
Procedure	Criteria for Evaluating Course Proposals
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References:	Procedures 201.30, 201.30.5, and 201.90
Approved by:	ASCRC and Graduate Council

Part I: Criteria for Evaluating New Course Proposals

A department proposes a new course when it wishes to revise the curriculum and to reflect new areas of study within the discipline. A course is generally proposed after it has been offered experimentally. In some cases, departments may have valid reasons for adding a new course without first offering it experimentally. In such cases, it may not be possible for departments to submit a full and complete syllabus beyond the general course description and outcomes.

Criteria for evaluating a new course are:

1. Does the course fit well with the existing curriculum?
2. Does the course represent a net increase in departmental credits? Does the department explain course deletions, combinations, credit reductions and/or increased teaching resources that accompany the proposal?
3. Does the course have internal coherence and clear focus?
4. Does the course duplicate courses in other departments? If so, have conflicts been resolved? Does a similar course with a Common Course Number exist in the Montana University System?
5. Is the course proposed by a tenured or tenure-track faculty member? If not, does the department chair or director make the proposal and stipulate that the course will be taught with existing resources at least once every three years?
6. Has the course been taught experimentally? (Special or Experimental courses must be offered consistent with Procedure 201.90.)
7. Unless required by Common Course Numbering, the chosen rubric and number cannot have been used at UM within the last ten years.
8. If the course is UG, has it been assigned a 400 number? Does the graduate increment comply to [Procedure 301.30](#). See [Procedure 301.20](#) for Co-convening courses.

When reviewing a proposal for a new course, please see also the relevant instructions from Part II regarding changes to existing courses (in particular regarding Credits, Course Title, Repeatability, Catalog Description, Course Syllabus, and Prerequisites).

Although course content should be appropriate to its proposed level, it is not the role of ASCRC or Graduate Council to judge the instructor's choice of texts, assignments, or grading methods.

Part II: Criteria for Evaluating Changes to Existing Courses

Change in Course Level: 1) Does the department offer a reasonable justification? 2) Is course content (difficulty and required student effort) being adjusted to suit the proposed level? 3) If the new level is UG, has it been given a 400 number?

Course Number: Proposed changes to course numbering must be reconciled with the Common Course Numbering matrix. Unless required by Common Course Numbering, the chosen rubric and number cannot have been used at UM within the last ten years.

Credits: Normally does not bear review unless the proposed number of credits is inconsistent with the amount of material being covered in the course.

Course Deletion: This is not a matter for ASCRC or GC review unless other programs depend on the course and relevant concerns have not been satisfactorily resolved.

Course Title: This does not normally bear review unless the proposed title is highly ambiguous or clearly fails to capture the essence of the course. Consultation with instructor may be necessary.

Repeatability: Normally a course can only be taken once. Exceptions are allowed for variable topics courses (e.g. seminars, independent studies, theses). Usually the limit for repeatability is 9-12 credits.

Catalog Description: A short and succinct summary of the course is best for catalogue purposes. Some editing may be required in consultation with the instructor. Catalog descriptions should comply with the UM Registrar's required format.

Course Syllabus: The syllabus should comply with Faculty Senate guidelines (Procedure 201.30.5). The reviewer or subcommittee chair should contact the instructor for revisions to ensure the syllabus is proper before inclusion of the proposal on the consent agenda. (Note: Also the syllabus of an existing course should be brought to compliance).

Prerequisites: Normally does not bear review unless there are so many prerequisites, including hidden prerequisites, that too many students are effectively barred access to the course

Affected Departments/Programs: Have all affected departments and programs been consulted? See Procedure 201.30 for information about affected departments and programs.

Inter- and Intra-Campus Section Approval: If a department or program from the Mountain Campus, Missoula College, or Bitterroot College wants to offer a section of a course that it has not offered in the past and that is currently offered by another department or program at UM-Missoula, the department that wants to begin offering this course must go through the regular Faculty Senate course approval process for new courses (listing the other department as an affected program).