

# UNIVERSITY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Definitions for various components of a course description.

## Course-Numbering System

These course descriptions are arranged alphabetically. If any course cannot be located readily, refer to the index. Courses are numbered as follows:

**Undergraduate Courses (1 to 399):** General courses accepted in fulfillment of requirements for the bachelor's degrees. These courses are described in the Undergraduate Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/undergraduate/>).

**Advanced Undergraduate Courses (400 to 499):** Courses open to graduate students and to juniors and seniors and, with the special written permission of the head of the department or the chair of the program sponsoring the course, to qualified students in earlier semesters. These courses are described in the Undergraduate Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/undergraduate/>).

**Graduate Courses (500 to 699; 800 to 899):** Courses restricted to students registered in the Graduate School, seniors with an average of at least 3.50 (500- and 800-level only; excludes 600-level), and other students who have been granted permission to enroll by the dean of the Graduate School. These courses are described in the Graduate Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/>). Undergraduate students who wish to enroll in 500- or 800-level courses should review the policy and follow the necessary procedures outlined in GCAC-507 Undergraduate Students Taking Graduate Courses (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-500/gcac-507-undergraduate-students-taking-graduate-courses/>).

**Medical Courses (700-799):** Courses restricted to students registered in the College of Medicine. These courses are described in the College of Medicine Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/medicine/>).

**Law Courses (900-999):** Courses restricted to students registered in Penn State Law and Dickinson Law. These courses are described in the Penn State Law Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/pennstatelaw/>) and Dickinson Law Courses section (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/dickinsonlaw/>).

## Common Course Numbers

The following course numbers for which students may register have been set up for common use by major programs, with University Senate approval, to encourage innovation and provide flexibility in designing programs, but in no case may a course be scheduled for 0 credits.

**First-Year Seminar 187.** Listed under some liberal art-related academic headings, this course has prerequisites of first-semester standing and enrollment in the College of the Liberal Arts.

**Research Project Courses 294, 494.** 1-12 credits. Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript.

**Internship 295, 395, 495.** 1-18 credits. Supervised off-campus, non-group instruction including field experiences, practica, or internships. Written and oral critique of activity required. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript.

**Independent Studies 296, 496.** 1-18 credits. Creative projects, including research and design, that are supervised on an individual basis and that fall outside the scope of formal courses. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript.

**Special Topics 97, 197, 297, 397, 497; 98, 198, 298, 398, 498.** 1-9 credits. Formal courses given infrequently to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject that may be topical or of special interest. Several different topics may be taught in one year or semester. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript.

**Foreign Studies 99, 199, 299, 399, 499.** 1-12 credits. Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript. These courses typically carry the International Cultures (IL) attribute.

## Graduate Common Courses

**Colloquium 590.** Continuing seminars that consist of a series of individual lectures by faculty, students, or outside speakers.

**Research Topics 594.** Supervised student activities on research projects identified on an individual or small-group basis.

**Internship 595.** Supervised, research-oriented, off-campus, nongroup instruction, including field experiences, practicums, or internships. Written and oral critique of activity required.

**Individual Studies 596.** Creative projects, including nonthesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

**Special Topics 597, 598.** Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject which may be offered infrequently; several different topics may be taught in one year or semester.

**Foreign Studies 599.** Courses offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.

**Thesis Research 600, 610.** In registering for thesis research, a student uses the appropriate number (600, 610) preceded by the abbreviation designating the major field. The numbers 600 (on campus) and 610 (off campus) are available for credit in thesis research in all graduate major programs. The bursar assesses charges for these courses at the current rate of tuition, according to the student's status at the time of registration.

**Ph.D. Dissertation 601, 611.** The numbers 601 and 611, with associated special fees, are available to Ph.D. degree candidates who have passed the comprehensive examination and met the two-semester residence requirement. They may be used for dissertation preparation work during its later stages, when the academic activity of the candidate consists partly (611) or solely (601) of work on the completion of research and writing of the dissertation.

SUBJ 601 and SUBJ 611 do not carry academic credit. They are entered on the academic transcript to indicate the registration and the nature of the candidate's academic activity. A candidate registered for SUBJ 601 is classified as a full-time student, while one registered for SUBJ 611 is classified as a part-time student.

The numbers 600, 601, 610, and 611 may not appear in the Schedule of Courses for each semester.

**Supervised Experience in College Teaching 602.** May be offered by any graduate program in a department that also offers undergraduate courses. A graduate program with no counterpart undergraduate program may offer SUBJ 602 when cooperative arrangements are made with an administrative unit that does not offer graduate degrees but that uses graduate assistants in its teaching. SUBJ 602 may be offered in any semester and is subject to the following restrictions:

1. SUBJ 602 will not be counted in fulfilling any specific credit requirement for an advanced degree.
2. SUBJ 602 will be graded (A, B, C, D, F). The grade will appear on the student's transcript.
3. SUBJ 602 will not be used in calculating grade-point averages.
4. SUBJ 602 shall be offered only in those graduate programs that want to provide opportunity for supervised and graded teaching experience. Enrollment will be restricted to students for whom the major program is prepared to provide such experience.
5. SUBJ 602 will be counted as a part of the student's credit load unless the program specifies otherwise.

**Foreign Academic Experience SUBJ 603.** Foreign study and/or research approved by the graduate program for students enrolled in a foreign university constituting progress toward the degree.

**Colloquium 890.** Continuing, professionally oriented seminars that consist of a series of individual lectures by faculty, students, or outside speakers.

**Capstone Experience 894.** Supervised, professionally oriented student activities that constitute the culminating experience for the program.

**Internship 895.** Supervised, professionally oriented, off-campus, nongroup instruction, including field experiences, practicums, or internships. Written and oral critique of activity required.

**Individual Studies 896.** Creative projects with a professional orientation, including nonthesis research, that are supervised on an individual basis and which fall outside the scope of formal courses.

**Special Topics 897, 898.** Formal courses given on a topical or special interest subject with a professional orientation that may be offered infrequently; several different topics may be taught in one year or semester. A specific title may be used in each instance and will be entered on the student's transcript. Multiple offerings may be accommodated by the use of suffixes A, B, etc.

**Foreign Studies 899.** Courses with a professional orientation offered in foreign countries by individual or group instruction.

## Course Attributes and Suffixes

Attributes and attribute values are course designations that are used to define specific characteristics for courses. The search for specific types of courses uses attributes and attributes are the most important notation for a course to satisfy a given requirement.

Suffixes are letters that follow a course number and allow for easier identification of a course's characteristics. Not all attributes and characteristics are captured in available suffixes and suffixes are not the feature used to determine if a course satisfies a requirement. The

degree audit and what-if reports use attributes, not suffixes, to determine applicability of a course to a requirement.

## Bachelor of Arts

### Attributes

- BA: Arts
- BA: Humanities
- BA: Natural Science
- BA: Other Cultures
- BA: Quantification
- BA: Social and Behavioral Sci
- World Lang (12th unit)
- World Language (all)

## Cultural Diversity

### Attributes

- International Cultures (IL)
- United States Cultures (US)

### Suffixes

- U: United States Cultures and/or International Cultures and Honors
- Y: United States Cultures and/or International Cultures and Writing Across the Curriculum

## General Education

### Attributes

- GenEd: Writing/Speaking (GWS)
- GenEd: Quantification (GQ)
- GenEd: Arts (GA)
- GenEd: Health Wellness (GHW)
- GenEd: Humanities (GH)
- GenEd: Natural Sciences (GN)
- GenEd: Social & Beh Sci (GS)
- GenEd Integrative: Interdomain
- GenEd Integrative: Linked

### Suffixes

- N: Inter-Domain
- Q: Inter-Domain and Honors
- Z: Linked Course. Approved Linked Course pairs must be confirmed by the Linked Course search feature in LionPATH.

## First-Year Engagement Program

### Attribute

- First-Year Seminar

### Course Subject

- PSU: First-Year Seminar

### Suffixes

- S: First-Year Seminar
- T: First-Year Seminar and Honors
- X: First-Year Seminar and Writing Across the Curriculum

## Writing Across the Curriculum

### Attribute

- Writing Across the Curriculum

### Suffixes

- M: Writing Across the Curriculum and Honors
- W: Writing Across the Curriculum
- X: Writing Across the Curriculum and First-Year Seminar
- Y: Writing Across the Curriculum and United States Cultures and/or International Cultures

### Honors Courses

#### Attribute

- Honors

#### Suffixes

- H: Honors
- M: Writing Across the Curriculum and Honors
- Q: Inter-Domain and Honors
- T: First-Year Seminar and Honors
- U: United States Cultures and/or International Cultures and Honors

## Undergraduate Course Lists

Below are links to course lists that contain courses that are approved to satisfy either General Education, Bachelor of Arts, or other University Degree Requirements (e.g., Writing Across the Curriculum, First-Year Seminar, etc.). These lists updated periodically throughout the academic year.

### General Education Requirements

- Arts Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/arts/>)
- Health and Wellness Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/health-wellness/>)
- Humanities Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/humanities/>)
- Inter-Domain Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/inter-domain/>)
- Linked Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/linked/>)
- Natural Sciences Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/natural-sciences/>)
- Quantification Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/quantification/>)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/social-behavioral-sciences/>)
- Writing and Speaking Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/writing-speaking/>)

### Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements

- Arts Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-arts/>)
- Humanities Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-humanities/>)
- Natural Sciences Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-natural-sciences/>)
- Other Cultures Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-other-cultures/>)
- Quantification Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-quantification/>)

- Social and Behavioral Sciences Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-social-behavioral-sciences/>)
- World Language (12th Unit) Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-language-12th-unit/>)
- World Language (All) Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/ba-world-language-all/>)

### Other University Degree Requirements

- First-Year Seminar (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/first-year-seminar/>)
- International Cultures (IL) (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/international-cultures/>)
- United States Cultures (US) (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/united-states-cultures/>)
- Writing Across the Curriculum (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/course-lists/writing-across-curriculum/>)

## Course Credits

In accordance with Senate Policy 42-23 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/42-00-acquisition-of-credit/#42-20>), for the typical student, a total of forty-five (45) hours of work planned and arranged by the University faculty is required to gain 1 credit. While the distribution of time varies from course to course, generally one-third of the time is devoted to formal instruction and two-thirds of the time to outside preparation. Course credit by instruction may be achieved by a variety of educational experiences that allow the student to work toward mastery of the course objectives. With the acknowledged goal of educational excellence, more than the minimum established here may be required for mastery of course objectives.

The number of credits for each course is indicated in parentheses and can be earned with classroom, practicum, or laboratory work as designated in LionPATH.

A department may schedule an entire section in an undergraduate course for fewer credits than the maximum authorized. In 400-level courses, a department may schedule an individual student for fewer credits than the maximum authorized. In no case, however, may the course be scheduled for 0 credit, or may the total credits scheduled for any student exceed the maximum number authorized for the course.

## Repeatable and Variable Credit Courses

Some courses are designated as repeatable; they may be taken more than once for credit. These courses may be repeated indefinitely unless the department stipulates a maximum number of credits allowed. These courses appear with the maximum number of credits allowed following the number of credits for the course—for example (1.5 credits/maximum of 3).

Courses may have variable credits, such as (1-3), (2-6), or (3-10). Here, the larger number signifies the total credits that can be accumulated for the course over an indefinite number of semesters, unless otherwise specified. For example, a course listed with (1-6) could be taken six semesters for 1 credit each semester, or two semesters for 3 credits each semester, or once for 6 credits, etc.

In some courses with variable credits, students may be permitted to accumulate more than the larger number shown. Such courses will be listed as, for example, (1-3 per semester, maximum of 12).

Any special departmental limitations are indicated by footnotes.

## **Prerequisites, Concurrent Courses, Co-requisite Courses, and Recommended Preparation**

See also: Senate Policy 34-60 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/34-00-course-scheduling/#34-60>).

Prerequisites, concurrent courses, and co-requisite courses approximate the necessary specific coursework or general academic knowledge, background, or semester classification required to succeed academically in a given course.

- Prerequisites are courses or other requirements that must be completed prior to the start of a given course.
- Concurrent Courses are similar to prerequisites except that they may be taken prior to, or in the same semester as, the given course.
- Co-requisite Courses are pairs of courses required to be taken together in the same semester.

Registration in a given course is limited to students who have satisfied the stated prerequisite, concurrent, or co-requisite requirements. The course instructor has the right to permit students to take the course without having the stated prerequisite, concurrent, or co-requisite requirements, if the student demonstrates mastery of the material through some other means.

Recommended Preparation relates to preparatory skills or companion courses deemed useful, but not necessary, for successful completion of a course. Recommended preparation has no bearing on registration in a given course.