



TO: Chairs, Directors of Undergraduate Study, and Scheduling Officers
FROM: James Thompson, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Curricula
RE: Syllabi; Learning Contracts; Curriculum Procedures and Deadlines; Catalog
DATE: Thursday, August 17, 2017

Welcome to the beginning of a new academic year. This memo contains several reminders and due dates for the fall semester. *Please forward the relevant information to your faculty.*

Course Syllabi and OSM

Please remind instructors that a syllabus must be provided to students no later than the first day of classes (=Tuesday, August, 22, 2017). Syllabi must also be uploaded to the [Online Syllabus Management](#) (OSM) tool by the first day of classes. Graduate courses (700+) are now included in the OSM.

Requirement for Written Assignments in General Education Courses

Courses meeting general education requirements must require at least 10 pages total of academic writing, not counting any in-class examinations. Syllabi should include length requirements for written assignments to demonstrate that courses meet this requirement.

Final Exams

The [Final Examination Policy](#) was recently updated by the Educational Policy Committee and approved by Faculty Council, effective Fall Semester 2017. As stated in the policy, undergraduate courses taught on campus must include a final assessment of students' mastery of course material. A traditional final examination is administered at a predetermined time as specified in the [official final examination schedule](#), and takes place at a designated location in Chapel Hill. Any other type of final examination is considered nontraditional. A few additional points:

- **No graded quizzes or exams** (excluding in-class presentations) may be given **during the last five days of the semester** before the beginning of the final examination period.
- For a three-credit-hour course, the University has a required three-hour final examination period, which incorporates 180 minutes of required instruction in each semester. Thus, **the University requires instructors to provide a full three hours of instruction for final assessment purposes** (e.g., written final examination, presentations, portfolio review, performance, review and evaluation, or some combination of these assessments). It is up to the discretion of the instructor of record to determine the form, content, and function of the final examination period.

- Even when faculty members have permission to administer nontraditional final examinations (e.g., exams requiring more than three hours to complete, a portfolio of a semester's work, a final project, or a take-home examination), the scheduled examination period must be utilized for instructional hours.
- A course instructor may, due to highly unusual circumstances, **petition for a change in the examination schedule**. The instructor must submit the request in writing to his or her chair no later than the last day of late registration for that term (**=Monday, August 28, 2017**), and it must be cleared by the chair and the appropriate dean (e.g., Associate Dean for Academic Advising) before consideration by the provost.
- Requests for all **common hour exams** must be made to the registrar the **first week of February for fall semester final examinations** and the **first week of September for spring semester final examinations**. There is no exception to this deadline. The new request form is available here: <https://registrar.unc.edu/classrooms/university-exams/>.

Independent Study Learning Contracts

After the learning contract has been approved, registration for an independent study course must be completed **no later than the last day of "late registration" (=Monday, August 28, 2017)**. Approved learning contracts should be archived in the unit for a minimum of four years.

Procedures governing independent study/research, directed readings, internships, and other such courses are available on the Office of the University Registrar's website under the title [UPM #30 Independent Study Policy](#).

Among other regulations, the policy restricts the number of students that an instructor may supervise in an independent study course to two students per semester plus two additional students who are working on an honors thesis (see the section "Limits and Exclusions" for exceptions). Units should create sections of a course for each instructor supervising an independent study.

The College of Arts and Sciences is in the process of piloting a new online learning contract form with workflow. Additional information will be shared at a later date.

Primary Instructor of Record

By census date (**=Tuesday, September 5, 2017**), the primary instructor of record must be listed on your department's official course listing in Connect Carolina. "Staff," "No Primary Instructor," or blanks are not permitted.

Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal Deadline and Procedures

The October 15 submission deadline falls on a Sunday this year, so submissions will be **accepted through Monday, October 16, 2017**. This deadline applies to any course requests or program proposals (majors, minors) that you wish to implement with a fall 2018 effective date and see included in the 2018-2019 *Undergraduate Catalog*.

Course Requests

To add, revise, or inactivate courses, submit requests through Connect Carolina's Course Request Approval System (CRAS). Every unit has at least one designated "submitter" and one "approver" with access to CRAS. Please make sure that these individuals have completed the [relevant training](#) so that courses can move smoothly through the system.

Undergraduate Program Proposals (majors, minors)

Program changes in the College of Arts and Sciences, including revisions to course lists that satisfy requirements for majors, concentrations, and minors, should be submitted to the Administrative Boards of the College of Arts and Sciences. Please send the following materials by email to Nick Siedentop (nick_siedentop@unc.edu):

- **Departmental memo** (on letterhead, signed by the chair), including a statement indicating the curricular reason(s) for the proposed changes.
- **Undergraduate Catalog text** with PDF mark-up reflecting the requested changes. To create a PDF of the current requirements, go to the program page in the 2017-2018 [Undergraduate Catalog](#), select “Print Options” in the top right corner, and Download PDF of the page.

Additional information: Office of Undergraduate Curricula’s [website](#).

University Catalog

The 2017-2018 [University Catalog](#) was released on **June 1, 2017**. The online publication offers enhanced features and can be easily viewed on tablets and mobile devices. The editing cycle for the 2018-2019 Catalog will begin in spring 2018.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel welcome to email James Thompson (uthomp@email.unc.edu) or Nick Siedentop (nick_siedentop@unc.edu).

Our best wishes for a successful semester.