

Starting a topics course (approval takes ~1 month)

When considering the time line, please remember that all steps for a topics course should be completed before the start of the enrollment period for the semester in which you plan to offer it, e.g. for a class to be offered in the spring, you'll need to have the steps completed by mid-October. Thus, you need to start the process at least 1 full semester before you plan to offer the new topics course for the first time.

The process for starting a topics course is simpler than starting a new course. It can be accomplished faster. Topics classes thus allow the instructor to give a course a test run. Teaching a topics class is a way to offer something 1-3 times, and also can be a vehicle for a test run of a planned regular course. Either way, if one wants to teach a topics class, the materials that the proposing faculty member should prepare are:

- A statement of the rationale for proposing the course. This is usually a few sentences.
- A syllabus for the course.

New courses generally should be proposed to the relevant section by contacting the section chair. The section chair will bring the proposal to the attention of section members who may discuss and make suggestions about the proposal. Ultimately the section members will vote on the proposal. Once the proposal is approved by the section, the section chair forwards the proposal to the curriculum committee chair. The curriculum committee chair then presents the proposal to the curriculum committee for discussion, provides suggestions to the proposers if needed, and conducts a vote. After approval by the curriculum committee, the proposal goes to the entire faculty for a vote. If the proposal is approved, it can be offered up to three times. If the course is a successful, the course can be converted to a regular course, by following the procedure under "starting a regular course".

Starting a regular course (approval takes 6-9 months)

When considering the time line, please remember that all steps for a new course should be completed before the start of the enrollment period for the semester in which you plan to offer it, e.g. for a class to be offered in the spring, you'll need to have the steps completed by mid-October. Thus, you need to start the process at least 1 year before you plan to offer the new course.

The materials that the proposing faculty member needs to prepare are:

- The proposed catalog description
- A statement of the rationale for proposing the course. This is usually a few sentences. If the course has previously been taught as a Topics course, include information about the number of times it was taught and its enrollment.
- A syllabus for the course.
- If offering this course will affect any other department, please discuss with the curriculum chair, who will work with you to get written documentation from the other department(s) indicating that they are OK with the offering or that appropriate modifications are made.

New courses generally should be proposed first to the relevant section by contacting the section chair. The section chair should then bring the proposal to the attention of section members who may discuss and make suggestions about the proposal. Ultimately the section members will vote on the proposal.

Once the proposal is approved by the section, the section chair forwards the proposal to the curriculum committee chair. The curriculum committee chair then presents the proposal to the curriculum committee for discussion and provides any suggestions for modifications to the proposer. A vote of the curriculum committee follows. After approval by the curriculum committee, the proposal goes to the entire faculty involved in instruction for a vote. If the proposal is approved, Nancy enters it into the “Curriculog” system, and it will be further considered at the level of the College curriculum committee, the College faculty, the faculty senate academic affairs committee, the faculty senate executive committee, and the faculty senate. If a course is a graduate course, it also needs to be approved by the graduate council’s academic affairs committee and the graduate council. After the proposal makes it through these steps and is given one last check, it will be added to the catalog and can be offered.

In the occasional case in which a planned course doesn’t seem to be associated with any particular section, feel free to come directly to the chair of the curriculum committee.

Modifying a course description (approval takes 6-9 months unless expedited)

If the change is very minor, such as the semester in which the course is taught and there is agreement between the instructor and the teaching coordinator (Carolyn), or if there is a minor change in the wording of the description, please discuss with Nancy and/or the curriculum committee chair, providing both the current catalog description and the proposed catalog description, and Nancy can request an “expedited” change through the Curriculog system. If you are not sure if this is appropriate, discuss with the curriculum committee chair.

If the change is more significant, such as a change in the prerequisites or a change in the number of credits, it will need to be approved through a process similar to a new class. The proposer will need to provide:

- The current catalog description
- The proposed catalog description
- A statement of the rationale for the change.
- A syllabus for the course.
- If the change in this course will affect any other department, please discuss with the curriculum chair and we will work together to get written documentation from the other departments indicating that they are OK with the change and/or that appropriate modifications were made.

Give these materials to the curriculum committee chair, who will work to get the approval of the curriculum committee and the faculty. At that point Nancy will take over and it will need to be approved by the College curriculum committee, the College faculty, the faculty senate academic affairs committee, the faculty senate executive committee, and the faculty senate. If a change affects a graduate course, it also needs to be approved by the graduate council’s academic affairs committee and the graduate council. After the proposal makes it through all these steps, the change will be made in the catalog, and the corresponding change in the course can be made.

Changing the curriculum (approval takes 6-9 months)

Usually changes in the curriculum start at the level of the curriculum committee and work up from there, through the faculty, College curriculum committee, the College faculty, the faculty senate academic affairs committee, the faculty senate executive committee, and the faculty senate. If it has to

do with requirements for graduate students, it will also need to be accepted by the graduate council's academic affairs committee and the graduate council. Changes that involve offering a new degree (or termination of a degree program) need to go further, to the level of the Board of Regents. If you or your section wants to make a change in the curriculum, the best plan is to talk to the chair of the curriculum committee.