



University Council

April 12, 2024

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2023-2024

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Graduate School – Rodney Mauricio

Ex-Officio – Provost S. Jack Hu

Undergraduate Student Representative – Gabriella Lewis

Graduate Student Representative – Kelsey Wohlford

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal for a Course Prerequisite Policy will be an agenda item for the April 19, 2024, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

Susan Sanchez, Chair

cc: Provost S. Jack Hu

Dr. Marisa Pagnattaro

## **Proposed policy for prerequisites in upper-level courses**

### **Background**

According to the UGA Bulletin (<https://bulletin.uga.edu/bulletin/acad/courses.html#Numbers>): “Courses numbered from 1000 to 2999 are considered lower-level courses. Courses numbered 3000 to 4999 are considered upper-level courses. Courses numbered 5000 to 5999 are considered professional-level courses. Courses numbered 6000 and above are considered graduate-level courses.”

The UGA curriculum committee reads and approves all courses proposed, revised, or deleted at UGA. Numerous upper-level courses are proposed that do not require prerequisites. Common questions from the committee: 1) why does this upper-level course not have prerequisites? 2) why is this course offered at the 3000-5000 level instead of the 1000-2000 level since it does not have prerequisites? The Registrar's Office compiled a spreadsheet comparing prerequisite policies from 15 comparators and nine aspirational institutions. After reviewing this spreadsheet, a subcommittee of the University Curriculum Committee met to discuss whether a prerequisite policy was needed at UGA.

### **Proposed Policy**

Prerequisites should normally be required for upper-level (3000-4000) and professional-level (5000) courses. For 3000-5000 level courses with no prerequisite listed, the minimum skills, experience, and/or competencies expected for students to enroll in the course should be specified. Permission of Department (POD) status for courses may be used in lieu of specific course prerequisites to help ensure that such informal prerequisites are met.

### **Rationale**

Course prerequisites help ensure students are adequately prepared for the course content and have the foundational knowledge needed. This type of preparatory work helps ensure students' success and sequences their learning. Prerequisites also eliminate the need for instructors to reduce the rigor of the content to accommodate students without the necessary background.

The proposed policy would help expedite the course review and approval process, better inform students interested in taking a particular course, and ensure that instructors can teach the course content at the appropriate level.

	Institution	Course Prerequisite Policy	Link
UGA Aspirational Peer	Pennsylvania State University	<p>001-399 – General courses accepted in fulfillment of requirements for the bachelor’s degree.</p> <p>400-499 – Advanced undergraduate courses open to graduate students and to juniors and seniors and, with the special permission of the head of the department or the chairperson of the program sponsoring the course, to qualified students in earlier semesters. Courses at the 400 level are generally distinguished from courses at the 001-399 level by an increased depth, by a more mature approach, and by a greater and more independent effort on the part of the student. Where, however, the goals of the course also include breadth, rather than solely depth, the total comprehension that the course demands should set it apart from lower-level courses.</p> <p><b>A 400-level course generally includes as a prerequisite another course, a specific number of credits in an area, or some other type of prerequisite. A 400-level course that does not include a prerequisite must explain why the course is not a 001-399-level course.</b></p>	<a href="https://senate.psu.edu/curriculum/policies-rules-for-undergraduate-instruction-and-curriculum/170-00-policies-on-courses-and-course-curriculum">https://senate.psu.edu/curriculum/policies-rules-for-undergraduate-instruction-and-curriculum/170-00-policies-on-courses-and-course-curriculum</a>
UGA Comparator Peer	University of California - Davis	The Regulations of the Academic Senate specify that ordinarily the minimum prerequisite for any upper division course is <b>junior standing or completion of at least one lower division course in the same department.</b>	<a href="https://committees/courses-of-instruction/policies-procedures#Prerequisi">u/committees/courses-of-instruction/policies-procedures#Prerequisi</a>
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of California - Los Angeles	<p>Undergraduate courses are classified as lower division and upper division.</p> <p>Lower-division courses (numbered 1–99) are often surveys of and preliminary introductions to the subject field. They are designed primarily for freshmen and sophomores, though upper-division students may enroll for unit and grade credit. Lower-division courses may not be applied toward graduate degrees.</p> <p>Upper-division courses (numbered 100–199) are open to all students who have met the requisites indicated in departmental requirements or the course description.</p> <p><b>Preparation generally includes at least one lower-division course in the subject or two years of college work</b>With approval of the major department, graduate students may take 100–series courses toward satisfaction of master’s degree requirements.</p>	<a href="https://registrar.ucla.edu/academic/course-descriptions/course-numbering-and-description-guide">https://registrar.ucla.edu/academic/course-descriptions/course-numbering-and-description-guide</a>
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Iowa	<b>Departments may establish prerequisite courses or conditions that must be met before enrollment in a course</b> A prerequisite may specify course work, a specific grade in a course, or scores on a placement exam.	<a href="https://uc.uiowa.edu/academic/university-college-programs/registration-policies#course-prerequisites">https://uc.uiowa.edu/academic/university-college-programs/registration-policies#course-prerequisites</a>
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Kentucky	<p>The number system reflects the level of course material and associated rigor. With the exception of upper graduate level and professional courses,<b>any prerequisite restrictions limiting the level of a student accepted into a course shall be specified in a course prerequisites</b>Courses shall be numbered as follows:</p> <p>001-099—No credit, non-degree and/or developmental courses;  100-199—Freshmen level course; undergraduate credit only;  200-299—Sophomore level course; undergraduate credit only;  300-399—Junior level course; undergraduate credit only;  400-499—Advanced junior and senior level course; undergraduate credit only;  400G-499G—Senior and first year graduate level course; graduate credit for non-majors only;  500-599—First year graduate level course; undergraduate and graduate credit;  600-799—Upper graduate level course; open only to graduate students;  800-999—Professional Programs course; open only to students in professional colleges and to students in other colleges offering professional degrees as defined by the Council on Postsecondary Education.</p>	<a href="http://catalogs.uky.edu/content.php?catoid=11&amp;navoid=610">http://catalogs.uky.edu/content.php?catoid=11&amp;navoid=610</a>
UGA Comparator Peer	Indiana University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Iowa State University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Michigan State University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	North Carolina State University at Raleigh	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Ohio State University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Purdue University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Stony Brook University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	The University of Texas at Austin	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Arizona	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of California - Berkeley	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Florida	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of Illinois at Urbana	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Maryland	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of Michigan	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of Minnesota	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	University of Missouri - Columbia	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of Virginia	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Aspirational Peer	University of Wisconsin	No course prerequisite policy	N/A
UGA Comparator Peer	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	No course prerequisite policy	N/A