



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

Section 1:	Courses and Curriculum: Guidelines and Procedures	
Title:	Common Course Guidelines	
Number (Current Format)	Number (Prior Format)	Date Last Revised
1.11	IV.A	10/2019
Reference:		
Related Form(s):		

1. The Regental system’s catalog of courses serves as the foundation of a commitment to provide students the opportunity to use courses offered by any Regental institution to fulfill degree requirements. Faculty members from the separate institutions have agreed that this catalog includes a set of common courses that are considered equivalent, regardless of the institution that offers instruction. This permits students to successfully complete a common course and have it recognized as meeting any requirement that includes that course at any Regental institution. This commitment removes the uncertainty that exists when students attempt to transfer completed coursework between Regental institutions. The Academic Affairs Council (AAC) maintains these common courses using the guidelines outlined here.
2. A **common course** is a course offered by one Regental institution that has essentially the same content (subjects/breadth) and level of instruction (depth) as a course offered by at least one other Regental university. Common courses shall have common CIP codes, prefixes, course numbers, course titles, course descriptions, and prerequisite requirements; common courses are equated (considered the same course for degree completion) in the Student Information System (SIS). Common courses also include courses cross-listed with a common course and 500-level courses dual-listed with a common course. Courses approved as meeting system general education requirements are not necessarily considered common courses. Common courses are not necessarily offered at all Regental universities.
 - 2.1. During the review processes leading to the establishment of common courses, small variations between universities were accepted and left unresolved in some cases. Whenever any curricular changes are made to these courses, it is assumed that these will build toward a single course with a single set of attributes. Only in very rare circumstances should proposals that create additional differences be approved at the university level and forwarded on for review and approval by AAC and the system Chief Academic Officer (CAO).
3. **Common Course Guidelines**
 - 3.1. Common courses shall have common CIP codes, prefixes, course numbers, course titles, course descriptions, and prerequisite/corequisite requirements.
 - 3.2. Common courses at the 100 and 200 level shall have the same number of credit hours.
 - 3.3. Common courses at the 300 and 400 level shall have the same number of credit hours with a few exceptions that must be within +/- 1 credit.

- 3.4. Common courses shall use the same course number for courses that have both a lecture and a laboratory. An “L” in the course number identifies laboratories (i.e., 101/101L). This applies to both composite courses (students must register for the lecture and the lab concurrently) and courses for which the student may register for the lecture and the laboratory in separate terms. Laboratory courses for which there are no parallel lectures courses do not need the “L” identifier.
- 3.5. Common lecture/laboratory courses at the 100/200 level will have the same total number of credit hours. The number of credit hours attached to the lecture and the lab may vary between universities as long as the total number of credit hours is the same. Each university determines faculty workload associated with laboratory courses.
- 3.6. Approval of deviations from the common course format occurs on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.7. Unique courses shall not have the same course number and/or title as other courses considered either common or unique. A course may be unique due to differences in level of instruction, accreditation standards, or level of the degree program.
- 3.8. The prefix need not reflect the name of the department offering the course.
- 3.9. Not all universities need to offer a course for the course to be a common course.
- 3.10. Common course numbering shall adhere to common course numbering guidelines (see Section 4).
- 3.11. Common courses will have common (identical) catalog descriptions (see Section 6).
- 3.12. Universities are not required to offer all of the courses associated with a common course’s prerequisites.
- 3.13. Any changes to a common course must be approved the Executive Director of the Board of Regents.

4. **Common Course Numbering System**

- 4.1. The South Dakota public university system uses the following middle digit 9 numbering system:

x90	Seminar
x91	Independent Study
x92	Topics
x93	Workshop
x94	Internship
x95	Practicum
x96	Field Experience
x97	Cooperative Education
498	Undergraduate Research/Scholarship
099	Experimental - Remedial
199	Experimental
299	Experimental
399	Experimental
499	Experimental
599	Experimental

699 Experimental

4.2. Common 700 and 800 level course numbers include the following:

788	Master's Research Problems/Projects
789	Master's Research Problems/Projects Sustaining
798/898S/898D*	Thesis/Dissertation
799/899S/899D*	Thesis Sustaining/Dissertation Sustaining

4.3. As appropriate, an “S” or “D” appends a course number to distinguish between courses for specialist and doctoral degree seekers.

4.4. Disciplines may add courses in the x90 series that use previously approved prefixes and are at previously used levels with permission of the university Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA submits a list of these courses to the system CAO annually as part of the Annual Curriculum Report to the Board of Regents at their October meeting.

4.5. The system CAO must grant approval to a university that wishes to offer a course in the x90 series that uses a new prefix for the university or that is at a new level. These requests appear on the agenda of the next AAC meeting as an informational item when approved by the system CAO.

5. Common Course Grading

5.1. *x9x Series*: Grading may be A, B, C, D, F, S, U. The university will make the decision and enter at the section level when the course is created in Colleague. The university may seek faculty input. When an x9x course or unique course is initially created at the course level (centrally) it will be assumed that A, B, C, D, F grading will be required unless the New Course Request indicates otherwise. Universities requesting a change to S/U grading for a course must submit a Minor Course Modification form. Once the Minor Course Modification receives approval, the university makes the grading change at the section level.

5.2. For all common courses, A, B, C, D, F grading is assumed unless S, U is specified. When a common course is initially created at the course level (centrally) it will be assumed that A, B, C, D, F grading will be required unless the New Course Request indicates otherwise. A university requesting a change in grading a common course (other than the x9x courses above) must submit a Revised Course Request - Common Courses. Upon receipt of approval, the university will make this change at the section level.

5.3. A university may determine to use S, U for all sections of a common course after approval of a Revised Course Request - Common Course Form.

5.4. Definitions of Common Course Types

5.4.1. **Seminar**: A highly focused and topical course. The format includes student presentations and discussions of reports based on literature, practices, problems, and research. A seminar may occur over electronic media such as the Internet and are at the upper division or graduate levels. Enrollment is generally limited to fewer than 20 students.

Instructional Method Type: E

5.4.2. **Independent Study:** Includes Directed Study, Problems, Readings, Directed Readings, Special Problems, and Special Projects. Students complete individualized plans of study including significant one-on-one student/teacher involvement. The faculty member and students negotiate the details of the study plans. Enrollments are usually three or fewer students. Meetings depend upon the requirements of the topic.

Instructional Method Type: I

5.4.3. **Topics:** Includes Current Topics, Advanced Topics, and Special Topics. A course devoted to a particular issue in a specified field. Course content is not wholly included in the regular curriculum. Guest artists' experts may serve as instructors. Enrollments are usually 10 or fewer students with significant one-on-one student/teacher involvement.

Instructional Method Type: X

5.4.4. **Workshop:** A very intense, rigorous academic experience, focusing on a specific, narrowly tailored topic of current interest and professional relevance. Each credit hour requires approximately 45 hours of student work. Workshops may vary in time range but typically use a compressed time-period for delivery. They may include lectures, conferences, committee work, and group activity. The workshop is typically used in graduate level instruction; use of the workshop at the undergraduate level is approved on rare, limited basis with appropriate justification. No more than 3 graduate credit hours in any graduate program can be a workshop (see Board Policy 2:8).

Instructional Method Type: W

5.4.5. **Internship:** Applied, monitored, and supervised, field-based learning experience for which the student may (or may not) receive payment. Students gain practical experience; they follow a negotiated and or directed plan of study. Instructors provide a higher level of supervision than provided by instructors in Field Experience courses.

Instructional Method Type: S

5.4.6. **Practicum:** Applied, monitored, and supervised, field-based learning experience for which the student may (or may not) receive payment. Students gain practical experience; they follow a negotiated and or directed plan of study. Instructors provide a higher level of supervision than provided by instructors in Field Experience courses.

Instructional Method Type: S

5.4.7. **Field Experience:** Applied, monitored, and supervised, field-based learning experience for which the student may (or may not) receive payment. Students gain practical experience; they follow a negotiated and or directed plan of study established between the student, instructor and field experience supervisor. Due to the presence of a field experience supervisor, the instructor provides a lower level of supervision in these courses than is the case with an Internship or Practicum course.

Instructional Method Type: S

5.4.8. Cooperative Education: Applied, monitored, and supervised, field-based learning experience for which the student may (or may not) receive payment. Students gain practical experience; they follow a negotiated and or directed plan of study established between the student, instructor and field experience supervisor. Due to the presence of a field experience supervisor, the instructor provides a lower level of supervision in these courses than is the case with an Internship or Practicum course.

Instructional Method Type: S

5.4.9. Undergraduate Research/Scholarship (Includes Senior Project and Capstone Experience): Independent research problems/projects or scholarship activities. The faculty member and student negotiate the plan of study. Contact between the faculty and student may be extensive and intensive. Does not include theoretical research courses.

Instructional Method Type: J

5.4.10. Master's Research Problems/Projects: Independent research problems/projects that lead to a research or design paper but not to a thesis. The faculty member and candidate negotiate the plan of study. Contact between the faculty member and candidate may be extensive and intensive. Does not include theoretical research courses.

Instructional Method Type: J

5.4.11. Master's Research Problems/Projects Sustaining: A zero credit hour instructional method type used to track students who are not currently working with faculty on thesis or doctoral activities. Universities may require students to register under this instructional method type to remain active degree candidates.

Instructional Method Type: U

5.4.12. Thesis/Dissertation: A formal treatise presenting the results of study submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the applicable degree. The process requires extensive and intensive one-on-one interaction between the candidate and a faculty member with more limited interaction between and among the candidate and other members of the committee.

Instructional Method Type: T

5.4.13. Thesis Sustaining/Dissertation Sustaining: A zero to one credit hour instructional method type used to track students who are not currently working with faculty on thesis or research activities. Universities may require students to register under this instructional method type to remain active degree candidates.

Instructional Method Type: U

6. Common Course Catalog Description Guidelines

6.1. CIP Code: The Academic Affairs Council approves all changes and such changes apply to all institutions offering the course.

- 6.2. **Subject Prefix:** The Academic Affairs Council approves all changes and such changes apply to all institutions offering the course. A university cannot change the Subject Prefix in the institutional catalog description. An institution may elect to cross list the course and the cross listing may be included in the catalog description.
- 6.3. **Course Number:** The Academic Affairs Council approves all changes and such changes apply to all institutions offering the course. A university cannot change the Course Number in the institutional catalog description.
- 6.4. **Course Title:** The Academic Affairs Council approves all changes and such changes apply to all institutions offering the course. A university cannot change the Course Title in the institutional catalog description.
- 6.5. **Course Description:** All changes must be approved by AAC and will apply to all universities offering the course. On extremely rare occasions with AAC approval, universities may add to but cannot delete from the approved common course description.
- 6.6. **Course Prerequisites:** The Academic Affairs Council approves all changes and such changes apply to all institutions offering the course. A university cannot add to Course Prerequisites in the institutional course description. A university cannot delete course prerequisites in the institutional course description unless the university does not have approval to offer the prerequisites to offer the prerequisite course.
- 6.7. **Section Registration Restriction Field:** All changes must be approved by AAC and will apply to all universities offering the course. On extremely rare occasions, Prerequisites and Corequisites listed in this field may vary by university and will be included in the institutional catalog description.

SOURCE:

AAC January 2017; October 2018 (Clerical); AAC October 2019.