

**SPECIAL REPORT**  
of the  
**ACADEMIC MATTERS COUNCIL**  
concerning  
**GUIDELINES FOR CROSS-LISTING COURSES**

Presented at the  
652<sup>nd</sup> Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
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## Guidelines for Cross-Listing Courses

### I. Background

The current guidelines were issued in 1991 (Sen. Doc. No. 91-046: Interdepartmental Teaching). The purpose of that report was to review existing practices relative to scheduling and crediting enrollment in undergraduate interdepartmental courses (and/or departmental courses team taught by faculty from more than one department) and to recommend policies designed to realize more equitable credit distribution for contributions to the teaching of those courses. The report also stated that:

Probably the most frequently used method to schedule an interdepartmental course is to “cross-list” it jointly under all departments whose faculty are associated with the course. The advantages of this approach are that each department captures some of the FTE’s in the enrollment reports (although not necessarily in proportion to the resources it commits), and the course is “publicized” under each department. This approach has several disadvantages as well: (1) since the course is listed in the schedule book under different departments, it is frequently confusing to students who may perceive that there are actually two or three different courses when in fact only one exists; (2) it provides misleading information on the number of courses offered by the institution; (3) it may lead to an unfair allocation in enrollment reports of the FTE’s of participating departments, as a disproportionate number of students will frequently sign up for the section offered by the most popular or visible department; and (4) it creates the possibility for students to receive credit for a course twice by taking it a second time under a different department’s rubric. (This can easily occur if a department changes its course number in a subsequent semester.)

The report was intended to encourage interdepartmental teaching by allocating to each department adequate credit for the teaching that it does; departmental enrollment numbers would be appropriately referred to for the demand by students for specific courses. The recommendations associated with that report were:

- (1) In cases of courses which are team taught by instructors from different departments, FTE credits should be proportionately divided (according to the teaching contributions) between or among the departments with which the involved faculty are affiliated. In addition to enrollment data, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning should also consistently publish measurements of FTE teaching effort by department units to show the total teaching effort of faculty and TA’s from each department regardless of the rubric under which the course is offered.
- (2) It is recommended that the cross-listing of courses (i.e., offering the same course under two different departmental designations) be used only as necessary. The Registrar’s Office should work with individual academic departments to find alternative undergraduate course listing procedures that are compatible with departmental needs. The cross-listing of courses may continue, however, for valid academic reasons if effective alternatives cannot be developed.

Since then, the campus has witnessed an increase in the number of cross-listed courses and a continuous stream of requests for cross-listing additional courses. In 2004-2005, the number of cross-listed offerings exceeded 110 courses. Such an increase threatens to bloat the listing of courses in the associated campus publications and increases the burden in the Registrar's Office. The responsibility for approving the cross-listing of courses is shared by the Offices of the Provost and the Faculty Senate. The absence of clear criteria that can be applied to requests for cross-listing has resulted in several disagreements.

The Academic Matters Council was asked to re-examine the current guidelines for cross-listing of courses and to provide revised guidelines to be followed in assessing the merits of requests for cross-listing of courses.

## **II. AMC Observations**

1. The Academic Matters Council believes that interdepartmental teaching has an important and vital role to play in the institution and should be encouraged to the extent possible.
2. The Council also believes that cross-listing of courses should be based on academic/pedagogical reasons and not only on a desire to advertise the course to a targeted group of students.
3. The current system of allocating the FTE's generated by a course enrollment to the persons teaching the course, in proportion to the efforts contributed by each, eliminates the need for cross-listing courses for the purpose of FTE bookkeeping.
4. The existence of courses in one department that are required by students in another department does not constitute an automatic reason for cross-listing.
5. Some interdepartmental teaching is stimulated by scholarly interests of faculty and may cross traditional disciplinary boundaries. Such interdisciplinary courses integrate two or more curriculum areas. In content and pedagogy, they cross the boundaries of the disciplinary designations; they do not fall entirely outside the defined disciplines. An interdisciplinary course will integrate the fundamental theories and methods of both disciplines to investigate the issues raised in the course. Courses such as these would not be appropriately designated in any single curriculum area. Such courses may be taught by faculty members from more than one department, or by only one faculty member. In both cases, the course may either be "cross-listed" or be offered by only one department.
6. Interdepartmental programs that have their unique rubric but draw on courses from different departments to build a curriculum might find it advantageous to have all courses cross-listed with courses offered in the contributing departments.
7. Making required courses and desired electives visible to students can be achieved by mechanisms other than cross-listing.
8. Listing a course with the rubric of a department that is not involved in the development and possible teaching of that course might be considered false advertising.

### III. AMC Recommendations

The Academic Matters Council recommends that:

- Approval of new requests for cross-listing a course be based on the proposed course meeting one of the following criteria:
  1. It is clearly an interdisciplinary course (as described under 5 above),
  2. It is part of the curriculum of an interdepartmental program that has an assigned rubric,  
or
  3. It can be taught by faculty who might reside in either department.
- Current cross-listed courses that have not been taught for the past three years should not be placed on the schedule unless they meet one of the above criteria.
- It is expected that the course will carry the same number in both departments or, at least, the numbers be at the same level (e.g., both are at the 200 level, if intended for second-year students).
- If a cross-listed course carries, or is granted, a General Education requirements designation(s), then its match under the other rubric must carry the same designation(s).
- Courses offered on experimental basis should be numbered X90-alpha. Courses numbered X91-X99 cannot be cross-listed.
- Requests for cross-listing must be approved by all involved departments.
- The “Form” that accompanies requests for cross-listing should reflect the Faculty Senate recommendations.

**MOVED: 31-06 That the Faculty Senate approve the Guidelines for Cross-Listing Courses, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-030.**