

Course Numbering Policy, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction

Policy Category:	Registration and Progression
Subject:	Course Numbering, Essay Courses, and Hours of Instruction
Subsections:	Course Numbering Policy for Undergraduate Courses ; Blended Courses ; Essay Courses (Undergraduate Degrees) ; Hours of Instruction for Undergraduate Courses ; Hours of Instruction – 1000-1999 Courses ; First Year Courses/Classes ; Graduate Course Offerings
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COURSE NUMBERING POLICY FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

Course Numbering

1. **Course Numbers:** Courses are labelled with a ten-character field where the first four characters are numeric and the last six characters may be used for an alphabetic suffix.

Course Titles: If the title exceeds 30 characters the course must be given an alternate “short title” of 30 characters or less for use by the Office of the Registrar.

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Course Descriptions: May not exceed 50 words.

2. Each course will be identified by the department/program offering it. If the course is to be cross-listed and offered by more than one department/program, this should be stated clearly in the original proposal for the course.

3. Courses will be numbered according to the following format:

0001 - 0999* Pre-University level introductory courses

1000 - 1999 Year 1 courses

2000 - 4999 Senior-level undergraduate courses

5000 - 5999 Professional Degree courses in Dentistry, Education, Law, and Medicine

6000 - 6999 Courses offered by Western Continuing Studies

7000 - 8999 *Not yet designated*

9000 - 9999 Graduate Studies courses

* These courses are equivalent to pre-university introductory courses and may be counted for credit in the student's record, unless these courses were taken in a preliminary year. They may not be counted toward essay or breadth requirements, or used to meet modular admission requirements unless it is explicitly stated in the Senate-approved module/program.

Undergraduate Course Suffixes

1. All suffixes are in upper case and indicate the following with regard to course weight and session. The suffixes I and O will not be used to avoid confusion with numbers.

2. Suffixes will be added according to the following format:

No suffix 1.0 course not designated as an essay course

A 0.5 course offered in first term

B 0.5 course offered in second term

A/B 0.5 course offered in first and/or second term

C January courses in the Faculty of Law (4.0 credit weight)

D February/March/April (FMA) courses in the Faculty of Law

E 1.0 essay course

F 0.5 essay course offered in first term

G 0.5 essay course offered in second term

F/G 0.5 essay course offered in first and/or second term

H 1.0 accelerated course (8 weeks) in the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing

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J	1.0 accelerated course (6 weeks) in the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing
K	0.75 course (integrated curriculum of HBA1 program) at the Ivey Business School
L	Unassigned
M	Unassigned
N	Unassigned
P	Unassigned
Q	0.25 course offered in the first half of first term
R	0.25 course offered in the second half of first term
S	0.25 course offered in the first half of second term
T	0.25 course offered in the second half of second term
U	0.25 course offered in other than a regular session
V	0.375 course offered by the Faculty of Education
W	1.0 accelerated course offered in first term
X	1.0 accelerated course offered in second term
Y	0.5 course offered in other than a regular session
Z	0.5 essay course offered in other than a regular session

Undergraduate Course Offerings

1. Course Designations

In most cases:

- a) A full course (1.0 course) will have no suffix or will have an E suffix. A full course has a minimum of 48 contact hours.
- b) A half course (0.5 course) will have an A, B, F, G, Y or Z suffix. Two 0.5 courses are the equivalent of one 1.0 course, whether or not they have been taken in the same subject. A half course has a minimum of 24 contact hours.
- c) A quarter course (0.25 course) will have a Q, R, S, T or U suffix to indicate the term. A quarter course has a minimum of 12 contact hours.

Other designations have also been approved, as follows:

- d) C and D courses are offered by the Faculty of Law
- e) H and J courses are offered by the Faculty of Health Sciences in the Compressed Time Frame Nursing program
- f) K courses are offered by the Ivey Business School
- g) V courses are offered by the Faculty of Education
- h) W and X courses are accelerated full courses (often language courses) which are offered in one term only. They may not be designated as essay courses and normally will not be scheduled during high demand hours, i.e., Monday to Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

2. Course Inactivation

- a) If a course is not offered for a period of five years, following consultation with the relevant Faculty, School or Affiliated University College, the Office of the Registrar will inform the Subcommittee on Undergraduate Academic Courses (SOC) that the course will be withdrawn from course offerings and removed from the Academic Calendar and master timetable.
- b) If a Special Topics course has been offered two times with the same topic, the Faculty, School or Affiliated University College, should they wish to offer the course again, must propose the course to SOC for its approval as a regular course offering and include the former course as an antirequisite for the years it was offered as a Special Topics offering, e.g., "Economics 4490F/G, if taken in 2023-24 or 2024-25."

BLENDED COURSES

Blended courses have both face-to-face and online instruction, as well as on-campus exams. These course offerings are clearly identified by designated section numbers in the undergraduate Academic Calendar and lecture timetable. In the identified blended courses, at least 30% of student learning integral to the course occurs in the online interactive learning environment. For example, in a half (0.5) course at the undergraduate level, at least eight of the required 24 contact hours will occur online.

ESSAY COURSES (Undergraduate Degrees)

Students are encouraged to take an essay course in first year.

Only Western courses designated as essay courses may be used to fulfil this requirement.

Departments must identify essay courses, and the courses will be designated as such in the Academic Calendar. However, courses which are not identified as essay courses may require a significant component of course work in the form of essay writing.

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The guidelines for the minimum written assignments refer to the cumulative amount of written work in a course.

An essay course must normally involve total written assignments (i.e., essays or other appropriate prose composition) as follows:

Full course (1000 to 1999):	at least 3000 words
Half course (1000 to 1999):	at least 1500 words
Full course (2000 and above):	at least 5000 words
Half course (2000 and above):	at least 2500 words

and must be so structured that the student is required to demonstrate competence in essay writing to pass the course.

The structure of the essay course must be such that in order to pass the course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

The term "essay" is to be understood broadly to include many of the reports, reviews, summaries, critiques, and some laboratory reports that are currently assigned, as well as essays in the strictest sense. The essential point is that the assignments involve assembling information and argument and presenting it in connected prose.

Depending on the course, the language of the essay may be English, French, or any of the foreign languages, but artificial and/or machine languages do not meet this requirement.

Course-wide uniformity of designation is a practical necessity. Where a multi-sectioned course is identified as an essay course, all sections of that course must include the appropriate essay component.

The alternative of separate courses with different course numbers, differing only in the essay course component (or lack of it), remains. This is consistent with existing regulations but requires "new course" approval through the Dean's Office by means of SOC.

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

The following course prescriptions are established:

- A full (1.0) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of 48 contact hours.
- A half (0.5) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of 24 contact hours.
- A course with a weight of 0.375, offered by the Faculty of Education, shall require a minimum of 20 contact hours.
- A quarter (0.25) course at the undergraduate level shall require a minimum of 12 contact hours.

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION - 1000-1999 COURSES

The hours of instruction for courses at the 1000-1999 level in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and Social Science shall not exceed three class hours per week, or a combination of class and laboratory hours not to exceed four hours per week in total.

FIRST YEAR COURSES/CLASSES

1. In each department, lecturing in first year courses should, in general, be done by members of faculty.
2. Departments will single out the teachers best qualified for first year teaching for assignment to first year classes.
3. Departments will make every effort to ensure that first year classes taught by more than one person have cohesion and continuity.
4. A common curriculum will be established in each course (1000-1999) with multiple sections.
5. Each department periodically will reappraise its first year course offerings to ensure that they adequately accommodate changes in Secondary School curricula, changes in the discipline, and the diverse levels of preparation attained by incoming students.

GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS

1. Graduate courses do not use course suffixes to identify course features.
2. Cross-listed graduate courses
 - a. A course should normally only be cross-listed if expectations for completing the course are different (e.g., additional assignments, increased required reading etc.), or are assessed differently (e.g., assignment expectations are greater for one group than another) for two, or more, groups of students based on: degree level (e.g., doctoral vs. masters); academic career level (undergraduate vs. graduate); or, program (e.g., computer science vs. electrical computer engineering).

Last Reviewed: January 17, 2025