

Subject: Emerging and Special Topics Courses

Policy Number: A3.50

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## PROCEDURE

A proposed emerging or special topics course should be submitted to the Curriculum Committee for review and determination that it is needed and does not conflict with or duplicate existing courses; the committee will confer with the BSIS committee when making decisions regarding undergraduate courses. Justification of the course and provision of necessary information to the Curriculum Committee is the responsibility of the proposer. The proposer will provide the Committee with a course proposal packet containing the following items:

1. Completed Special Topics Course form **signed by the proposer**, located at:  
<https://www.sc.edu/provost/acadprog/forms/SpecialTopicsCourseSTC.pdf>
2. A complete syllabus structured in accordance with the USC syllabus templates.

### **Undergraduate:**

[https://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/cte/teaching\\_resources/syllabus\\_templates/docs/cte\\_f2f\\_syllabus\\_template.docx](https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/cte/teaching_resources/syllabus_templates/docs/cte_f2f_syllabus_template.docx)

**Graduate:** [http://gradschool.sc.edu/forms/GC\\_SyllabusGuideline.pdf](http://gradschool.sc.edu/forms/GC_SyllabusGuideline.pdf)

Syllabus must include:

- a. Course number
- b. Course title
- c. Course description
- d. Possible pre-requisites
- e. Length (e.g., 8 weeks, full semester, etc.) and credit hours
- f. Justification, including the anticipated audience and indication of how this course relates to other courses in the SLIS or University curriculum
- g. Student learning outcomes that are stated using action verbs to characterize what students will be able to do as a result of successful completion of the class
- h. Textbook and reading list
- i. Course assignments
- j. Grading scale
- k. Course calendar, indicating topics to be covered
- l. Any resource implications for the course (library resources, supplies and equipment, computer time, etc.).
- m. **If the course will be delivered online**, a breakdown of Learning Minutes for Distributed Education Delivery must be included (see example at the end of this document). Also include an explanation of student-student, student-instructor, and student-content accommodations that will

be made in this version of the course delivery; including a statement that this version of delivery will accomplish the same goals as the face-to-face delivery.

If the Curriculum Committee approves the course, it will recommend this approval to the faculty for a full faculty vote. The approval will include the maximum number of times the course may be offered as an emerging or special topics course, the appropriate number of credits, and the course title and description. A course approval expires after 3 years from the semester it is first taught. After this time, the approval process must be repeated.

A special topics course must be approved by the Graduate School each semester it is offered. In general, the Graduate School does not approve the same special topics course to be taught more than three times. After a special topics course is offered three times, it must be put through the new course proposal process to be taught again.

#### **After Curriculum Committee and faculty approval**

1. Proposer gets the **required signatures** of the SLIS Director and CIC Dean on the STC form and submits a **scanned PDF of the STC form and syllabus** to the Scheduling Coordinator.
2. Scheduling Coordinator submits packet to the Registrar's Office and/or Graduate School for final approval.

#### **Deadlines**

Emerging and special topics courses may be proposed at any time; however, the proposer cannot be guaranteed approval and scheduling for a particular semester. The following deadlines are based on the master schedule production calendar, and assume that the entire approval procedure has been completed.

- For emerging and special topics courses to be offered in the fall: **October 31 in the previous year.**
- For emerging and special topics courses to be offered in the spring or summer sessions: **May 31 in the previous year.**

#### **Learning Minutes for Distributed Education Delivery**

Each 3-credit primarily asynchronous course must have **6300 learning minutes**. Of key importance is the identification of provisions for student-professor or student-student interaction.

- The categories that can be counted as contact hours:
  - **Required/Mandatory**: Participation in live sessions is required.

- **Responsible:** Participation in live sessions is not required but students are responsible for the material.
- Some possibilities include live class sessions, guest lectures, recorded lectures, live discussion sessions or Blackboard discussion postings, supplemental content and activities, and lab sessions.

**Note:** Optional sessions (e.g., office hours, help sessions) are **not** counted as contact hours.

Optional is defined as students are not responsible for the material.

- Include a time allocation framework (week 1, week 2, etc. to include at least the number of weeks for a standard course session – e.g., 8 weeks, 14 weeks, etc.)

**It is necessary to describe the percentages for methods of delivery.** For example:

§ #% -- Lectures

§ #% -- Guest presentations

§ #% -- Discussions and in-class activities

§ #% -- Blackboard activities

§ #% -- Other instructional components

#### **Example – Tally of Contact Minutes**

Recorded lectures: 14 weeks x 90 minutes = 1260 minutes

Reading: 14 weeks x 180 minutes = 2520 minutes

Lesson activities, quizzes, and assignments: 14 weeks x 120 minutes = 1680 minutes

Participation via Blackboard discussion boards: 14 sessions x 60 minutes = 840 minutes

Total learning minutes: 6300 minutes