

DEFINITION OF COURSE LEVELS

Suggestions for the differentiation between lower and upper division courses are as follows:

Lower-division courses comprise all 100-level courses and all 200-level courses.

Upper-division courses comprise all 300- and 400-level courses.

000-level course designation

Remedial courses; placement determined by college-wide testing of entering students.

100-level course designation

Courses with no prerequisites, survey courses, courses defining basic concepts or presenting the terminology of a discipline.

Assumptions and Expectations:

1. Students possess writing ability sufficient to compose definitions, paragraphs, or essays where appropriate;
2. Students possess reading skills sufficient to comprehend college-level material in textbook and monograph form. Where specified, completion of remedial course work should be a prerequisite.

200-level course designation

Courses of intermediate college-level difficulty; courses with 100-level course(s) as prerequisite(s); or survey courses devoted to particular areas or fields within a discipline.

Assumptions:

1. Students will have completed expository writing (ENG 102) or the equivalent;
2. Students possess general skills such as recognition, reading, appropriate quantitative skills, and varying degrees of fluency in writing and articulateness in expression;
3. Students are acquainted with the basic language, terminology, or methodology of the subject itself;
4. Students are, in that subject, at a stage of understanding where they can progress towards significant conclusions, experiments, and/or explorations.

Expectations:

1. Students can proceed at a reasonable pace without difficulties in comprehension;
2. Students can cope with assignments involving reading and comprehending a specified amount of material and/or preparing organized papers;
3. Students will accomplish a substantial amount of work, for example: study a number of books or work through a comprehensive textbook, write a number of papers, or demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the material covered.

300-level course designation

Courses of advanced difficulty taken by majors and upper division students. These are often considered to be courses in the major offered for students clearly interested and qualified in a subject.

Assumptions:

Students are at ease and comfortable in the field; they have acquired an adequate general knowledge in the area to pursue some study in depth with the proper methodological tools.

Expectations:

1. Students have the ability to do research, or to obtain relevant information in the field through the proper use of libraries;
2. Students are fluent in the language of the field so as to read and analyze relevant information;
3. Students are able to combine the results of the research or the reading into cohesive statements;
4. Students are able to produce substantial work such as a paper of "term-paper" length, or a creative or experimental project.

400-level course designation

Advanced upper-division courses, seminars, practicums, or internships for majors and upper-division students.

Assumptions:

1. Students have completed a substantial amount of work on the 300 level.
2. Students have the capacity to work independently under the guidance or supervision of an instructor.

Expectations:

Students complete research project or paper.

500-600 level course designation

Master-level graduate courses numbered 500-600 require a bachelor's degree and admission to a graduate program. 500 level course are more rigorous than undergraduate courses. These courses require a higher level of critical thinking, necessitate considerably more intellectual rigor, and demand integration of information into frameworks of knowledge.

Assumptions:

The Graduate Programs are specifically designed to enhance the student's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in their chosen academic arenas and to prepare them to accept professional responsibilities. Success in the Graduate Program is based not only on completing the required course work but also on demonstrating competencies and attitudes appropriate to the profession.

Expectations:

Students should:

1. Be capable of sustained, independent inquiry and analysis
2. Have a mastery of writing skills in the format required by the discipline;
3. Understand and carry out research at the master's level;
4. Possess a thorough understanding of the literature within the discipline;
5. Possess the ability to communicate effectively on topics within the discipline of study.

700-level course designation

These courses are reserved for clinical work in the discipline.

Assumptions:

Courses at the 700 level are designed to prepare the graduate student for becoming a practitioner Within the field.

Expectations:

1. Students should be able to function as practitioners in their field under the supervision of qualified professionals.
2. Students should be able to self-evaluate while accepting guidance from supervisors.

800 level course designation

These courses are offered at the doctoral level. Students must have been admitted into a doctoral program within the university.

Assumptions:

A doctoral program involves a serious commitment of time and energy. Requirements for completion of the degree go far beyond completion of courses, examinations, and a dissertation. Throughout the doctoral program, students are expected to be involved in the research projects of faculty members, assist in teaching courses, provide group and individual supervision when assigned, attend and present at professional conferences, and generally immerse themselves in professional activities at the university. These activities are designed to prepare doctoral students to become faculty members or leaders in their field.

Students at this level should have completed a master's degree in the discipline and have mastered the requirements necessary to enter a doctoral program. These students should have leadership qualities and the ability to work independently toward completing, not only rigorous coursework, but independent research leading to a dissertation or action research project.

Expectations:

Students should be able to:

1. Extend and contribute to theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field.
2. Demonstrate the ability to engage in critical thinking, decision making, and independent judgment.
3. Design, conduct, evaluate, and disseminate research in the discipline for its applicability to the field.
4. Practice leadership skills in collaboration with members of the profession.
5. Evaluate the impact of theory and practice as it relates their field.
6. Accept individual responsibility and accountability for personal and professional growth.
7. Design and complete independent research leading to either a dissertation or action research project.
8. Prepare to move into leadership roles in their field.