

Policies Regarding
the Reuse of Course Numbers
and
the Assignment of New Course Numbers
due to Course Description and Course Title Revisions

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Rationale

To address issues raised to Academic Publications in the Office of the Registrar concerning course description and course inventory updates during the recent revisions of the graduate and undergraduate catalogs, a committee was formed to provide standardized guidelines addressing the following: (1) the reuse of course numbers within the same discipline; (2) the extent of modification to a course description that would require assignment of a new course number (creation of a new course); and (3) the extent of modification to a course title that would require assignment of a new course number (creation of a new course).

This document presents the recommendations of that committee.

Committee Members

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Committee Recommendations

1. Reuse of Course Numbers for New Courses

Currently, a course number that has been used previously for a course in a specific discipline cannot be reused until the last catalog the course appeared is no longer in effect. This term is seven years for an undergraduate catalog and six years for a graduate catalog. The justification for this is that “formerly” and “credit cannot be earned” statements remain in the catalogs for seven years (or six years for graduate) after the course has been removed from the catalog and reusing a course number may conflict with these statements. For example, ES 2113 Fundamentals of Geographic Information Systems states: “Formerly ES 4043. Credit cannot be earned for both ES 2113 and ES 4043.” ES 4043 cannot be reused before this statement can be removed from the catalog.

The reuse of numbers also creates the potential for problems concerning students being erroneously assessed a surcharge under the Three-Attempt Rule. Banner identifies duplicate course numbers within a discipline for identification of the repeat of a course. These duplicate numbers are pulled from a student’s entire academic history, so even if the two courses were different, the student would be identified as repeating the same course.

Currently, course numbers are never reused prior to the expiration of the last catalog the course appeared in, and the reuse of numbers after that time is strongly discouraged.

The committee recommends the following policies concerning the reuse of course numbers:

- A. Course numbers should not be reused (even after the seven-year period for undergraduate catalogs, or six-year period for graduate catalogs, has expired) given the potential problems this may cause to student records. (Exceptions to this may need to be made in disciplines that have few available numbers.)
- B. If a number must be reused due to the lack of available numbers within a discipline, the number should be from a course with no academic history (the course was never offered or was offered but there was no enrollment).

2. Course Description Changes Requiring a New Course Number (creation of a new course)

Updating course descriptions (and titles) is necessary in order to reflect changing technology and terminology; however, substantial modifications to a course description that change the content of the course are effectively creating a new course.

The committee recommends the following policies and procedures concerning course description revisions and the assignment of new course numbers:

- A. Substantial modifications to a course description that reflect a change in course content (and may or may not result in a change in the Classification of Instructional Programs [CIP] Code) would require assigning the course a new course number, even if the course title remains unchanged.
- B. Minor modifications to a course description or updates to technical language or terminology that do not affect the actual content or applicability of the course would not require the assignment of a new number to the course.
- C. If the course has a Texas Common Course Number (TCCN) assigned, the TCCN course guide should be consulted to determine if the course is still equivalent to that common course. If the description has changed enough that the TCCN assigned is no longer appropriate, the course should be assigned a new number.
- D. The final decision concerning the need to assign a new number (i.e., create a new course) based on substantial modifications to an existing course description that change the content of the course will rest with the academic department under which the course falls, or the college Dean's office if the discipline is not housed within an academic department.

If there is some question about the significance of the modifications, the decisive question should be: if a student took the course in question two years ago, would they be taking the same course if they registered for it today? If the answer is "no," then it should be considered a new course.

The following are examples identified by the committee as changes to course descriptions that may be considered substantial and require assignment of new course numbers:

ART 2313 Digital Photography: Basic [TCCN: ARTS 2348.]

(0-6) 3 hours credit. ~~Prerequisite: ART 1003.~~ Recommended Prerequisite: ART 2513

~~Introduction to the fundamentals of 2-D image creation and manipulation using software as a tool for art making in a variety of media, including printmaking, photography, video and multimedia computer display programs.~~ Introduction to the digital application and manipulation of photography primarily through the use of the Adobe Photoshop program. It will examine extensions of traditional photographic techniques for exhibition, as well as uses for the web and multimedia. Previous computer experience is helpful, but not required. ~~May be repeated once for credit when topics vary.~~

CSH 3813 Advanced Topics in Comparative Studies in the Humanities World Cultures

(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: WRC 1023 or the equivalent.

~~Comparative and/or interdisciplinary investigation of humanistic fields of study, including literature, culture, film, and other arts. Topics may include study of a genre, period, or motif, comparison of authors or directors.~~ investigation of foreign cultures. Topics may include various combinations and aspects of Hispanic, Francophone, German, Slavic, Judaic, Latin or Oriental cultures. All readings are in English translation. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

SOC 3413 Sociology of the Mexican American Family-Community

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Focuses on contemporary issues regarding Mexican American ~~families-communities~~. Topics of discussion include family structure, ~~child-rearing practices~~, gender roles, ~~marital stability, and intermarriage~~ border issues and political power. Comparison with other minorities and the majority group will allow discussion of variant ~~family-community~~ patterns.

3. Course Title Changes

The committee recommends the following policies concerning course title revisions:

- A. Modifying the course title **only** would not require assigning a new number to a course, even if the changes are substantial.
- B. If the title is modified substantially, such as in the example below, the former title will be noted at the end of the course description. The notation of the former title would remain in the course description until the catalog in which the title last appeared is no longer in effect (seven years for undergraduate, six years for graduate).

It was decided by the committee that even though these changes may be confusing to students already in a program of study, the assignment of a new number in addition to the title change may only add to that confusion.

Example:

ARC 3343 ~~Environmental Systems I~~ Building Technology IV

(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisites: ARC 2126 and ARC 2213.

Environmentally responsive design of buildings and the natural and artificial systems that support them, including heating, ventilation and cooling, water and waste, and solid waste management. (Formerly ARC 3323. Credit cannot be earned for both ARC 3343 and ARC 3323.) (Formerly titled Environmental Systems I.)

4. Additional Procedures

- A. A course that has been removed from the catalog (and course inventory) can be reinstated without assigning a new number to the course, provided that the title and description remain unchanged from when the course was previously offered.
- B. A course that is being moved from one discipline to another (resulting in a change in the two- or three-letter abbreviation) with the content remaining the same will keep the same course number, unless that number is currently in use, or has been previously used, in the discipline acquiring the course.

