt persists regarding the appropriateness of the jurisdiction.

Academic units may submit written challenges to experimental courses to the Chair of the UCC, who shall inform the office of the appropriate AVP and the Chair of the Academic Senate of the challenge. The Chair of the UCC shall further inform the proposing academic unit of its right to submit a rebuttal to the committee within 10 business days. The UCC then shall make a recommendation, which may be approval, disapproval, or further consideration, to the appropriate AVP who shall make the final decision.

The challenged course may be offered as scheduled, but shall not be offered again until the conflict is resolved.

6. The following statement shall appear on the scheduling form for experimental courses and be signed by the academic unit chair or equivalent, the college dean, if appropriate, and the appropriate AVP: "This course conforms with the guidelines for Experimental Courses in UPS 411.100."

C. Experimental courses may be offered through University Extended Education conforming with the guidelines for on-campus experimental courses. However, additional approvals are necessary when out-of-state travel is involved. (See UPS 320.102.)

- D. Experimental course proposals must reach (i.e., all prior levels must have approved) the office of the appropriate AVP by means of the online curriculum system a minimum of 30 days prior to the first proposed offering.
- E. Exceptions to the above guidelines may be petitioned by academic units to the appropriate AVP, who may consult with the appropriate college dean(s).

IV. **VARIABLE TOPIC COURSES**

A variable topic course is a series of regular courses that share a common theme, a common course title, and a common course number. Individual topics are courses that would not be offered frequently enough to remain in the annual university catalog as separate regular courses.

- A. At the time of submittal into the regular course approval cycle, proposed courses designated as variable topic courses shall include subtitles and syllabi for each topic to be offered in the series. Subtitles and syllabi for each approved topic in the series shall be recorded by the appropriate college dean and by the office of the appropriate AVP.
- B. After approval of the original variable topic course and topics, subsequent topics, accompanied by subtitles and syllabi, may be added to the original series after approval by the academic unit, the college curriculum committee, and the college dean. It shall be the responsibility of the proposing academic unit to thoroughly check whether there is any overlap between the newly proposed topic and any existing course(s) in the university curriculum. Should there be any overlap, the proposing academic unit shall consult with the academic unit(s) that offer(s) the existing course(s) in order to avoid conflict that may end in a challenge or challenges. The office of the appropriate AVP shall be notified of proposed additional topics by the dean.

If the original variable topic course has been included in the General Education Program, additional topics must be reviewed and approved by the GE Committee prior to their being offered.

If the office of the appropriate AVP believes there to be significant curricular impacts beyond a single college, it may refer the topic to the UCC, the Graduate Education Committee, or the GE Committee, which shall make a recommendation, including approval, disapproval, or further consideration, to the appropriate AVP, who shall make the final decision.

- C. Topics which are not in the approved series may be offered in the series as a unique course on one occasion.
- D. Catalog-type descriptions of the individual topic being taught as part of a variable topic series shall appear in a separate section of the registration guide.
- E. Individual topics in a variable topic series may be challenged by academic units on academic and jurisdictional grounds. However, before initiating a challenge, the academic unit is expected to seek resolution of the conflict by consulting with the proposing academic unit. Evidence of such consultation shall be included in the challenge.

The challenge shall be submitted to the Chair of the UCC who shall inform the office of the appropriate AVP and the Chair of the Academic Senate of the challenge. The Chair of the UCC shall further inform the proposing academic unit of its right to submit a rebuttal to the committee within 10 business days. The UCC then shall make a recommendation,

which may be approval, disapproval, or further consideration, to the appropriate AVP, who shall make the final decision.

The challenged topic may be offered as scheduled but may not be offered again until the conflict is resolved.

- F. Individual topics within a variable topic course may not be repeated for credit, unless approved by the academic unit.

V. **GRADUATE COURSES**

Courses at the graduate level draw upon, apply, and extend knowledge and skills previously acquired through undergraduate study. These courses deal with substantially more advanced and complex ideas, materials, techniques or problems than undergraduate courses.

- A. It is assumed that students who enroll in graduate courses possess:

1. Maturity, responsibility, and scholarly integrity appropriate to study beyond the baccalaureate level.
2. A broad base of knowledge represented by the possession of a bachelor's degree.
3. A command of basic techniques and skills essential for independent, self-directed study in the field.

- B. The graduate course requires:

1. The identification and investigation of theory or principle.
2. The application of theory to new ideas, problems, and materials.
3. Extensive use of bibliographic and other resource materials with emphasis on primary sources of data.
4. Demonstration of competence in the scholarly presentation of the results of independent study.
5. Evidence of advanced skill in reading critically, writing clearly, and arguing persuasively.

- C. Graduate students enrolled in 400-level courses will be expected to:

1. Complete at least one additional assignment beyond that required of undergraduate students in the same course.
2. Demonstrate, in their written and oral performance in the course, quality higher than that expected of an undergraduate.
3. Demonstrate competence in areas required by a graduate-level course (See "V.B." above).

- D. When an academic unit which does not have a graduate degree proposes a regular or experimental graduate course (500-700 level), an existing graduate degree program must be designated to which it would initially apply. Such courses must be approved by the academic unit with the graduate program as well as the sponsoring academic unit.

- E. Petitions for exception require the approval of the appropriate AVP.

VI. 700-701 COURSE NUMBERS

These are course numbers that provide opportunity for graduate and postbaccalaureate students (including those seeking the credential) to maintain continuous enrollment during a particular semester when they are not enrolled in regular courses. These numbers do not represent courses and do not therefore grant credit.

VII. 900-999 COURSE NUMBERS

- A. Courses may be created that are not applicable to an academic degree to serve those who wish postbaccalaureate study not leading to a degree.
- B. These courses are to be numbered in the sequence 900-999.
- C. Enrollment in 900-level courses shall be restricted to persons holding the baccalaureate.
- D. The procedure for the review and approval of the courses shall be the same as that established by UPS documents for regular courses.
- E. These courses shall originate and be taught only at the discretion of academic units involved, and when approved, shall be staffed by the originating unit.

VIII. COURSE CHANGES

- A. Course changes shall be submitted on the appropriate course change form in the online curriculum system and forwarded for review and approval to the academic unit's chair or equivalent, the college curriculum committee, and the dean of the college, who will, in turn, forward the course change proposal to the office of the appropriate AVP.
- B. Changes may include:
 - 1. Increases or decreases in unit values;
 - 2. Shifts in course level (lower division, upper division, graduate, postgraduate, extension);
 - 3. Changes in type of course (e.g., lecture, seminar, laboratory, or activity, requiring a change in staffing formula);
 - 4. Change in course title or numbering;
 - 5. Change in the course description (for catalog purposes, course descriptions shall not exceed forty words);
 - 6. Change in the course pre- or co-requisites.
- C. If the change is deemed substantial at any level of review, the course shall be submitted as a new, regular course proposal. Academic units have the primary responsibility in defining whether a course change is substantial regarding changes in learning outcomes and/or content. The following are additional examples of substantial changes: making multiple changes to a course, dividing or expanding a course into a longer sequence, and combining a sequence of courses into one course.

IX. COURSE MODALITY CHANGES

- A. Changes in course modality (such as adding online or hybrid options of an existing course) shall be approved by the chair or equivalent of the sponsoring academic unit after consultation with its faculty, by the college dean, and by the office of the appropriate AVP.

- B. Modality course change proposals must reach the office of the appropriate AVP (i.e., all prior levels must have approved) by means of the online curriculum system a minimum of 30 days prior to the first proposed offering.

X. COURSE RETIREMENT

- A. Academic units may retire courses under their jurisdiction from the curriculum and the university catalog. Course retirement requests shall be submitted on the appropriate form through the online curriculum system. Course retirements are subject to approval by the college dean and the appropriate AVP.
- B. Supervisory courses are excluded from this retirement policy. Though these courses will not be retired automatically if not offered for five years, departments may choose to retire any of these of their own volition. Normally, these courses end in numbers 93 and 95-99:
 - 1. Directed Studies courses, which end in “93”;
 - 2. Internship courses, which end in “95” (see UPS 411.601 “Policy on Academic Internships”);
 - 3. Tutorials, which end in “96” (UPS 410.100 “Student-to-Student Tutorials”);
 - 4. Projects, which end in “97,” and theses, which end in “98” (see UPS 400.020 “Undergraduate Project and Thesis”); and
 - 5. Independent Studies, which end in “99” (see UPS 400.010 “Independent Study”)
- C. The retirement of support courses is subject to special rules, which are prescribed by UPS 411.105.
- D. When an academic unit wishes to reactivate a course that has been retired, the guidelines for initiating new courses shall apply.
- E. Any course that has not been offered in five years shall be retired from the university curriculum and the university catalog by the office of the appropriate AVP. A course is considered to have been offered if it meets through census date. Notification of potential course retirements shall be given to the academic unit sponsoring the course at the conclusion of the third year. Exemptions from this rule may be granted by the appropriate AVP.
- F. The office of the appropriate AVP shall publish annually, for information purposes, a list of courses that are being retired from the university curriculum and the university catalog.

Source: University Curriculum Committee

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