

# COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

## OFFICIAL POLICY

7.6.9

Course Numbering Policy

11/12/2019

### Policy Statement

#### 1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide uniform guidance for students, faculty, staff, and community members in understanding the intended audience and relative degree of course difficulty when registering for and completing any credit-bearing course at the College of Charleston.<sup>1</sup>

#### 2.0 USE OF THREE-DIGIT COURSE NUMBERS

Three-digit course numbers shall be used at the College of Charleston (hereafter, "College") to identify courses that can be taken for undergraduate or graduate course credit.

All three-digit course numbers follow four-letter prefixes that designate a specific discipline or an interdisciplinary field. For example, "ENGL" has been the four-letter prefix designation for courses offered by the College's undergraduate and graduate programs in English, and many undergraduate and graduate courses are approved for these programs (e.g., "ENGL 110").<sup>2</sup> In course syllabi and in the course schedules provided by the Registrar, course numbers are followed by section numbers. The combination of course prefix, course number, and section number identifies the specific course section in which a student enrolls (e.g., "COMM 104 - 02").

The first digit in each three-digit course number indicates the level of the course

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<sup>1</sup> Course numbering policies vary significantly from one university to another. Caution should be exercised in comparing courses at different institutions, whatever their course numbers might be. The guidance provided by this policy also may be relevant to zero-credit-hour courses associated with or linked to credit-bearing courses.

<sup>2</sup> On occasion, disciplinary or program designations are revised when disciplinary names are changed or when an insufficient supply of unused course numbers is associated with an older disciplinary designation.

(e.g., "200-level," "500-level"). As a general guideline, the larger the first digit in the three-digit number for the course, the more advanced the material for which the student will be responsible. For example, consistent with the explanation offered below, a 400-level course should be substantially more advanced than a 200-level course offered by the same undergraduate academic program.

Credit-bearing courses numbered 000-099 and 1000 or above are not permitted at the College of Charleston. Course numbers shall have no fewer than and no more than three digits.

Course numbering shall be interpreted in accordance with the following explanation of course levels at the College of Charleston:

<b>100-299</b>	Lower-level, undergraduate courses
<b>300-399</b>	Upper-level, undergraduate courses
<b>400-499</b>	Advanced, upper-level undergraduate courses that may be cross-listed with graduate courses numbered 500-599 <sup>2</sup>
<b>500-599</b>	Introductory <sup>3</sup> graduate courses that may be cross-listed with undergraduate courses numbered 400-499
	Graduate courses
<b>901-999</b>	Graduate courses reserved for use in instruction leading to the doctoral degree

Course prerequisites and co-requisites are designated in each case consistent with disciplinary context or course-specific needs. The inclusion of prerequisites and co-requisites - or the decision not to require them - is separate from the determination of the appropriate level for the course. Presumptively, prerequisites and co-requisites exist at or below the course level of the course in question. Course sequences at the same course level -- where one course is the prerequisite for another course at that same level - are customary and expected in several disciplines.

Undergraduate students may not register for graduate courses at the 500-level and above, unless such registrations are approved as part of a four-plus-one program or other program or policy that expressly provides for such registrations and has been endorsed by the relevant College committees; the Dean of the Graduate School of the

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<sup>3</sup> The terms "introductory" and "advanced" have been used inconsistently in the development and approval of undergraduate and graduate course titles and descriptions at the College. Such terms, when used to describe a specific course, should not be understood as inconsistent with the current Policy, but as a commentary on course content in a particular disciplinary or interdisciplinary context.

University of Charleston, South Carolina; and the Provost.

Certain graduate course offerings in the education disciplines are linked to the development of instructional competencies for graduate students who already have developed specific sorts of subject-matter expertise; such subject-matter expertise usually was cultivated while earning previous undergraduate or graduate degrees.

Graduate courses developing instructional expertise in such cases, while offered consistent with best practices in higher education, pose special challenges for interpretation of course numbers and for institutional decisions about cross-listing and “meets with” courses, as described below.

The adoption of this Policy shall not prevent the President of the College from proposing, or the Board of Trustees from approving, separate tuition rates or fees for courses based on their level within the course-numbering system.

### **3.0 CROSS-LISTING OF COURSES, INCLUDING CROSS-LISTING OF UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE COURSES**

Cross-listed courses may be approved when two separate courses are equivalent in content or share content to a very significant degree, but where separate course listings are necessary and desirable. Cross-listed courses must be approved by the faculty Senate.

Two undergraduate courses may be cross-listed with different program prefixes and numbers, though cross-listing with the same course number is preferred in such cases. Cross-listed courses shall have identical course catalog descriptions. Cross-listing of undergraduate courses must be approved by the relevant College committees and the Faculty Senate. Cross-listed undergraduate courses should be designated as such in the undergraduate catalog and in the College's course-management software.

Because cross-listed undergraduate courses are equivalent in content or share content to a very significant degree, no student shall be permitted to receive credit for both cross-listed courses. Academic programs may offer both undergraduate versions of cross-listed courses during the same academic term, or they may offer only one version of the cross-listed courses, depending on the curricular needs and enrollment-management goals of the academic programs.

Cross-listing of undergraduate and graduate courses shall be permitted only when those involved in the approval process are provided with satisfactory evidence that the course objectives, student learning outcomes, learning experiences, and assignments will be different and more advanced for students in the 500-level course than for students in the 400-level course. Consistent with the requirements of College Policy 7.6.10, these mandatory differences in the content and rigor of cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses must be readily apparent when the separate

syllabi for the cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses are examined.

Cross-listing of undergraduate and graduate courses must be approved by the relevant College committees and the Faculty Senate. The relevant Department Chairs and Program Directors shall be responsible for assuring that cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses are offered and taught in a fashion consistent with their approval by the Faculty Senate. Cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses should be designated as such in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and in the College's course- management software.

Because cross-listed undergraduate and graduate courses share content to a significant degree, no student shall be permitted to receive credit for both the 400- and 500-level versions of the course, except with the written permission of the Provost (or the Provost's designee). Academic programs may offer both the undergraduate and graduate versions of cross-listed courses during the same academic term, or they may offer only one version of the cross-listed courses (i.e., undergraduate or graduate, but not both), depending on the curricular needs and enrollment-management goals of the academic programs.

Repeatable courses cannot be cross-listed. Special topics courses may be offered using a "meets with" scheduling and instructional model, provided that all provisions of this Policy are followed.

#### **4.0 "MEETS WITH" COURSES DISTINGUISHED FROM CROSS-LISTING OF COURSES**

"Meets with" is a scheduling designation. Courses scheduled as "meets with" are co-located with one or more courses that share facilities or other instructional resources, but where course content remains significantly different from one "meets with" course to another. For example, one "meets with" course might share some lecture sessions with another course, but have separate discussion sections and assignments. Notwithstanding their co-location, students in these courses are receiving significantly different instructional content. Courses scheduled as "meets with" are not equivalent and thus there are no restrictions on students registering for and receiving credit for each of the courses in a "meets with" status in subsequent semesters. The relevant Department Chairs and Program Directors shall be responsible for assuring that meets- with courses are offered and taught in a fashion consistent with this definition.

A student who enrolls in a "meets with" course section should in no way assume that she or he has earned the same type of course credit as a student who may have enrolled in a different course with which the course meets. Also, students in "meets with" courses should not assume that they may switch their enrollment from one course section to another or attend discussion sections or labs in which they are not enrolled.

Consistent with the requirements of College Policy 7.6.10, separate syllabi must be provided for each "meets with" course. The mandated differences in the content and

rigor of “meets with” undergraduate and graduate courses must be readily apparent when the separate syllabi for “meets with” undergraduate and graduate courses are examined.

A variation of “meets with” that requires careful administrative oversight at the program/department-level is restricted to the scheduling of two or more special and/or variable topics courses that are co-located, taught by the same instructor and have identical instructional content or share content to a very significant degree. This variation is not permitted between courses of the same prefix (e.g., BIOL, ENGL, MUSC, etc.) or between fixed catalog courses (non-variable/non-special topics). This variation of “meets with” is intended to facilitate the interdisciplinary activity of programs with identifying/tagging special and/or variable topics classes for their respective majors/minors. This variation of “meets with” scheduling for the assigned professor is only counted as a single course assignment when the collective target enrollment is achieved for all special and/or variable topics courses in the classroom in question. Program directors/chairs who oversee the courses taught in this variation of “meets with” are responsible for tracking the respective courses to ensure students do not repeat the special topics courses if/when offered with the same content.

#### **5.0 PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSE NUMBERING GUIDELINES**

Additional course-numbering guidelines may be developed for use in specific undergraduate or graduate academic programs, as long as those guidelines do not violate the provisions of this Policy. When a conflict exists between a school-, department-, or program-specific course-numbering guideline and the current Policy, the current Policy shall prevail.

#### **6.0 DEVELOPMENTAL AND NON-CREDIT-BEARING COURSES**

Developmental and non-credit-bearing courses are not included in the College's Course Numbering Policy.

#### **7.0 COURSE NUMBERING IN PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY TWO OR MORE UNIVERSITIES**

In consultation with the Registrar, deviations in the application of this Policy to the course numbers for joint undergraduate programs (i.e., undergraduate programs administered by two or more universities) may be approved in writing by the Provost (or the Provost's designee). In consultation with the Registrar, deviations in the application of this Policy to the course numbers for joint graduate programs (i.e., graduate programs administered by two or more universities) may be approved in writing by the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Charleston, South Carolina, subject to review and determination by the Provost.

#### **8.0 SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMS**

No element of this Policy shall be interpreted as preventing or interfering with the ordinary management of and institutional provisions for any institutionally approved

accelerated degree program, dual-enrollment program, degree-completion program, first-year experience program, four-plus-one program, or other academic program of a special nature, as so designated by the Provost.

## **9.0 CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN COURSE NUMBERING**

Those developing, reviewing, and approving new course proposals, or proposals for course modifications, shall avoid, to the best of their ability and in light of all other academic considerations, the assignment of course numbers with the potential to cause confusion for students, prospective students, faculty, and staff. While deferring to the relevant faculty when possible, Deans, the relevant faculty committees, the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of the Provost shall assist course proposers in the selection of course numbers that will minimize errors in advising and course selection and emphasize the movement of students through increasingly advanced material during their academic careers at the College.

## **10.0 ORDERLY MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

Disputes regarding the interpretation and/or application of this Policy may be appealed to the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final.

The Registrar may create additional procedures, guidelines, or conventions for course numbering, including course section numbers, in consultation with the Office of the Provost, the Speaker of the Faculty, and/or one or more College, Senate, or Institutional Committees, as appropriate. Disputes regarding any course-numbering procedures, guidelines, or conventions created by the Registrar may be brought to the Provost. In resolving such disputes, the decision of the Provost is final.

All course numbers at the College of Charleston shall comply with this Policy no later than May 15, 2017.<sup>4</sup> In specific, extraordinary cases not involving joint degree programs, the Provost (or the Provost's designee) may, by written directive, extend this policy compliance deadline for up to one year. As appropriate, academic administrators responsible for an academic program in which course numbers are being revised to comply with this Policy should work with the Registrar to provide appropriate notice to faculty, students, prospective students, and staff about the transition from old to new course numbers.

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<sup>4</sup> Multiple undergraduate and graduate course numbers were adjusted in accordance with the provisions of the current Policy during the 2015-2016 academic year, when the Policy was available in draft form and was under review.

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### **Policy Manager and Responsible Department or Office**

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (or Provost's Designee)  
Office of the Registrar

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### **Purpose/Reason for the Policy**

The purpose of this Policy is to provide uniform guidance for students, faculty, staff, and community members in understanding the intended audience and relative degree of course difficulty when registering for and completing any credit-bearing course at the College of Charleston.

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### **Departments/Offices Affected by the Policy**

Office of the Provost  
Office of the Registrar  
All Academic Schools, Departments, and Academic Programs  
Honors College  
Graduate School  
Summer School Office  
School of Professional  
Studies Treasurer's Office  
Academic Advising and Planning Center

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### **Procedures Related to the Policy**

Procedures related to this Policy may be developed by the Provost and/or the Registrar, as described in the text of the Policy. The procedures adopted by several College, Senate, and Institutional Committees may have implications for the course-numbering

schemes adopted by or proposed for one or more academic programs.

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**Related Policies, Documents or Forms**

Faculty Organization and By-Laws Faculty/Administration Manual

Forms Maintained by the Curriculum Committee

Forms Maintained by the Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education and Special Programs

Policy 7.6.10, "Policy on Course Syllabi"

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**POLICY APPROVAL**

**(For use by the Office of the Board of Trustees or the Office of the President)**

Policy Number: 7.6.9

President or Chairman, Board of Trustees



Date: 11/19/2019