

I. PURPOSE

To define experimental and special topics courses and the processes associated with each.

II. SCOPE

These guidelines apply to all experimental and special topics course offerings.

III. FUNCTIONAL DEFINITIONS & GUIDELINES

A. Experimental Course Definition

Experimental courses cover content which may or may not be made a regular on-going part of the curriculum. (Example: a one-off course offered by visiting faculty). Departments are encouraged to try out new course material on an experimental basis through the use of an experimental course number (shell) before formally proposing as a new course with a permanent number.

All subject matter areas have established a standard set of experimental course shells at each of the following course levels:

300X - intended primarily for juniors

400X - intended primarily for seniors

600X - registration restricted to students who are classified as graduate students

750X - registration restricted to students admitted to doctoral programs

Scheduling an Experimental Course:

1. Title – begins with Exp: (the appropriate title should be inserted after the colon – example = “Exp: Baby Boomers”)

The title should be limited to six words or fewer* (30 characters) and should clearly reflect the content of the course. Care should be taken not to use technical terms that may not be clear to

students or other non-specialists. The Registrar's Office may recommend changes in course titles.

**Note: Banner allows only 30 characters (including spaces) so be mindful of how your title may be abbreviated for the academic transcript and the schedule of courses.*

2. Credit Hours – will always be listed as variable credit (1-6). Students will select the appropriate credit structure during the registration process.
- *3. Schedule Type – default option is LEC. Departments can request a different schedule type via the curriculum change management process (CIM system). This type of change is subject to the annual curriculum revision deadline.
- *4. Online offerings – will need to complete the C-RAC process. This type of change allows for a term specific deadline.
5. Grade Mode – each experimental course shell will have both standard grading and P/NP options which can be selected as appropriate for each course section.
6. Campus Code – can be O (online), G (Greensboro Main), S (off-campus location) or R (Nanoscience Building).
7. Cross-listing – experimental courses can be cross-listed only with other experimental courses (i.e. GRO 400X and SWK 400X).

*See Curriculum Guide for associated submission deadlines: <http://curriculumguide.uncg.edu/>

Characteristics of an Experimental Course:

- The content of the course is manifestly appropriate to the department or program offering it.
- Experimental course shells will appear in the University Catalog with a generic course description.
- Experimental course should be advertised by the department to ensure appropriate fill rates.
- Experimental courses are repeatable when the topic of study changes.
- Departments may offer no more than three undergraduate experimental courses, and two graduate experimental courses per semester.

Limitations of Experimental Courses:

- Experimental courses cannot be required in an undergraduate degree or minor or for a graduate program (major, concentration, or certificate) but may be included as an elective for a program where no specific elective requirements exist.
- An experimental course can neither carry General Education category/marker credit nor meet a LEC (Liberal Education Commitment) requirement.
- An experimental course cannot carry course restrictions (including written permission) and/or pre- or co-requisites, nor reserved seating.
- Experimental courses (same content/title) may be offered twice without curriculum committee approval.

Approval Process:

- Offering experimental courses, utilizing existing experimental course shells, does not require prior approval. After the course (same content/title) is offered twice, the course must be approved by the appropriate curriculum committee to be offered a third time as an experimental course, or transitioned to a standard course offering with a non-experimental course number.
- Offering an experimental course online requires approval via the C-RAC process.
- Transitioning an experimental course to a regular course offering with a non-experimental course number requires approval from the appropriate curriculum committee, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), or Graduate Studies Committee (GSC).
- All requests (above) for course changes must follow the CIM process (see <http://curriculumguide.uncg.edu/>)

B. Special Topics Course Definition

Special topics courses are an ever-changing menu of courses that address current/emerging issues, special interest, or specialized content not represented in the main curriculum. Not all courses are offered each semester.

Scheduling a Special Topics Course:

1. Title – begins with Tps: (the appropriate title should be inserted after the colon – example = “Tps: Baby Boomers in the Workplace”)

The title should be limited to six words or fewer* (30 characters) and should clearly reflect the content of the course. Care should be taken not to use technical terms that may not be clear to students or other non-specialists. The UCC or GSC may recommend changes in course titles.

**Note: Banner allows only 30 characters (including spaces) so be mindful of how your title may be abbreviated for the academic transcript and the schedule of courses.*

2. Credit Hours – listed as approved credit structure (fixed or variable)
3. Schedule Type – listed as approved schedule type
4. Online offerings – will need to complete the C-RAC process
5. Grade Mode – listed as approved grade mode (standard *or* P/NP).
6. Campus Code – can be O (online), G (Greensboro Main), S (off-campus location) or R (Nanoscience Building).
7. Cross-listing – must be approved and/or follow the cross-listing guidelines.

Characteristics of a Special Topics Course:

- A special topics course may carry General Education category core or marker credit.
- A special topics course may carry course restrictions (including written permission) and/or pre- or co-requisites.
- A special topics course may be repeated for credit if approved as such during the course creation approval process. Repeat status must be specified (example: “May be repeated twice for credit” *or* “May be repeated for credit if the topic of study changes”).

Approval Process:

- Creating a special topics course requires approval from the appropriate curriculum committee and must be initiated through the standard course proposal and curriculum procedures (CIM: <http://curriculumguide.uncg.edu/>)