



## Course Numbering and Approvals

### No. 6900

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**Affected Parties:**  
Undergraduate  
Graduate  
Faculty  
Staff  
Other

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### 1.0 Purpose

### 2.0 Policy

#### 2.1 Identifying Courses with Abbreviations, Numbers and Titles

All courses at Virginia Tech must be identified according to the official scheme.

Departmental abbreviations are established jointly by the department head, the Registrar, the academic dean for the college in which the department is organized, and if appropriate, the dean of the Graduate School. These abbreviations are based on official names of departments or programs, which are formally approved in the appropriate commissions, University Council, and by the university administrators having jurisdiction. Generally, these departments/programs and their names must also be approved or acknowledged by the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV).

The first digit of a course number indicates the academic level/s of the students for whom the course is primarily designed.

In the context of numbering courses, the levels are:



0	Associate degree students
1	First-year undergraduate students
2	Second-year undergraduate students
3	Third-year undergraduate students
4	Fourth- and fifth-year undergraduate students plus first-year graduate students, in the case of courses specifically approved for this level
5	First-year graduate students and second-year graduate students pursuing master's degrees
6	Regular graduate students beyond the master's level
7	Regular graduate students beyond the master's level
8 and 9	Professional-degree candidates (DVM)

The second and third digits are established at the option of the department, except that:

- The combination must be identical for each course within a given sequence.
- Combinations that are dedicated throughout the university for courses of a specific type must be used only as defined.
- Combinations 80 through 99 are reserved for new university-wide course types that may be established by governance processes.
- A four-digit number combination previously used may not be reclaimed for a new course until 5 years after the previous use.
- The fourth digit indicates whether the course is part of a sequence and its placement in the sequence.

The numbers currently authorized for use and their meanings are:

4	Not part of a sequence.
5	First in a sequence of two or three courses.
6	Second in a sequence of two or three courses.
7	Third in a sequence of three courses.

No number combination previously used may be reclaimed for a new course until five years have elapsed after the previous use.

## 2.2 Course Number Combinations with Pre-assigned Meaning

The following course number combinations must be used by any department offering courses of the types indicated. The numbers may not be used for any other course types.

The dedicated numbers and the types of courses for which they are to be used are:



2964	Field Work/Practicum, lower division undergraduate
2974	Independent Study, lower division undergraduate (individual students)
2984	Special Study, lower division undergraduate course on trial/under development, involves class groups
3954	Study Abroad, undergraduate, taught by Virginia Tech faculty outside the United States
4964	Field Work/Practicum, upper division undergraduate
4974	Independent Study, upper division undergraduate (individual students)
4984	Special Study, upper division undergraduate course on trial/under development, involves class groups
4994	Undergraduate Research
5894	Final examination, master's level in non-thesis programs, only for candidates who have no other enrollment in the quarter
5904	Project and Report
5954	Study Abroad, graduate, taught by Virginia Tech faculty outside the United States
5974	Independent Study, graduate (individual students)
5984	Special Study, graduate course on trial/under development, involves class groups
5994	Research and Thesis, master's degree level
6984	Special Study, graduate course on trial/under development, involves class groups
7994	Research and Dissertation, doctoral degree level

### 3.0 Procedures

These are the procedures to be followed to obtain approval for new courses and to revise existing courses.

Proposals must be written and organized in the standard format. Preparation of this material is the responsibility of the individual or group in the department or program seeking or having been requested to originate the course or revision. This responsibility includes requesting written statements of approval or opposition to the proposal from other departments or academic groups that may be affected.

The completed proposal with its supporting documents must be sent through the chairman/head/director, assuming endorsement by that person, to the college curriculum committee. There should be a copy for each member of the curriculum committee.

When the proposal is approved by the committee, the chairman of the curriculum committee and the dean of the college will send it to the Secretary of the Commission on Undergraduate Studies (University Registrar) with their letter of transmittal. Fifteen (15) copies of the materials, with any changes stemming from the review by the college curriculum committee, must be sent.

When the commission rejects the proposal or recommends modifications, the secretary of the commission will return it to the college curriculum committee chairman, who will notify the sponsoring group.



The following items must be included on the check sheet for new and modified courses.

- Title - CHECK SHEET FOR NEW OR MODIFIED COURSES
- Name of sponsoring college
- Name of sponsoring department or other sponsoring academic group
- Proposed course number
- Proposed course title
- Number of hours per week in lecture and in laboratory
- Number credits for lecture, for lab, and total credits, new/revised course
- Indicate whether new course or revised course
- Number and title of course replaced, if any
- Number of credits for lecture, for lab and total credits, replaced course
- Specific quarters/summer terms to be taught each year
- Estimated enrollment per term taught
- Curriculums for which to be required
- Curriculums for which to be elective
- Indication if for undergraduate only or graduate as well
- Names of professors who will teach the course
- Name of person who will be in charge of the course
- Name of the person submitting proposal
- Department abbreviation(s), number(s), and title(s) of related courses
- Departments for suggested cross listing, if any
- Courses to be deleted as a result of approval of this proposal
- Indicate if recommended by internal (college or department) study group
- Indicate if recommended by external group. Identify group
- Indicate if requested by another department. If yes, explain.
- Indicate if new faculty positions will be required. If so, explain.
- Indicate desired effective date
- Indicate date proposal submitted to college curriculum committee

## 4.0 Definitions

## 5.0 References

Policy Memorandum No. 141, "Governance Level Approval of Course Proposals," approved by University Council and the President, October 18, 1994.

## 6.0 Approval and Revisions

Approved August 22, 1990, by the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, James F. Wolfe.

Annual review December 15, 1998, by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.

- Revision 1



## Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Sections 2.1 and 2.2. Updated course levels and designated course numbers.

Section 2.3. "Requirement that Courses Carry Credit" deleted.

Minor updates to Section 3. "Procedures."

Reference to Policy Memorandum No. 141 added.

Approved April 17, 2002 by Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, David R. Ford.