New Course Proposal Guidelines  
Academic Learning Services (ALS) Department

To Submit a Course Proposal to the ALS Department

- Provide a syllabus that illustrates the learning outcomes, the expected course work including reading and assignments, and an overall description/illustration of topics to be covered
- Provide a short description of the instructional methods and/or some of the course activities that might be part of your course.
- A brief written description of how you will assess the effectiveness of the course

Departmental Philosophy

ALS courses offer students support in orientation and transition into the university, career decision-making, study skills, peer education, and developmental reading. The ALS department adheres to the National Association for Developmental Education philosophy “to help underprepared students prepare, prepared students advance, and advanced students excel.” The philosophy developed by educators such as Hunter Boylan and Martha Cazzaza calls for a holistic view of student development, including academic and personal growth, an emphasis on curricular and co-curricular learning, and a comprehensive network of student support.

Best practice calls for challenging students with rigorous content and workload in ALS courses and giving them the support they need to be successful. Joe Cuseo argues that “content material pertinent to the student transition can be made rigorous by nature of delivery and design.” ALS courses should represent this best practice in their design and delivery, such that these courses promote support for transition and uphold rigor and challenge for students. Additionally, such an approach relies on identifying student strengths and assisting them to maximize their potential for learning.

ALS Department Guiding Principles

- ALS courses are offered only at the 100 or 200 level
- Each course must have clearly defined learning outcomes, and a plan in place to assess these outcomes
- Courses must include academic activities such as reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking appropriate to the credit level being offered
- Curriculum should be developed to challenge students as well as offer appropriate support
- Course delivery, activities, and workload for ALS courses should be commensurate with expectations for academic rigor in the disciplines.
- Oversight will rest with the director of the Academic Success Center as well as the ALS unit administrator.
- Instructors should provide:
  - Frequent and timely feedback
  - An inclusive classroom space that respects and promotes the diversity of approaches to learning
  - Content delivery using a range of instructional methods that uses a learner-centered and engages students in active learning
  - Any support or explanation necessary for students to complete course assignments or tasks (be cautious of assumptions of prior knowledge and experience)