Common Reasons Proposals are Returned
from the Curricula and Courses Committee

The University Academic Affairs policy ACAF 2.03 is the authoritative document that outlines what is required to be included in a proposal to either create or change a course. The university faculty have legislative authority over matters pertaining to the curriculum. For the Columbia campus, the Faculty Senate Curricula and Courses Committee is charged with reviewing and approving all requests to create, revise, or eliminate undergraduate courses to ensure that all offerings meet the academic expectations of the university.

To help proponents with this process and avoid delays when it reaches the Curricula and Courses Committee, common issues that cause proposals to be returned for revision and/or clarification are summarized below. There are also links to sample syllabus statements provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence that can be adapted for course proposals.

I. **Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses 500 – 600 Level Courses:** Since both undergraduate and graduate students can take these classes, they have additional requirements.

   1. All 500 and 600 level courses must provide differentiated grading criteria for graduate students. Furthermore, this difference must amount to a letter grade if not completed (e.g., a student cannot earn an A if the assignment is not completed). Simply suggesting that graduate students will be given "harder" questions or "will be graded with higher standards" when all point values are the same, is not sufficient. *Differences must be described in the syllabus.*
   2. A separate learning outcome tied to the differentiated task for graduate students is recommended but not required.

   Sample approaches to address this requirement
   a. First, and the simplest approach is to have a separate graduate student requirement worth at least one letter grade (usually, 10% of the grade—often this is an added research paper, but, it can be something else).

   For example:

Grading Rubric	Undergraduate	Graduate
Homework	20%	20%
Research Project *	0%	20%
Presentations	20%	20%
Reports	30%	20%
Final	30%	20%

   *The Research Project is only a Graduate Student requirement.

   Grading Scale:
   A   = 90 to 100%
   B+ = 85- 89%
   B   = 80 – 84%
   C+ = 75 – 79%
   C   = 70 – 74%
   D+ = 65 – 69%
   D   = 60 – 64%
   F   = 0 – 59%

b. A second approach is to have an alternate requirement for undergraduate and graduate students, with separate grading criteria. For example:
- Undergraduate Students – Book Report (with a description of what is required)
- Graduate Students – Research Paper (with a description of what is required))

Grading Rubric	Undergraduate	Graduate
Homework	20%	20%
Book Report*	20%	0%
Research Project**	0%	20%
Presentations	20%	20%
Reports	30%	20%
Final	30%	20%

*The Book Report is only a requirement for Undergraduate Students.
**The Research Project is only a requirement for Graduate Students.

Grading Scale:
A   = 90 to 100%
B+   = 85 – 89%
B   = 80 – 84%
C+   = 75 – 79%
C   = 70 – 74%
D+   = 65 – 69%
D   = 60 – 64%
F   = 0 – 59%

II. **Bulletin related Issues:** The following are issues related to the content in the bulletin that will result in a returned proposal. The main issues are:

1. **Number of times a course can be taken for credit:** *Normally this is one* (1). The number of times a course can be taken for credit is not how many times a course can be repeated (in case of failure to pass), but rather how many times it can be counted on the transcript as part of the program of study. Normally the only courses that would have a number other than one (1) are special topics courses and internship/field experience courses to gain varied experiences. If it is greater than one (1), it is important to explain this in the proposal comments.

2. **Grading System:** If you specify Standard (Letter Grades with Pass/Fail option), you must indicate what constitutes a Pass in the syllabus. If you are submitting a course change, note that what is pulled into APPS is the default for the course that is in Banner. If you do not wish to offer the class as pass/fail, change this option in APPS.

3. **Pre-/Co-Requisites**: Changes to Pre-/Co-requisites (either their addition or removal) require a letter of concurrence for the department offering the pre-/co-requisite course unless the impacted courses are in the same department as the subject course. The reason is that these changes have resource implications for departments.

   Also, if a course has a pre-requisite listed, it needs to indicate what grade the student must earn in order to satisfy the pre-requisite. This is required because Banner assumes a grade of D or better satisfies progression requirements when the bulletin does not state some other criteria. This is true even if the degree requires a higher grade in the pre-requisite course to graduate.

4. **Cross Listing:** Whenever a proposal has a cross listing, *a letter of concurrence is needed from all cross-listed courses to indicate agreement with the proposed change.*

   In some cases, letters of concurrence are not enough, and separate proposals are needed to ensure that the appropriate changes are made to the bulletin. Separate proposals are needed:

- Anytime a course is being deleted. If multiple cross-listed courses are being deleted, separate proposals are needed.

- Anytime a new course is being created. If a new course is to be cross listed with another new course, two proposals are needed (one for each course).

- If a new course is going to be cross listed with an existing course, only one proposal is needed. The proposal that creates the new course can also create the cross list, but does need a letter of concurrency.

III. **Cross Listing**

1. Cross listed classes must have identical:
   - Title
   - Course Description
   - Pre-requisites and Co-requisites
   - Catalog Restrictions
   - Carolina Core or GLD designations
   - Grade Mode (e.g., letter grades only, or letter and pass/fail)
   - Schedule Type (e.g., lecture/lab/practicum etc.)
   - Be at the Same Level
     1. Lower Division (100-200)
     2. Upper Division (300-400)
     3. Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate (500-600)
     4. Graduate Courses (700 and above)
   - Does not cross list within same 4-letter designator

2. Getting approval for distributed learning for one course does not automatically approve cross listed courses for distributed learning delivery. Separate submissions are required for each course.

IV. **Course Syllabi:** The syllabus is the single most important instrument of structure in a course. It outlines what is to be learned, how learning will occur, and how learning will be evaluated.

   1) **When is a Syllabus required by the Curricula and Courses Committee?**

   A syllabus should only be included in a proposal when necessary. When a syllabus is included, it will be reviewed by the committee.

   Proposals that require a syllabus
   - New course
   - Significant change in the course description, and/or title
   - When required by other committees (i.e., Carolina Core and Instructional Development - INDEV)

   Proposals that _do not_ require a syllabus
   - Minor revisions to the course description or course title (e.g., slight rephrasing to replace terms as dictated by professional organizations often related to accreditation)
   - Change in co-requisites or pre-requisites
   - Change in course level, as long as not changing to/from 500 or 600.
   - Change in Catalog Restrictions
   - Change in Carolina Core or GLD designations
   - Change in Grade Mode (not needed for removing pass/fail; _needed if adding pass/fail_)
   - Change in Schedule Type (e.g., adding/changing lecture/lab/practicum format]
   - Deleting a course

2) What is required in a syllabus?

The syllabus establishes the standards, and sets the tone, for a course. All undergraduate and graduate courses must have a course syllabus that includes the following:

1. Course title (including course subject designator and number)
2. Instructor name and relevant contact information
3. Final Exam day and time, as appropriate (from Registrar's website)
4. Class meeting days, times, and location, or equivalent
5. Undergraduate or Graduate Bulletin course description
6. Course learning outcomes (*see below*)
7. Required text(s) and/or suggested readings, as appropriate
8. Course requirements and grading
   - Assignments, projects, quizzes, and/or exams with brief descriptions of expectations with points/weights assigned to each activity.
   - Courses at the Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses (500 and 600--level) must include one or more assignments for graduate credit that are clearly differentiated from undergraduate assignments. Graduate work is normally evaluated on a more rigorous basis than that of Undergraduate work.
   - Grading scheme and weights including what a student must do to receive a grade of A through F for a letter grade-based course, or an S or U, or a T or U, or a P or F, as appropriate for a non-letter grade course.
   - Courses at the Advanced Undergraduate/Entry Level Graduate Courses (500 and 600--level) must include separate grading schemes for undergraduate and graduate credit.
9. Topical outline of content to be covered and time allocated to each topic, to cover a typical 14 week semester or equivalent, indicating a minimum of 700 minutes per credit hour).
10. Statement regarding academic integrity, honorable behavior and/or the Carolinian Creed (or excerpt thereof).
11. Course attendance policy consistent with the expectations stated in the Academic Bulletin.
12. Statement regarding disability services.

V. Other Issues

1. **Learning Outcomes**: In most cases, course proposals must use the term Learning Outcomes, and not "Learning Objectives", "Student Outcomes", or something similar. Learning Outcomes are statements that describe significant and essential learning that students will achieve, and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program—as distinguished from what the instructor will cover. Learning outcomes must be phrased with action verbs that identify quantifiable or measurable actions. For guidance on writing effective Learning Outcomes see (https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/coursedevelopment/learning_outcomes/).
   In special cases, the committee will approve alternate phrasing, such as instances where an accrediting body specifies how learning outcomes must be phrased. The proponent should highlight this requirement in the justification portion of the proposal.

2. **Distributed Learning**: The Curricula and Courses committee typically defers to the Instructional Development (INDEV) Committee on issues related to distributed learning requirements.

3. **Sample Syllabus Statements** - The Center for Teaching Excellence provides useful information and example syllabi statements related to academic integrity, attendance policy, and disability services (see https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/coursedevelopment/example_syllabus_statements/).