
Procedure **Co-convening Course Guidelines**

Procedure Number: 301.20
Date Adopted: 4/20/11
Last Revision: 11/14/19

Approved by: Graduate Council

Graduate programs differ from undergraduate programs in that they require a greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacity beyond the undergraduate level (NWCCU Standard 2.C.12). A graduate course, therefore, should include content beyond that of an undergraduate course and should be constructed to challenge and edify students who already possess knowledge of the discipline equal to that of a typical undergraduate degree recipient in the field.

A co-convened graduate course is a graduate course that will include, as a majority of its content, concurrent attendance in a 400-level class. The graduate course must comprise significant experiences and content beyond what is required in the companion 400-level course. (See the details of the [Graduate Increment Requirements and Guidelines \(301.30\)](#))

In general, co-convened graduate courses should:

1. Provide opportunity for significant interaction among graduate students and/or between graduate student(s) and the faculty member teaching the course.
2. Require a higher level of cognitive processing. Frequently, graduate courses will contain significant communication, writing, and speaking requirements, as well as required and suggested readings of research and scholarship in the discipline.
3. Require an extensive theoretical base in the discipline or present core or important peripheral components of the discipline at an advanced level.
4. Have a separate and distinct syllabus specifying learning objectives, content, and assessment procedures.
5. Require upper division prerequisites.

Approval Procedures: At the time of submission, both the graduate and undergraduate syllabi should be submitted to Graduate Council along with a new course form, including a justification for co-convening rather than requesting a (UG) designation for the course. The following requirements must be met for approval of a co-convening course:

1. Syllabi for the graduate sections should represent more extensive student learning outcomes and a higher degree of rigor parallel to the other graduate courses in the same academic

program, meeting, at a minimum, the guidelines for the Graduate Increment (See [Graduate Increment Requirements and Guidelines \(301.30\)](#))

2. The graduate course must require graduate students to complete extra assignments or work that is appropriately greater than the co-convening undergraduate students.
3. The course must provide opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students or cohorts to meet separately to discuss or explore the material at a level appropriate to their experience.

The following administrative procedures should be observed when offering a co-convening course:

- No graduate course may co-convene without approval of the Graduate Council. A new course form will be used to facilitate this approval.
- Typically only 400-level and 500-level courses can be co-convened. Under special circumstances, 400-level and 600-level courses can be co-convened if the program provides a sufficient rationale.
- No co-convening graduate course can be paired with a course that has a (UG) catalogue designation.
- A student should not receive credit for a 5XX graduate course if he/she has already completed the companion co-convened 4XX course.
- Co-convening courses should have a distinct catalogue designation, with the same last two digits. ex: 586 (G) when listed to reflect that the course meets with a 486 (U).
- The graduate co-convened course should include in its catalogue language reference to the undergrad co-convened course, as well as specification of additional content and learning objectives.

The following option is available for programs that determine the content of a 300-level course is essential to a graduate degree.

- Departments can offer a 592 Independent Study course that requires attendance and completion of a 300-level course when the content of the course is determined to be essential to the graduate degree. The 592 designation will serve as placeholder for these atypical Independent Study courses, and may only be taken for up to six credits campus-wide if counted towards a graduate degree.
- Each 592 course will have its own section and syllabus.
- The 592 course description will include a statement like “Students will obtain basic knowledge in X by attending 3xx and will expand upon this base through additional work assigned through this 592 course.” This will be followed by a description of the additional work, sufficient to justify graduate credit.

- If the 300 level course is not in the degree granting department, the supporting department must confirm its willingness to support additional support and engagement for graduate students.

Exceptions

A graduate program may petition for individual course exceptions to these policies. The petition should demonstrate how, due to unique circumstances, compliance with these policies will have an adverse effect on the ability of the program to deliver quality graduate education. The Graduate Council will consider such petitions and will make recommendations to the Graduate School whether to allow the requested exception(s). The Dean of the Graduate School will decide whether to grant the requested exception(s).