

ALS Curriculum Information

The following links are very helpful in ALS decision-making for new course proposals and curricular changes:

1. <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/aa/apaa/academic-programs/curriculum/curricular-policies-and-procedures>
2. <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/aa/apaa/academic-programs/curriculum/category-2-proposals>

The first, Policies and Procedures, is full of information, so I've copied the most pertinent or most often used when corresponding with units and instructors.

The second provides a good overview of the CAT II process. Note that **Cat II submissions generally take two months**. A submission for an experimental "X" course takes about a week and is good for two iterations of the course proposed.

Credits: Definition and Guidelines

The OSU Catalog states that "One credit is generally given for three hours per week of work in and out of class. For example, each hour of class lecture is generally expected to require two hours of work out of class." Thus, one quarter credit represents 30 hours of work.

The following guidelines come from C.J. Quann's "A Handbook of Policies and Procedures":

"Academic credit is a measure of the total time commitment required of a typical student in a particular course of study. Total time consists of three components:

- (1) time spent in class;
- (2) time spent in laboratory, studio, fieldwork, or other scheduled activity;
- (3) time devoted to reading, studying, problem solving, writing, or preparation.

One quarter credit is assigned in the following ratio of component hours per week devoted to the course of study:

- (1) lecture courses—one contact hour for each credit (two hours of outside work implied);
- (2) laboratory or studio course—at least two contact hours for each credit (one hour of outside preparation implied);
- (3) independent study—at least three hours of work per week for each credit."

While there may be natural diversity among academic units in administering these standards, they should be carefully considered when assigning credits to new (or existing) courses. For example, one- or two-day workshops, field trips, etc., will not qualify for academic credit unless there are extensive pre- or post-workshop trips or assignments to provide the required 30 hours

of work per credit. Also, the extensive outside work required of some laboratory or studio classes should be taken into account in assigning credits.

Experimental “X” Courses

Experimental “X” courses are designed to be offered temporarily and to permit innovation, experimentation, and development within authorized programs. A syllabus is not required for an X course Category II proposal, but it is still required for review by the ALS Chair.

Experimental courses cannot be taught more than twice in a three-year period. If experience indicates the “X” course should be continued, it must be requested on a permanent basis through the Category II process.

To request a new experimental course, submit a Category II proposal.

Special Topics Course

When it is expected that a course will only be offered once, the “Special Topics” designation may be desired and can be established without a Category II proposal. Please contact the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation to establish a "Special Topics" course.

A full ALS proposal still must be submitted to the ALS Chair for review.

Grading Mode

A course is assumed to be letter graded (A-F) unless otherwise indicated. However, students may elect to take a letter graded course on an S/US (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory) basis.

In addition to traditional letter grading (A–F), departments are authorized to designate Pass/No Credit (P/N) courses, subject to the following guidelines (Academic Regulation 18):

- The principal criterion for choice of grading system is enhancement of the educational experience for the student;
- The nature, structure, and/or objectives of a course may suggest that the Pass/No Credit grading system be adopted. It is anticipated that courses graded on this basis will generally fall into one of the following categories: skill-building courses or practicums, courses which stress orientation and awareness rather than academic preparation;
- The designation of Pass/No Credit grading for a course will follow the academic college’s recommendation and approval by the Curriculum Council of the Faculty Senate, and in the case of graduate courses, by the Graduate Council of the Faculty Senate.

Changing a course from letter grading to P/N grading requires a Category II proposal. However, no curriculum proposal is required to change a course from P/N to letter grading or to change the grading mode for undergraduate Special Topics (X99) courses and 401-410, 506, 1-cr 507, 510, 601, 606, 1-cr 607, 610, 701-710 and 800-level courses.

Grading mode must be identical for all cross-listings of a course.

Designation of courses for P/N grading must be completed prior to the opening of the term in which the course is offered and normally prior to preparation of the Schedule of Classes. Under normal circumstances, once students have enrolled in current term courses, changes in grading mode for that term will not be made.

With the exception of the blanket numbered and Special Topics courses listed above, courses graded on a P/N credit basis contain the statement, "Graded P/N" as part of the course description in the OSU Catalog. Courses that do not contain that statement are letter graded.

Departments must make the grading mode clear during initial class periods and in course syllabi or other materials.

Liaison

Category II proposals require liaison with other academic units. The purposes of liaison are:

- To gather information and opinions concerning the propriety and quality of the changes being proposed.
- To assure that students (including those outside the department) are not adversely affected by curricular changes.
- To reduce duplication of curriculum and enhance complementarity of curriculum within the university and with other OUS institutions.

Feedback should be solicited from all campus units whose programs or students could be affected by the proposal and/or whose common subject matter pertains to the subject matter of the proposal (see list of OSU curriculum contacts). An mail is automatically generated as part of the Cat II proposal process, and this states that any response not received within 2 weeks will be considered a "yes" response.

A record of liaison, and any requests/suggestions/comments made by those campus members, will be created in the online proposal.

For Category II course proposals, please also include:

- A list of courses for which this course/sequence serves as a prerequisite or co-requisite.
- A list of those courses for which this course serves as a cross-list.
- Documentation (e-mails are OK) showing that all participating units agree with the proposal; department chair/head and college-level approvals are required from each.

Outcomes - Student Learning Outcomes for Courses and Degree Programs

Student learning outcomes are learner-focused statements reflecting what a student will be able to do as a result of an instructional activity. Each outcome statement should start with a measurable action verb that indicates the level of learning, followed by a precise description of the learned behavior, knowledge, or attitude. Bloom's Taxonomy is a useful tool for choosing action verbs that accurately describe a desired level of student learning.

For example, an OSU faculty member will be able to:

- Identify an appropriate action verb from Bloom's Taxonomy that describes a particular level of learning.
- Describe the desired behavior a student will be able to exhibit upon successful completion of a course.
- Assess students' performance for evidence of desired learning.

Slash (4xx/5xx) courses must have differentiated learning outcomes for graduate and undergraduate students (i.e. two separate sets of learning outcomes listed on the syllabus). See Slash (4xx/5xx) courses-Differentiation of Learning Expectations.

All degree and certificate programs should publish student learning outcomes on their website or other program material.