

# UNC CHARLOTTE ACADEMIC POLICY: COURSE NUMBERING AND STATUS

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy provides a framework for the identification of course types, as well as a standardized mechanism through which students, faculty, advisors, and others can understand and navigate the curriculum.

## II. POLICY STATEMENT

### COURSE NUMBERING

#### **Rule No.1**

The course number will contain no more or no less than four numerical digits and will have no alpha suffixes except as provided for in Rule No. 5 and Rule No. 6.

#### **Rule No.2**

The first digit of the 4-digit number indicates the level of the course.

#### **0001-0999 Specialty Courses**

Specialty courses are intended to prepare students for future coursework, which may not carry full credit toward a degree.

#### **1000-2999 Lower Division Undergraduate Courses**

Courses for undergraduate students. Graduate students may enroll in these courses but they are not available for graduate credit.

#### **3000-3999 Upper Division Undergraduate Courses**

Courses comprising the advanced portion of an undergraduate program leading to a baccalaureate degree. Graduate students may enroll in these courses but they are not available for graduate credit.

#### **4000-4999 Undergraduate Courses**

Not open to graduate students. May include parallel graduate courses cross-listed at the 5000 level.

**5000-5999 Graduate Courses**

Not open to undergraduate students. May include parallel undergraduate courses cross-listed at the 4000 level.

**6000-7999 Master's Level Courses**

Advanced, well-qualified undergraduates may register in 6000-level courses for undergraduate credit, but only by special request. Thesis registration is generally at the 6900 level with work beyond program requirements numbered GRAD 7999 once all program requirements have been met.

**8000-9999 Doctoral Work**

The 8999 number is for dissertation work with the program. The 9000 level is used only for doctoral work beyond the program, and GRAD 9999 is used once all program requirements have been met.

**Rule No.3**

Unique second digits will be used University-wide to designate special types of courses. These unique digits are:

X000 Topics

X400 Internship, Practica, Clinical, and Student Teaching

X500 General Education and Cooperative Education

- 1500-1599 and 2500-2599: General Education Courses
- 3500, 6500, and 7500: Cooperative Education Courses

X600 Seminar

X700 Honors Courses

X800 Independent Study

X900 Research-Based Course, Thesis, and Dissertation Research

This convention can be used for courses at all levels.

**Rule No.4**

Except for the special courses listed in Rule No. 3, the second, third and fourth digits are reserved for departmental or college use. Each department may develop its own scheme to meet its particular needs.

**Rule No.5**

Use of Alpha Suffixes is restricted as follows:

“L” reserved for a laboratory attached to a course such as General Chemistry and General Chemistry Lab. (“L” will not be attached to a “stand-alone” laboratory.)

Other Alpha Suffixes will be used ONLY as a logistical means for handling topic courses with different topics in a single term and for variable credit courses offered in a single term to distinguish between sections with different credit. All alpha suffixes other than “L” will be assigned by the Office of the Registrar on a term-by-term basis.

#### **Rule No.6**

A laboratory attached to a course will have the identical number as the course except the alpha suffix “L” will be attached.

#### **Rule No.7**

A course number may not be used for a substantially different course within a period of six years from the most recent use of the number. This does not preclude minor revisions in title, content, or description of existing courses; nor does it preclude reinstatement of essentially the same course with the old number that has been deleted by a department or college.

## **COURSE PREFIX**

#### **Rule No.8**

The course prefix will contain no more than four alpha characters. Departments should consult with the University Registrar when establishing courses which may desire a course prefix other than the departmental abbreviations.

## **COURSE STATUS**

#### **Rule No.9**

Departments should periodically review the status of their courses to clearly communicate to students when they can reasonably expect to be able to take a course. A course that is not offered within a period of 10 years will be removed from the Catalog and inactivated. Annually, departments will be asked to review this list of courses during year nine and may elect to offer a course they do not wish to be inactivated during year ten or send a petition to the Associate Dean of the college.

## **III. DEFINITIONS**

- **Bachelor’s degree or baccalaureate** - The degree of bachelor of arts (B.A.) or bachelor of science (B.S.), typically requiring a minimum of 120 hours of specified course work. A

bachelor's degree is comprised of General Education courses, a major program(s), elective courses, and, in some cases, a minor program(s), and, in general, is completed in four years.

- **College** - An academic unit of the University. Each of the seven discipline-based colleges at UNC Charlotte represents an organization of related departments.
- **Course** - A specific subject studied within a limited period of time. Courses may utilize lectures, discussion, laboratory, seminar, workshop, studio, independent study, internship, or other similar teaching formats to facilitate learning.
- **Credit hour** - an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:
  1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or
  2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
- **Cross-Listed Course** - A single course which is simultaneously listed in the schedule of course offerings by two or more academic departments. They share the same meeting times, room, instructor(s), and curriculum. Students may only receive credit for the single section of the cross-listed course for which they are registered. Credit will not be awarded for a course where credit has been awarded for a cross-listed course.
- **Department** - A unit within a college representing a discipline. For example, the Department of English is in the College of Humanities & Earth and Social Sciences.
- **Dissertation** - The major research project normally required as part of the work for a doctoral degree. Dissertations are expected to make a new and creative contribution to the field of study, or to demonstrate one's excellence in the field.
- **Non-Credit for Graduation** - Courses which are designed to make up deficiencies in previous training or to improve facility in certain basic skills without earning credit for graduation.
- **Registrar** - The official at the University who is responsible for maintaining student records. The Office of the Registrar plans and oversees registration, academic record maintenance, transcript preparation, graduation, a degree audit report system, and curricular records.
- **Seminar** - Most commonly offered as upper-level and graduate courses, these are small classes of approximately 15 students each, designed to facilitate intensive study of specific subject areas.

## IV. POLICY CONTACT(S)

- **Authority:** [Faculty Council](#) [Faculty Academic Policy and Standards Committee]

- **Responsible Office:** [Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs](#)
- **Additional Contact(s):** [Office of the Registrar](#)

## V. HISTORY

- **Approved:** March 14, 1969
- **Revised:** September 30, 1982
- **Revised:** June 15, 1984
- **Revised:** April 24, 2014 [numerous revisions to the Rules; added “and Status” to policy title]
- **Revised:** September 30, 2021 [revised 4000 and 5000 level course descriptions under Rule No. 2, , removed H for Honors sections in Rule No. 3 & 5, removed requirement to add three most recent terms courses offered in catalogs and replaced it with the new sunset clause in Rule No. 9]
- **Revised:** January 27, 2022 [updated number types under Rule No. 3]
- **Revised:** March 30, 2023 [updated X500 in Rule No. 3 to include General Education courses]

## VI. PRIOR VERSIONS

- [January 27, 2022 - March 30, 2023](#)

## VII. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

- [Boiler Plate Syllabus for Graduate Courses](#)

## VIII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Where is this policy referenced?**  
The policy is published on the Academic Policies & Procedures webpage of the [Provost website](#) and summarized in the Course Descriptions section of the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#).
- **Which students are covered under this policy?**  
This policy applies to all students at UNC Charlotte.
- **What should I consider when cross-listing courses?**
  - (1) If possible, use the same course level and number for all listings (i.e., AFRS 3232, COMM 3232, ENGL 3232)
  - (2) Use the same title and course description for all listings
  - (3) Keep prerequisites the same for all listings, clearly stating any exceptions
  - (4) For courses cross-listed at different levels (i.e., Master’s and doctoral-level), the higher-

level course needs to have more advanced requirements; this is a SACSCOC expectation

- **Can undergraduate and graduate courses be cross-listed?**

According to the above policy, courses at the 4xxx and 5xxx levels can be cross-listed; in doing so, undergraduate and graduate students can enroll in the same course, but the syllabi requirements for each section must be different. Requests for courses to be cross-listed must be made through the faculty curriculum approval process.

- **How should a course be numbered if it meets several of the course types under Rule No.3?**

If a course meets more than one course type as described in Rule No.3, the special course type that best accurately describes the course should be used. All things being equal, priority should be given to x800 (Independent Study) or x000 (Topics), when possible and if applicable. For example, if your course is an honors course that is also an independent study, the x800 (Independent Study) number should take priority over the x700 (Honors Courses).

- **What course numbers should be used for Co-Op Seminars and Experiences?** Cooperative Education (Co-Op) Seminars and Experiences should use the following numbering conventions:

- Co-Op Seminars: 3695 (undergraduate) or 6695 (graduate)
  - Co-Op Experiences: 3500 (undergraduate), or 6500 or 7500 (graduate)
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