

Curriculum Manual for Graduate Studies

**Metropolitan State University of
Denver
2024**



**METROPOLITAN
STATE UNIVERSITYSM
OF DENVER**



Curriculum Manual for Graduate Studies

Approval Signatures

Chair, Graduate Council

Date

Chair, Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee

Date

President, Faculty Senate

Date

AVP Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, Policy Development

Date

Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs

Date

Contents

Contents	2
1.00 Introduction	3
2.00 Curriculum Goals	3
3.00 Roles and Responsibilities	3
3.1 Department Level	4
3.2 College/School Level	4
3.3 University Level	6
3.4 Regional Level.....	9
4.00 Curriculum Policies and Procedures	10
4.1 Types of Curriculum Changes.....	10
4.2 Program and Course Documentation	12
4.3 Course Credit, Faculty Contact and Student Work Hours.....	12
4.4 Special Types of Courses	12
5.00 New Program Policies and Procedures	16
5.1 New Graduate Programs.....	16
5.2 Concentrations within an Existing Degree Program	17
5.3 Certificate Programs: Definitions and Policies	17
6.00 Discontinuing an Academic Program	17
7.00 Instructional Activities and Methods	17
8.00 Grade Mode Definition	21
9.00 Rationale for Curriculum Deadlines	21
10.00 Procedure for Changes to this Manual	21
11.00 Catalog Addendum	21

1.00 Introduction

The Curriculum Manual for Graduate Studies documents the governing policies and procedures for creating, modifying and discontinuing graduate programs and courses at Metropolitan State University of Denver. It supersedes the Curriculum Guidelines, Policies and Procedures publication, last revised May 2023. These guidelines should not be interpreted in any way that would supersede State or Federal guidelines.

2.00 Curriculum Goals

The **mission** of Metropolitan State University of Denver states:

MSU Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate- and master's-degree granting urban university that offers arts and sciences, professional and business courses and programs to a diverse student population in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective.

MSU Denver's mission is to provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global and technological society. To fulfill its mission, MSU Denver's faculty and staff engage the community at large in scholarly inquiry, creative activity and the application of knowledge.

The mission of MSU Denver Graduate Studies states:

MSU Denver Graduate Studies represents a diverse community of scholars and practitioners and is the central advocate for the of campus-wide graduate programs while providing strategic leadership for growth and quality. MSU Denver Graduate Studies promotes excellence in graduate education through leadership and service within the University and the greater community. Leadership is provided through the initiation of dialogue regarding issues and trends in higher education; the development of innovative and timely graduate programs; support for improvement of existing viable programs; the endorsement of policies and practices contributing to high quality education endeavors; and proactive advocacy for graduate students and faculty. Service is provided through recruitment and admission of well qualified students; professional, accurate, and timely response to requests and concerns; the maintenance of processes and procedures that are efficient and consistent with academic policies; and responsible use of resources. MSU Denver Graduate Studies is committed to building collegial and mutually supportive relationships with all constituencies to create learning environments that contribute to outstanding achievement in learning, discovery, scholarship, and service to the benefit of the local and global society.

3.00 Roles and Responsibilities

Curricula originate with faculty in academic departments, schools or colleges, and the Honors Program, hereafter referred to as academic units. In the case of interdisciplinary courses or programs, the department with primary responsibility for the course or program is considered the originating department. As a general rule, courses are owned by a single academic department. In certain circumstances, a course can be owned by a college or school in lieu of a specific department. Administrative units (defined as non-academic offices or departments) must work through the appropriate academic levels to move curricula through the approval process. It is the responsibility of all levels to follow the curriculum policies and procedures included in this manual. Chairs of various committees have the discretion to determine if a curriculum change requires committee review. In the case a committee chair determines that the changes are only clerical in nature, the committee chair will notify the committee and give them two business days to object. The committee chair will ensure that all documentation is accurate and complete. Because the Honors Program collaborates with

all departments regarding faculty members who teach Honors courses, a letter of collaboration from the sponsoring department providing the content expertise must be included in Honors proposals. Since colleges and schools collaborate with specific departments to create courses, approvals from one to three sponsoring departments providing the content expertise must be included, and additional departments can submit letters of collaboration.

3.1 Department Level

3.1.1 Originator

This individual or group originates curriculum proposals and shall:

- Plan curriculum changes well in advance of deadlines, in alignment with the curriculum review calendar,
- Submit complete and accurate documentation,
- Identify if a current proposal is in alignment with accreditation requirements,
- Incorporate stipulations and suggestions made by subsequent levels of review and,
- Search the University Catalog to ensure that the proposal does not duplicate existing curricula and determine, with the department chair, possible conflicts or impacts on other academic units (e.g., Transfer Services, Academic Advising).

3.1.2 Departmental Curriculum Committee

The Departmental Curriculum Committee shall:

- review the merit of the proposal to ensure that it is:
- Complete,
- Pedagogically sound,
- In line with current graduate scholarship requirements,
- Of benefit to students,
- Includes letters of notification or support,
- And has Proofread the proposal

3.1.3 Department Chair or Designee

The Department Chair or designee shall:

- Ensure curriculum changes do not contradict statewide articulation agreements, statewide transfer policies, or inter-institutional agreements and Memoranda of Understanding,
- Evaluate the impact of the proposal on departmental resources,
- Consult with the Dean in advance if new or additional resources will be needed to implement a curriculum change (*e.g.*, personnel, space, equipment),
- Notify other academic and administrative units (e.g., Transfer Services, Academic Advising) of proposed changes and provide a detailed list of potential impacts,
- Obtain detailed letters of support from academic and administrative units affected by the change(s), including acknowledgement of the impacts and details of any compromises or agreements made,
- Respond to other academic units' letters of notification and requests for support in a timely manner.

3.2 College/School Level

3.2.1 The College or School Curriculum Committee shall:

- Ensure that the proposal has academic integrity, coherence, and rigor and is worthy of inclusion in the university's graduate programs,
- Ensure that new courses do not duplicate or overlap in content with those in an existing curriculum, and to determine possible conflict or impacts on other academic and administrative units,
- The following procedures must be conducted by the committee to identify duplicate or overlap content with existing curricula:
 - Run a keyword search of the catalog
 - Run a keyword search of Curriculog
 - Run a Curriculog impact report
- In case there is duplication or overlap, the committee must ensure that the originator provides a justification for the redundant course. The committee must also ensure that all affected faculty and academic units offering related courses have been allowed to review the proposed course and have letters of acknowledgment submitted and that any change to a current course which is a service course to other departments, programs, and degrees be acknowledged. The committee will delay the approval of the course if the appropriate contacts have not been made and acknowledgments have not been included with the proposal.
- Ensure that possible conflicts or impacts on other academic and administrative units have been addressed and resolved, and that detailed letters of acknowledgment are included,
- Request needed revisions in a clear, detailed and timely manner, and assist departments in addressing requests for revisions,
- In cases where proposals are denied, justify the decision in writing and notify all other levels,
- Submit the proposal by the posted deadlines,
- Ensure that all revisions have been completed and included in the proposal before granting College/School Curriculum Committee approval.

3.2.2 Dean or Designee

The Academic Dean or designee shall:

- Evaluate how the proposal will affect the allocation of resources, including personnel, space and equipment, and verify that adequate resources are available to support the proposal,
- Notify the Provost's Office of any requests for new program codes or course prefixes,
- Ensure that the proposal does not duplicate or overlap in content with existing curricula, and determine, with the initiating faculty and department, possible conflicts or impacts on other academic and administrative units,
 - The following procedures must be conducted by the committee to identify duplicate or overlap content with existing curricula
 - Run a keyword search of the catalog
 - Run a keyword search of Curriculog
 - Run a Curriculog impact report

- In case there is duplication or overlap, a justification for the redundant course must be included with the proposal. In addition, all affected faculty and departments offering related courses must be allowed to review the proposed course and letters of acknowledgment must be included with the curriculum proposal by the initiating faculty. Any change to a current course that is a service course to other departments, programs, and degrees must be reviewed by those departments and letters of acknowledgment from those departments must be included in the proposal. Failure to make the appropriate contacts will delay the processing of the course through the curriculum approval process.
- In cases where proposals are denied, return the proposal to the originating department with a written explanation and notify all other levels and,
- Ensure that all revisions have been completed and included in the packet before granting approval.

3.3 University Level

3.3.1 Graduate Council Curriculum Committee

The Graduate Council Curriculum Committee shall:

- Ensure that the proposal has academic integrity, coherence, and rigor and is worthy for inclusion in the university's graduate curricula,
- Ensure that the proposal does not duplicate existing curricula within the University,
- Ensure that the proposal does not duplicate or overlap in content with existing curricula, and determine, with the initiating faculty and department, possible conflict or impacts on other academic and administrative units,
 - The following procedures must be conducted by the committee to identify duplicate or overlap content with existing curricula,
 - Run a keyword search of the catalog,
 - Run a keyword search of Curriculog,
 - Run a Curriculog impact report,
 - In the case that there is duplication or overlap, a justification for the redundant course must be included with the proposal. In addition, all affected faculty and departments offering related courses must be allowed to review the proposed course and letters of acknowledgment must be included with the curriculum proposal by the initiating faculty. Any change to a current course that is a service course to other departments, programs, and degrees must be reviewed by those departments and letters of acknowledgment from those departments must be included in the proposal. Failure to make the appropriate contacts will delay the processing of the course through the curriculum approval process.
- Request needed revision in a clear, detailed and timely manner, and assist departments in addressing requests for revisions,
- In cases where proposals are denied, return the proposals to the originating department with a written explanation and notify all other levels,
- Ensure that all revisions have been completed and included in the proposal before granting Graduate Council Curriculum Committee approval.

3.3.2 Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee

The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee shall:

- Evaluate curriculum proposals and changes to ensure that they are academically sound and in alignment with the University's role and mission,
- Ensure that conflicts or impacts on other academic and administrative units have been addressed and resolved, and that detailed letters of support are included,
- Ensure that a proposal does not duplicate or overlap in content with existing curricula, and determine, with the initiating faculty and department, possible conflicts or impacts on other academic and administrative units,
 - The following procedures must be conducted by the committee to identify duplicate or overlap content with existing curricula
 - Run a keyword search of the catalog
 - Run a keyword search of Curriculog
 - Run a Curriculog impact report
 - In the case that there is duplication or overlap, a justification for the redundant course must be included with the proposal. In addition, all affected faculty and departments offering related courses must be allowed to review the proposed course, and letters of acknowledgment must be included with the curriculum proposal by the initiating faculty. Any change to a current course that is a service course to other departments, programs, and degrees must be reviewed by those departments and letters of acknowledgment from those departments must be included in the proposal. Failure to make the appropriate contacts will delay the processing of the course through the curriculum approval process.
- Request needed revision in a clear, detailed and timely manner, and assist departments in addressing requests for revisions,
- Ensure that all revisions have been completed and included in the proposal before granting Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee approval (*i.e.*, do not grant "approval with modifications"),
- Present completed curriculum proposals to the Faculty Senate and obtain the approval of the Faculty Senate President,
- Submit approved proposals to the Office of Academic Affairs by the posted deadlines and,
- Return all proposals that cannot be approved to the originating department with a written statement explaining why the packet could not be approved, and notify all other approval levels.

3.3.3 Faculty Senate

It is the responsibility of Faculty Senate to certify that curriculum proposals and curriculum changes have received thorough review and are worthy of inclusion in the University's graduate curricula.

3.3.4 Provost's Office

The Provost Office designee for curriculum and course developments is the Office of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development.

The Provost or designee shall:

- Adhere to Board of Trustees policy, state statutes and Colorado Department of Higher

- Education policies, and Higher Learning Commission policies concerning curriculum,
- Evaluate how the proposal will affect the allocation of resources, including personnel space and equipment, at the University level, and ensure that adequate resources are available to support the proposal,
 - Coordinate with the Office of the Registrar to set curriculum deadlines;
 - Disseminate curriculum development deadlines to Colleges/Schools,
 - Coordinate implementation with centralized support units (*e.g.*, Registrar, Advising, Admissions, and Financial Aid),
 - Assist departments/schools/colleges with implementation and questions/concerns unresolved at other levels,
 - Assist curriculum review committees in locating and interpreting statewide articulation agreements, statewide transfer policies, inter-institutional agreements and Memoranda of Understanding, or other external policies and regulations that affect curriculum,
 - Ensure proper documentation exists to meet internal and external institutional requirements,
 - Prepare and submit curriculum approval requests to the Board of Trustees, Colorado Department of Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission,
 - Return all proposals that cannot be approved by the Provost, Board of Trustees, Colorado Department of Higher Education, or Higher Learning Commission to the department chair with a written statement explaining why the proposal could not be approved and notify all other levels,
 - Maintain the University's electronic curriculum library,
 - Edit and publish the *University Catalog*,
 - Forward Banner Catalog information to the Office of the Registrar by the posted deadlines.

3.3.5 Registrar's Office

The Registrar or designee shall:

- Enter approved curriculum changes in Banner and class schedule,
- Maintain Banner Catalog and Degree Works and,
- Set the Academic Calendar published in the *University Catalog*.

3.3.6 President

The President or President's designee holds final authority over all curriculum matters at the university except for those requiring approval by the Board of Trustees, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Education (teacher licensure programs only), and/or the Higher Learning Commission.

3.3.7 Curriculum Dispute Resolution Committee

The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee has the authority to resolve conflicts over impacts on other academic units that have not been resolved at the school or college level. In such cases, the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee will exercise its jurisdiction over curriculum proposals and resolve such conflicts.

Members of the FSCC whose departmental affiliation is connected to the proposal(s) will recuse themselves from the dispute resolution process.

If the FSCC reaches a decision that is unanimously approved, this decision becomes binding and cannot be appealed.

If the FSCC reaches a non-unanimous decision, the decision will be brought to the Faculty Senate for a discussion and Senate vote.

3.3.8 Board of Trustees

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to review and approve:

- New degree programs,
- New academic minors,
- New certificate programs,
- New concentrations
- New Centers, Academies, and Institutes and,
- Discontinuing programs, minors, certificates, Centers, Academies or Institutes

Board of Trustee approval must be obtained before any approval requests can be submitted to external review levels.

3.3.9 Colorado Department of Education (Teacher Licensure Programs only)

It is the responsibility of the Colorado Department of Education to review and approve all curricula associated with teacher licensure or teaching endorsements. Departments proposing licensure or endorsement programs must work directly with the Colorado Department of Education to submit review materials.

Approval requests should be submitted simultaneously to the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Higher Education to prevent delays in final approval by the Commission.

3.3.10 Colorado Department of Higher Education and Colorado Commission on Higher Education

It is the responsibility of the Colorado Department of Higher Education to review and approve new academic programs based upon the program's fit with the University's statutory role and mission. Per Commission Policy I, V the Department can update SURDS with non-substantive changes to programs. Although certificate programs are not reviewed formally, they may be reported to the Department for entry into SURDS. Requests for review and approval are submitted through the [Colorado Department of Higher Education](#) and are typically processed within 60 days. Commission approval must be obtained before requesting approval from the Higher Learning Commission.

3.4 Regional Level

3.4.1 Higher Learning Commission (HLC)

It is the responsibility of the [Higher Learning Commission](#) to assure that the University provides a quality education. Accreditation certifies this assurance. Curriculum changes that require review and approval include:

- Degree or credential levels not previously offered at the University,
- All new programs,
- Substantial increases or decreases in a program's credit hours and,
- All program discontinuations

Requests for review and approval are submitted to HLC electronically by the Office of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development and require a significant amount of time and information not recorded in the University's existing curriculum forms. Requests are typically processed within 60 days. HLC invoices the University for processing institutional change requests.

4.00 Curriculum Policies and Procedures

Curriculum proposals are submitted via the curriculum management system. The [Curriculum SharePoint](#) will provide additional resources for this system.

4.1 Types of Curriculum Changes

4.1.1 Substantive Curriculum Changes – University Level

The following changes require Department, College/School, and Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee review:

- Create a new degree, concentration, certificate, teacher preparation or other academic program,*
- Change a department or program name, creating a new prefix, or a department-initiated prefix change,
- Discontinue a degree, concentration, certificate, teacher preparation or other academic program,*
- Modify a course prefix or subject code,
- Transfer ownership of a course or a program to another academic unit;
- Course proposals owned by a college or school instead of a single department,

These changes are reviewed and approved internally by:

- Department Curriculum Committee
- Department Chair or designee
- College/School Curriculum Committee
- Dean or designee
- Graduate Council
- Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Senate
- Provost or designee

** New, discontinued, and substantially modified programs require internal review and may require approval by the Board of Trustees and external review and approval by CDE/CCHE/HLC, as applicable, at the State and Regional levels. See [Section 3: Roles and Responsibilities](#).*

4.1.2 Substantive Curriculum Changes – Graduate Council Level

The following changes require Department and Graduate Council Curriculum Committee review:

- Revision of a concentration, certificate, teacher preparation or other academic program, including program requirements and program electives (*e.g.*, change in hours required, disciplines required, and/or list of courses),
- Creation of a new course without special designation, including converting an omnibus course to a regular course, or individual variable topic course,
- Designating a course as a repeatable course,
- Modification of the number of credit hours or attempts for a course designated as repeatable,

- Modification of course number or course level,
- Modification of course title,
- Modification of course description,
- Modification of course credit hours
- Modification of course prerequisites, co-requisites or registration restrictions,
- Addition of a Service Learning component to a new or existing course.

These changes are reviewed and approved by:

- Department Curriculum Committee
- Department Chair
- College/School Curriculum Committee
- Dean or designee
- Graduate Council
- Provost or designee.

4.1.3 Non-substantive Curriculum Changes – Department Level

The following changes require Department Curriculum Committee review. These changes are *published in the University Catalog and must be submitted to the Provost's Office by the catalog deadline published in the Academic Affairs Procedural Calendar*:

- Add or remove a course cross-listing,
- Archive (temporarily remove) or delete (permanently remove) a course from the curriculum,
 - A course cannot be archived or deleted until it is removed from all locations in the catalog. Departments requesting an archive or deletion of a course should ensure that it has been removed from all program and course listings in which it appears. This may require coordination with other departments to submit program or course modification proposals. A request to archive or delete a course without complete supporting proposals to remove the course from other programs and courses will be denied until all required proposals are submitted.
- Reactivate a course from archived status.

These changes are reviewed and approved by:

- Department Curriculum Committee
- Department Chair
- Dean or designee
- Provost or designee

The following changes require Department Curriculum Committee review:

- Addition or modification of an omnibus, independent study, or individual, variable-topic course,
- Addition or modification of a 30-character, Banner course title,
- Addition or modification of course instructional activity or schedule type,
- Addition or modification of a course grade mode,
- Banner enforcing existing prerequisites, co-requisites, and registration restrictions,
- Remove Banner enforced prerequisites, co-requisites, or registration restrictions,
- Modification of the distribution of credit hours,
- Modification of course contact hours,

- Modification of student behavioral learning objectives,
- Modification of assessment criteria,
- Modify course content or outline.

These changes are reviewed and approved by:

- Department Curriculum Committee
- Department Chair
- Dean or designee

** Non-substantive changes designated with an asterisk are published in the University Catalog and must be submitted to the Provost's Office by the catalog deadline published in the Academic Affairs Procedural Calendar.*

***Independent Study courses do not require the approval of the Department Curriculum Committee Chair.*

4.2 Program and Course Documentation

The online *University Catalog* management system serves as the official documentation of all University programs and courses. It is the basis for the software used to build class schedules, degree audit systems, student transcripts, and many other University tracking and reporting requirements used internally and externally. It is critical that departments ensure that programs and courses are accurate and up-to-date. Should there be conflicting information, the information contained in the *University Catalog* is the binding record that will supersede any other records.

4.3 Course Credit, Faculty Contact and Student Work Hours

To maintain regional accreditation, federal financial aid funding, and state funding, all courses offered at MSU Denver must comply with the federal definition of a credit hour and state reporting guidelines.

Federal Definition of a Credit Hour

A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) at least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other activities as established by an institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading toward to the award of credit hours. 34CFR 600.2 (11/1/2010)

4.4 Special Types of Courses

4.4.1 Cross-listed Courses

Cross-listed courses are "parent" courses listed under two or more course prefixes in the Catalog, and allow departments to offer courses pertinent to more than one academic program in an efficient manner. Cross-listed courses are also footnoted in the class schedule. Students receive course credit only under the course prefix for which they have enrolled.

Cross-listed courses:

- May be offered as a single section or multiple sections.
- May consist of a combination of regular, omnibus or variable topics courses.
- Require approval, by all departments cross-listing a specific course.
- Must carry the same course title, course description, course level and number of credit hours across all prefixes.
- Require departments to collaborate on course scheduling.
- Require notification to other departments and a new cross-listing agreement for any modifications to the course;
- Require notification to other departments before initiating a course archive or deletion.

4.4.2 Independent Study Courses

Independent study courses provide students the opportunity to pursue in-depth study of a topic of special interest. Independent studies:

- Require the submission of an independent study course proposal,
- Will use 6808 for their course number,
- May not duplicate a regular course unless the regular course is required for the student's degree program and was cancelled or is not offered during a given semester . In this case, the independent study section of the course should remain under the original course number but should be submitted on the Independent Study Course form in the Curriculum Management System,
- Require the student to receive Institutional Review Board approval for independent studies involving human subject research before the student is allowed to begin the course,
- May not be listed in the Catalog as a degree requirement but may be listed as an option or elective course in the program,
- A maximum of 4 students may be enrolled in each independent study course,
- All independent studies will be repeatable for up to 6 credit hours,
- An individual section for each approved independent study will be built by the department for the students to enroll in after the submitted proposal is approved by all levels.
- No student can enroll for 6 credit hours of in Independent Study in a graduate program.

Department chairs are responsible for assuring that the instructor is qualified to supervise an independent study and that the student has adequate preparation to complete an independent study successfully. Department Chairs must also ensure that the number of course contact hours required are met in every course.

Independent study courses offered multiple times should be considered for a conversion as a regular course. The Dean's Office or the Office of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development can assist departments in exploring this option.

4.4.3 Internship Courses

Supervised work-oriented instruction* involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experiences coordinated by** a faculty member.

Internship credit hours may range from one to fifteen (1-15) credit hours per course.

** Work-oriented instruction includes projects, duties, and activities that would be similar to those needed or used in an employment setting related to the student's program of study. The work should be structured and supervised by a professional in the field with the experience and background to provide support and feedback to the student.*

**** Coordinated by** generally means the faculty member defines the learning objectives and academic assignments, but may not be physically present with the student.

For more detailed information about the qualities of an internship, please see the Internship Program in the Classroom to Career (C2) Hub.

4.4.4 Omnibus Courses

Omnibus courses are temporary courses that are not listed in the Catalog. They can be used to pilot-test a course, present a special topic, or provide a unique, experiential-learning opportunity.

Omnibus courses:

- Require use of an Omnibus Course Proposal,
- Conform to credit hour distributions appropriate to the schedule type,
- Use a specified range of course numbers: 590_ or 690_ and include an alpha character in the course number, typically assigned by the Registrar,
- May be offered a maximum of three (3) times,
- May be converted into to a regular course through the substantive curriculum change process,
- May not be listed in the Catalog as a program requirement.

4.4.5 Practicum Courses

Practicum courses consist of work-oriented instruction involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experience under the direct supervision* of a faculty member.

- Practicum or clinical practicum credit hours may range from one to nine (1-9) credit hours per course.

Direct Supervision *generally means the faculty member is physically present with the student, or within an immediate distance, such as on the same floor, and available to respond to the student's needs.*

4.4.6 Study Abroad Courses

Study abroad courses consist of instructional activities conducted in and involving travel to another country, as guided by faculty. Study abroad courses must meet federal and state requirements regarding credit and contact hours for lecture- and field-based courses, or some combination thereof. Please contact the Office of International Studies for detailed policies and procedures.

Curriculum offered for study abroad must have passed all normal levels of curriculum review prior to being included in a study abroad proposal and submitted to the University Study Abroad Committee. A study abroad proposal must contain approved syllabi for courses that have been signed by the Department Chair and Dean.

Departments may assign an instructional method in class schedule to offer courses as study abroad formats only after the Study Abroad Proposal has been approved by the University Study Abroad Committee.

4.4.7 Variable Topics Courses

Variable topics courses allow courses of varying titles under an overall theme or "umbrella" course and:

- The umbrella course University Required Course Materials must specify whether students may enroll in multiple variable topics courses under an umbrella (i.e. repeatable courses, and state

the minimum and maximum number of credit hours allowed).

- The umbrella course description must be broad enough to cover all topics taught under it.
- All specific variable topics courses must have unique course descriptions that relate clearly to the umbrella theme.
- Student learning objectives must align across the umbrella course and its related variable topics courses.
- Only the umbrella course description appears in the *University Catalog*, individual variable topics course descriptions appear in the class schedule.
- Variable topics courses offered on a regular basis may be converted into regular courses.

4.4.8 Service Learning Courses

4.4.8.1 Service Learning Course Goals, Student Learning Outcomes

At MSU Denver, service learning is defined as a form of experiential learning in which students combine classroom experience with a community-based service that:

- Meets an identified community need,
- Provides a structured opportunity for students to reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content,
- Balances student goals and community goals through collaborative development of course content and service opportunity,
- Engages students in structured preparation for, participation in, and reflection on service experience.

Service learning is a pedagogical method that combines classroom instruction with coordinated, integrated, and structured volunteer service. This teaching method is adaptable across all disciplinary and school divides and is appropriate at any educational level.

At the conclusion of a Service Learning (SL) section of a course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to engage in personal and critical reflection concerning the service experience,
- Relate the service experience to core concepts and learning outcomes of the course as described in the course documentation,
- Assess and analyze the service learning experience in the context of fulfilling the identified community need, community engagement or promoting the public good, and,
- Interpret and communicate the learning experience to a wider forum and disseminate information to audiences beyond the classroom.

4.4.8.2 Review and Approval Policies and Procedures

Any academic unit may propose a course for an SL designation at its own discretion. When the designation is granted, it can then be applied to any or all sections of the course as the academic unit desires. Although the designation is granted to the course, not all sections of that course must use the designation.

Measurable student learning outcomes must be stated so that the criteria listed under Student Behavioral Learning Objectives of Service Learning are met. The course documentation must identify SBLOs that apply only to the SL designated sections with an SL in parentheses at the end of the SBLO.

To qualify as an SL eligible course, service learning must comprise at least 33% of the graded

material in the SL sections, as well as receive consideration in course discussions, lectures, and activities. (Sections that do not use the service learning designation do not need to do any grading based on service learning). The course documentation must identify the methods of student evaluation that apply only to the SL designated sections with an SL in parentheses.

Service Learning sections are designated with the SL designation in the Banner system. The academic unit is responsible for identifying which sections of multi-section course offerings are to be designated.

The proposing department will work with the staff in the Classroom to Career Hub in developing the Service Learning (SL) proposal to ensure its completeness.

The Classroom to Career Hub will house the Service Learning Curriculum Review Committee (SLCRC) to approve the Service Learning designation. The committee will consist of two faculty/staff members from the Classroom to Career Hub and will have one representative assigned from the Graduate Council.

The following information must be submitted to the SLCRC in addition to other curriculum documentation:

- Program Modification, if applicable (i.e., if the program description changes in any way as a consequence of the new designation),
- Current syllabus (for an existing course) and,
- The enrollment level per section should be appropriate for meeting the goals of the course. The recommended maximum class size must be stated in the proposal.

After the SLCRC receives a course proposal, the SLCRC may:

- Recommend conferral of the SL designation,
- Not approve conferral of the SL designation and,
- Recommend changes to the course syllabus or request additional documentation in the SL proposal form before making a final recommendation to the FSCC.

The SLCRC's recommendation for a course will be communicated to all other curricular levels for consideration and appropriate action. If the SLCRC denies a Service Learning designation, the committee chair will provide written documentation to the department specifying the rationale for the denial. Since course approvals fall under the purview of the school, college, or Graduate Council curriculum review committees, these committees may:

- Approve the course for inclusion in the University's curriculum but not approve it for SL designation,
- Approve the course for inclusion in the University's curriculum and approve it for SL designation.

Courses approved for SL designation will be reported out at Faculty Senate during the normal FSCC Senate Report so that Service Learning designations are announced to the university-wide faculty body.

5.00 New Program Policies and Procedures

5.1 New Graduate Programs

The policies and procedures governing new graduate programs are detailed in the *Graduate Program Approval Process* document.

5.2 Concentrations within an Existing Degree Program

New concentrations within an existing degree program are processed through all internal review and approval bodies including the Board of Trustees (see Section 3.00). To facilitate thorough and thoughtful internal review, departments are strongly encouraged to address the same information in the substantive curriculum proposal that is required for new degree programs.

5.3 Certificate Programs: Definitions and Policies

All new graduate certificate programs are processed through all levels of internal and external review and approval (see Section 3.00).

While Phase One Proposals are not required for certificate programs, the department must provide all of the information required for new degree programs in order to facilitate external review and approval.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The US Department of Education defines virtually all certificate programs as “Gainful Employment” programs, and requires institutions to complete a variety of compliance related reporting and tracking.

Departments must work closely with Enrollment Services and the Office of Financial Aid when developing graduate certificate programs to ensure that the University can meet/implement the graduate certificate program properly.

The National Center for Education Statistics and the state define certificates in terms of their relation to degree programs:

- Embedded certificates are designed from courses contained in a larger degree program such the certificate is completed by meeting certain degree requirements.
- Stackable certificates are a series of related certificates that can be “stacked” to complete a larger degree program.
- Standalone certificates are designed to be completed independently of a degree program.

The National Center for Education Statistics and the state define post-baccalaureate certificates as equivalent to 18 semester hours beyond the bachelor’s degree but they do not meet the requirements of a master’s degree. Post- baccalaureate certificates comprised solely of Graduate courses (5000 and 6000 level courses) are considered Graduate Certificates.

6.00 Discontinuing an Academic Program

Requests to discontinue programs are substantive curriculum changes processed at all internal levels of review and approval. Notification is submitted to the CDHE and HLC. Both the state and HLC require departments to specify a “teach out” plan to assist currently-declared students in completing the program. It is critical that proposals to archive a program are accompanied by concise letters of support from all programs and offices affected directly or indirectly.

7.00 Instructional Activities and Methods

Instructional Activity refers to all teaching and teaching-related activities such as curriculum development; preparing for and conducting class meetings, including: laboratory, studio, clinical, practicum, or shop practice; developing instructional materials; preparing and grading assignments and examinations; conferring with students about coursework; non-credit and community services instructional offerings; engaging in other teaching-related activities; academic advising and career counseling of students; recruiting students; evaluating student transcripts and life experience equivalencies; assisting students in

planning their programs of study; advising student groups; serving as a mentor to individual students; other related student life and student support activities; and other "hours arranged" such as credit by examinations and independent study. Non-instructional activity includes service and professional development.

Credit Hour (Federal definition): Except as provided in 34 CFR 668.8(k) and (l), a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than—

- One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time or,
- At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div8&node=34:3.1.3.1.1.1.23.2>

Credit Hour Distribution: The portion of total credit hours generated by each type of instructional activity within any schedule type. Federal and state regulations require all institutions to track and report credit hour distributions.

Schedule Type: The Banner code identifies the instructional activity, such as lecture, lab, recitation, or seminar. Schedule type may impact class scheduling, rooming, and compliance reporting, and must accurately reflect the instructional activity and credit hour distribution of the course.

7.1.1 Instructional Activity/Schedule Type Definitions

- **Field Instruction/Experience:** Instructional activities focused on supplementing and/or extending content formally presented in a lecture or seminar course in a field-based setting, as guided by faculty.
- **Independent Study:** Student project or other required activity with minimal involvement association with faculty direction.
- **Internship:** Work-oriented instruction involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experiences coordinated by* a faculty member.

** Coordinated by generally means the faculty member defines the order or priorities of activities for the student, but is not physically present with the student.*

- **Laboratory, Academic or Clinical:** Instructional activities focused on student participation, experimentation, observation, or practice, as guided by faculty.
- **Lecture:** Formal presentation of content primarily delivered by one-way communication by the faculty.
- **Lecture/Field Experience, Seminar/Field Experience:** Instructional activities focused on presentation or exploration of content either faculty-to-student and/or student-to-student, combined with instructional activities focused on supplementing and/or extending content

formally presented in a lecture or seminar course in a field-based setting, as guided by faculty.

- **Lecture/Lab:** Instructional activities focused on presentation or exploration of content either faculty-to-student and/or student-to-student, combined with instructional activities focused on student participation, experimentation, observation, or practice, as guided by faculty.
- **Lecture/Lab/Practicum:** Instructional activities focused on presentation or exploration of content either faculty-to-student and/or student-to-student, combined with both instructional activities focused on student participation, experimentation, observation, or practice, as guided by faculty, as well as work-oriented instruction involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experience under the direct supervision* of a faculty member.

Direct Supervision generally means the faculty member is physically present with the student, or within an immediate distance, such as on the same floor, and available to respond to the student's needs.

- **Lecture/Practicum:** Instructional activities focused on presentation or exploration of content either faculty-to-student and/or student-to-student, combined with work-oriented instruction involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experience under the direct supervision* of a faculty member.
- *Direct Supervision generally means the faculty member is physically present with the student, or within an immediate distance, such as on the same floor, and available to respond to the student's needs.*
- **Physical Education and Recreation Activity Courses:** Physical education and/or instructional activities focused on the development of skill proficiencies, as guided by faculty.
- **Practicum, Clinical Practicum:** Work-oriented instruction involving the implementation of classroom or laboratory experience under the direct supervision* of a faculty member.

** Direct Supervision generally means the faculty member is physically present with the student, or within an immediate distance, such as on the same floor, and available to respond to the student's needs.*

- **Private Instruction:** Instructional activities focused on presentation or exploration of content in a one-to-one relationship, faculty to student.
- **Readings:** Specified readings that accompany another course or that may stand independently.
- **Recitation or Discussion:** Instructional activities focused on the reinforcement and/or enhancement of content formally presented in a lecture or seminar course.
- **Seminar:** Two-way student and faculty communication of course materials.
- **Student Teaching:** Faculty supervised learning experience in which the student applies knowledge gained in the teacher education program to a classroom setting.
- **Studio – Art:** Instructional and/or lab activities focused on painting, sculpture, and other artistic endeavors, as guided by faculty.
- **Studio – Music:** Instructional and/or lab activities focused on band, ensembles, music labs, and other musical endeavors, as guided by faculty.

7.1.2 Instructional Method

A course's instructional method, such as in-person or asynchronous identifies the way in which students interact with course content. Instructional Method may impact class scheduling, rooming, and compliance reporting. MSU Denver is approved to offer courses in the following formats. New instructional methods may require approval of the Higher Learning Commission.

NOTE: Instructional methods are assigned by academic departments during class scheduling and do not require curriculum review.

NOTE: Some self-paced courses are offered outside the standard term, or semester. To receive financial aid for a self-paced course, students must register for the course by the course census date and complete the course within the standard term or part-of-term. If a student receives financial aid for other coursework, the student's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) may be impacted if the student does not complete the self-paced course within the standard term or part-of-term.

- **In-Person:** Instructional activities are facilitated in-person at scheduled times, either on-campus or at other physical locations.
- **Hybrid In-Person:** Instructional activities are facilitated through scheduled in-person sessions and either a) asynchronous online instruction, or b) scheduled meetings using live virtual meeting technology.
- **Dual Mode: In-Person:** Instructional activities are facilitated in-person. The section is combined with an online section, creating a learning environment with in-person and online learners. Students are not able to switch between learning experiences during the semester.
- **SyncFlex:** Instructional activities are facilitated in-person and online using live virtual meeting technology. Students have the flexibility to choose between in-person and live virtual instruction each class session.
- **Hyflex:** Instructional activities are facilitated through: a) in-person class meetings; b) asynchronous online instruction; and c) online instruction using live virtual meeting technology. Students have the flexibility to choose between in-person, asynchronous, and live virtual instruction throughout the course.
- **Study Abroad:** Instructional activities are facilitated in another country and guided by faculty.
- **Dual Mode: Online:** Instructional activities are facilitated online. The section is combined with an in-person section, creating a learning environment with online and in-person learners. Students are not able to switch between learning experiences during the semester.
- **Synchronous Online:** Instructional activities are facilitated online at scheduled times through live virtual meeting technology. There are no location-specific requirements.
- **Asynchronous Online:** Instructional activities are facilitated online with no required scheduled meeting times. Assignments and assessments take place on a specific schedule. There are no location-specific requirements.
- **Hybrid Online:** Instructional activities are facilitated online through both asynchronous online instruction and at scheduled times through live virtual meeting technology. There are no location-specific requirements.

- **Self-Paced Asynchronous Online:** Instructional activities are facilitated online with no scheduled meeting times and no location-specific requirements. Students choose the pace of their progress within the course with few or no established due dates.

8.00 Grade Mode Definition

Grade modes determine how course grades appear on student records and transcripts. In addition:

- Grade mode must be entered on course documentation.
- Only one grade mode can be assigned to a schedule type.
- Although Banner catalog contains several grade modes, most are restricted to specific types of courses and/or programs.
- The most common grade mode is “L” for letter grade.
- See appendix for current grade modes and corresponding schedule types

9.00 Rationale for Curriculum Deadlines

The *University Catalog* is published annually and governs academic programs and policies from fall semester through the following summer semester. A catalog addendum is published in Summer as needed and cannot include curricular changes that would negatively impact a student. Students’ degree requirements are linked to a specific catalog year. Student financial aid disbursements are also linked to the annual *Catalog*. Therefore it is imperative to have deadlines to ensure the timely publication and release of the *Catalog*

Substantive curriculum changes that require external (state and/or HLC) review and approval must have received Board of Trustees approval at or before the January Board of Trustees meeting to ensure sufficient time for external review. Curriculum proposals that have not received all required levels of approval by the final deadline cannot be implemented until the next *Catalog* cycle.

Final curriculum deadlines are established to facilitate *Catalog* publication before the mid-March release of the fall schedule, and the early-April start of fall registration. The period between the curriculum deadline and Catalog publication allows sufficient time to compose, edit, proof and publish the online *Catalog*, and to build programs, degree audits and schedules in Banner Catalog and Degree Works.

10.00 Procedure for Changes to this Manual

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Council Chair to review and recommend changes to this Manual.

Recommended changes to the Manual are to be submitted to the Graduate Council for approval. Once approved by the Graduate Council, these proposed changes are to be submitted to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee, the Faculty Senate and the Office of Academic Affairs for review and approval.

11.00 Catalog Addendum

A catalog addendum is published in summer as needed and cannot include curricular changes that would negatively impact a student. This includes but is not limited to changing requirements, increasing minimum passing grades, or removing program or courses. The Office of Curriculum, Academic Effectiveness, and Policy Development will administer the addendum process.

Changes at the program level will begin with the academic year that starts in the fall after the summer addendum is published. For example, the Summer 2023 addendum will be effective for the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Changes at the course level will be effective the spring following the addendum publishing date. For

example, a course created or modified in the Summer 2020 addendum will be effective in Spring 2021.
Non-curricular updates will be effective in the academic year that starts in the fall after the summer addendum is published.