

INFORMATION FOR UPC MEMBERS

FAQ'S

1. Why is there a deadline for submission?

The University timetable must be set by March of each year. May 1st is the beginning of the Spring/Summer Sessions and the curriculum must be in place in order for a timetable to be set by that date.

2. What is the underlying role of the Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC)?

UPC is a Senate committee, primarily focused on the University's academic program (i.e., the curriculum). Degree programs must be coherent, must have the requisite human and material resources in place, must be consistent with the policies and principles which govern them, and must be possible to implement.

3. Why is the Committee so insistent on clarity and rationale in submission?

- a) The calendar copy has to be read by people who may or may not have knowledge of the various disciplines – clarity and simplicity are not only useful but are educational.
- b) Most of our programs have multiple options – e.g., accreditations, minors, certificates, streams/concentrations, co-ops – so it is important that overlaps, exclusions and possible crossovers (to name a few) are anticipated and addressed so that students and others are able to get accurate information.

4. Why is the Committee so insistent on consistent and “brief as possible” course descriptions?

- a) The “calendarese” (i.e., no or few verbs; clauses; no more than 60 words) may seem absurd but is meant to encourage the cleanest, clearest, briefest consolidated description of the course content or the focus that makes it distinct.
- b) Reducing redundancy and language that appropriately belongs in course outlines keeps the total number of pages to a manageable limit for Faculty, Staff and Students who wish to print relevant information.

5. Things to think about when you look at a submission

- a) Has the Department/Centre actually completed the UPC protocol?
- b) Has the Department/Centre provided adequate and appropriate rationale and detail for its changes, additions, deletions?
- c) Are the descriptions clear and concise for outsiders to the Department/Centre?

- d) Are the degree requirements consistent with the university regulations and possible within the university timetable (e.g. 20 credits, 5 years or 4 years, core and elective balance, adequate numbers of 100, 200, 300, 400 level courses and 2 *alpha* 90 and 3 *alpha* 90 courses, context credits, no internal inconsistencies with related programs and/or cross listed courses)?
- e) Is there a “flow through” strategy for students – i.e. back-up plans, no bottlenecks, course substitution options, appropriate “elective” courses.
- f) Are the course patterns, restrictions, prerequisites and exclusions necessary and consistent with other related programs and cross listings and consistent with internal changes in the program?
- g) Do any of the changes affect other Departments/Centres/Programs? For example, required courses in other Departments/Centres, cross-listed courses, duplication of a course in another Department/Centre? If so, complete the Consultation Form and submit evidence of consultation (e.g., e-mails, letters and memos) from both the program requesting the change and the program being affected by the change should be provided. Lack of evidence of consultation will result in the proposal being sent back.

Challenges:

1. Use of same number (internal mixing)
 - Once a number is approved and added to the course bank that number stays in the calendar until it hasn't been offered for a minimum of three years. Once a number is removed from the course bank, it cannot be reused for at least five years.
 - Departments/Centres are often under the misguided impression that if they propose a course number that gets approved, yet doesn't get offered, that they can then use the number for a new course prior to the minimum requirements being observed (e.g. HLTH 3P40 introduced in 2004-2005 yet never offered, HLTH 3F40 split to become HLTH 3P40 and HLTH 3P41 in 2005-2006). This often occurs with the variable topics (V) and multiple topics (M) courses. Departments/Centres sometimes think that, if the title is similar, then the number can be reused even though the course outline material of the two courses are significantly different (e.g. LYRE 3V90 introduced and offered in 2000-2001 Horace, Odes and Vergil, Georgics, LYRE 3V90 introduced and to be offered 2005-2006 Horace: Odes.
- 2.) Variable topics and/or multiple topic courses being used as a core requirement
 - Departments/Centres may come up with a variable/multiple topic course that seems to fit into the core of the program for the year the course is added to the course bank. Given that these kind of courses may not be consistently offered, including them as core elements is inadvisable.

3.) Internal coherence at the University level

- not all Departments/Centres will “build in” the minimum 2(alpha)90 or above and/or 3(alpha)90 or above credits required to graduate. Students unable to graduate as department/centre advisers do not always take University requirements into consideration when doing a program plan for students.
- changing requirements/courses every year can play a part in students not having the minimum 200+ credits as well can produce complications at degree audit time.
- internal changes that affect other programs are not always being conveyed to those Departments/Centres (e.g. restrictions, prerequisites, exclusions not allowing for students to register in required courses; adding courses from other departments/centres that do not allow sufficient spacing)