

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

## Memorandum

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To: Graduate Council

From: Julie Rivera, Director of Academic Reports and Curriculum  
Stephen Crites, Dean of the Graduate School

Date: March 1, 2023

Subject: Minor Curriculum Changes – Update to previously approved minor changes guidelines

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To expedite some catalog changes and ease the workload on the Graduate Council, the Graduate Council considered and approved a proposal that allowed minor changes in the Graduate Catalog to be made without Graduate Council approval. This was done at the April, 6 2022 meeting (the Faculty Senate approved the same document for Undergraduate Courses around the same time).

The approved plan allowed catalog changes to be made in three ways.

- 1) Administrative Approval – changes that could be made by administration without approval by any faculty body.
- 2) Department Approval – changes that must be approved by the department/program but do not require approval of the respective College or Graduate Council.
- 3) College Approval – changes that must be approved by both the department/program and the College, but not the Graduate Council.

Since the first proposal was approved, other items have been identified that we would like to include in the list of minor curriculum changes: addition and removal of courses for elective lists and removal of inactive courses when appropriate.

This updated proposal is seeking permission to add these to the minor improvement list.

**Addition and Removal of Courses from Elective Lists.** Many degree plans include lists of electives where students select a prescribed number of courses. There are often minor changes to be made to these lists (additions or deletions), that currently require approval through the full curriculum process. We would like to allow programs to add and remove courses from elective lists with only departmental approval, when the courses are from the program’s college.

**Removal of Inactive Courses from Degree Plans in Elective Sections.** Courses that have not been offered in long time must occasionally be removed (e.g., the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requested this in 2020). When this occurs, the programs are notified and have three options for proceeding:

- Request reactivation of the courses (so it can be offered), or
- Replace the inactive course(s) with another course(s), or
- Remove the course from the degree plan.

Options 2 and 3 currently require Graduate Council approval, and we are requesting approval to remove inactive courses from these degree plans when the course(s) is part of an elective list where removal of the courses does not affect the section requirements.

### **Proposed Approvals Required for Simple Changes**

| <b>Administrative approval</b> |                        |  |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| <b>Change</b>                  | <b>Example</b>         | <b>Comment</b>   |
| Change in course prefix        | SPLP 5XXX to SLP 5XXX  | Only if no changes are to be made to the existing course.<br>Provide list of current courses that require the new prefix |
| New course #                   | ESCI 1201 to ESCI 2201 | Same level only. Change in level (e.g., 5000 to 6000) requires curriculum approval                                       |

|                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Schedule type change   | Add Independent Study<br>Lecture to Lecture/Lab            |  |
| Addition of keywords   |  | Requesting keywords for all course descriptions to improve course searches   |
| Clear up catalog rules | TOEFL scores change at state level, requiring us to change | Remove and/or replace rules in catalog if they supersede existing institutional rules and replace with links when possible |

| <b>Department Approval</b>   |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Change</b>  | <b>Example</b>                                | <b>Comment</b>                              |
| Deactivate course  | Course no longer offered                      | Replaced in degree plan by different course |
| Reactivate course  | New faculty hired                             | Program able to provide course again        |
| Contact hours change   | Practicum courses increase/decrease           | Change in accreditation requirements        |
| Removal of departmental approval   | Approved courses added to list in degree plan | Reduces workload for advisers               |
| Non-curricular related changes to catalog language w/o degree plan changes | Description of program, marketable skills     | No effect on degree plan                    |
| Grade mode change  | Standard to pass/fail                         |   |

| <b>College Approval</b>   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Change</b>   | <b>Example</b>   | <b>Comment</b>  |
| Fast track – add or remove courses (if departmental courses only) |  | Requires curriculum approval if courses are outside of department |
| Reorganize credit distribution                                    | 4 lecture w/ 0 lab to 3 lecture with 1 lab   |   |
| Add to elective list  | Degree plan includes section where students select from a list of electives                          |   |
| Remove inactive courses if deg plan not affected                  | Inactive course is in section where there are still enough option to fulfill the section requirement | Will not remove required courses                                  |

|                                 |   |   |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Restriction/prerequisite change | Add or remove majors<br>Level restriction change<br>Remove prerequisite | If change does not negatively impact programs outside of the requesting college<br>Prerequisite removal only if prerequisite is from the same college as the course |
|---------------------------------|---|---|

*\*\*Include effective term*

Administrative Approval

Email request to [curriculum@utep.edu](mailto:curriculum@utep.edu)

Departmental Approval

Email request to [curriculum@utep.edu](mailto:curriculum@utep.edu) and include approval page or email with department chair approval

College Approval

Email request to [curriculum@utep.edu](mailto:curriculum@utep.edu) and include approval page or email with College Curriculum Chair and Dean approvals