Course Designators

Procedural Steps:

1. The academic unit contacts the office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation @ 7-9560, or via email to the Curriculum Coordinator (Cheryl.Hagey@oregonstate.edu or Gary.Beach@oregonstate.edu), with a proposal to create a new course designator, including a justification for the proposal.
2. The proposer responds to the questions set forth in Request for New or Changed Course Designator (see below) and emails responses to APAA.
3. The Curriculum Coordinator in APAA will contact the Registrar’s Office to confirm the availability of the proposed course designator.
4. The Curriculum Coordinator will submit the proposed course designator to the Curriculum Council for review and approval.
5. Following approval by the Curriculum Council, the Curriculum Coordinator will submit an expedited Category II proposal in the Curricular Proposal System (CPS).
6. The Registrar’s Office then moves forward with implementation of the new course designator.
7. Once a course designator is approved, the academic unit seeking to convert their courses to the new designator will send the list of these courses to APAA. APAA will change the course designators via abbreviated Category II proposals, without the inclusion of syllabi.

Request for New or Changed Course Designator:

Requests for new or changed course designators are reviewed by the Registrar’s Office and by the Curriculum Council of the Faculty Senate. Proposers should contact the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation to initiate a designator request.

Creation or alteration of a course designator constitutes a change in the curricular structure of the university. Such a change has implications for the catalog, schedule of classes, BANNER Student Information Systems, MyDegrees, and transfer articulation. Accreditation standards require that designators be “consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.”

Designator requests should be prepared in writing and should address Purpose, Accountability, and Impact of the new designator. Additional details for addressing these considerations are given below.

Purpose: The proposed course designator should have an identified purpose within the curricular structure of Oregon State University.

- What academic programs, including majors, certificates, options and minors will be served by courses within the designator?
Students earning UEXP credit will be able to apply the credit toward general elective requirements; UEXP courses will not serve specific academic programs.

• In what ways do the general area and scope of the content constitute a coherent body of knowledge?

UEXP courses will enhance access to high-impact practices and provide credit-bearing opportunities for student engagement opportunities. High-impact practice, student engagement, and co-curricular engagement all constitute key dimensions within the “Student Success” discourse. Specifically, UEXP curriculum focuses primarily on leadership, research, and internship opportunities, all frequently cited components of high-impact practice.

• Is the proposed usage of the designator consistent with practice at OSU and other institutions? Give examples.

Prior to 1995, developmental and transition courses carried a UNIV or LS (if administered through Liberal Arts) designator. In 1995, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Council approved a new ALS (Academic Learning Services) designator and transitioned UNIV and LS courses to ALS. The ALS designator remains active today and demonstrates OSU’s historical practice of identifying a course designation for transition, skill building, and engagement courses with content outside traditional curricular entities. UEXP would serve a similar function and would focus on areas of student engagement and high-impact practice.

This approach is not without precedent at peer institutions. Washington State University uses the UCOLL (University College) designator to, “assist students in gaining the skills for effective decision-making to manage key transitions of the college years: from high school or a community college to a research university, transition into a major, and transition from college into a career and a life of personal fulfillment.” Courses focus on major and career decision making, leadership, and building research skills.

Additionally, Purdue University uses the GS (General Studies) designator to support the development of a variety of learning skills, including leadership development and internship preparation.

Accountability: Responsibility for the integrity and oversight of the proposed course designator should be clearly identified.

• What is the academic College of the designator?

UEXP will be housed in the Division of Undergraduate Studies.

• Who is responsible for administering courses in the designator, e.g. scheduling and catalog updates. Who are the faculty contact persons?
Who is responsible for consistency and outcome assessment for courses in the designator?

Jesse Nelson, Ph.D. Director, Academic Success Center

Which units get credit for the SCH generated by courses in the subject code?

Undergraduate Studies

Who is responsible for communicating information about the new designator to stakeholders, including advisors, Admissions, and students?

Jesse Nelson, Ph.D. Director, Academic Success Center

Impacts: Who will benefit from the new designator and what changes will result from its implementation?

Will courses in the new designator duplicate or compete with existing ones?

Currently, there are no other interdisciplinary course designators that support leadership development, research and internship success, or co-curricular engagement. Depending on their academic plan, some students may enroll in these types of curricular experiences within their own department, using the department designator. Because UEXP will fulfill elective credit only, it will not compete with similar discipline-specific offerings.

Are there expected cross-listings or curricular equivalencies?

No.

How will the new designator affect transfer credits?

Because UEXP coursework is not part of the Baccalaureate Core, nor required for any academic degrees, it will not be impacted by transfer credit articulation. This remains unchanged from the previous AHE practice.

Will any previous existing designators expire as the new one appears?

The AHE undergraduate designator will expire.

How will the new designator benefit students?

The Adult Education and Higher Education Leadership (AHE) Designator has caused some confusion at the undergraduate level. Current undergraduate curriculum focuses primarily on leadership development, research, and internship success. The designator change will more fully align course content with an appropriate designator while locating the interdisciplinary content within an
inherently interdisciplinary academic unit (Undergraduate Studies). Students will benefit from the increased clarity and possibility for further UEXP curriculum development (as part of a comprehensive undergraduate studies experience) and instructors will benefit from focused UEXP professional development.

Approval by Curriculum Council: May 13, 2011

Approval & Revisions: March 8, 2013; April 2, 2015

Additional Information: List of Course Designators; Category II Proposals