

Dual-listed Course Feedback from the Programs

The following was sent to the program director, chair, and staff list serve on March 6, with feedback requested by April 3. The feedback is included below as well.

Dual Listed Courses Discussion

The graduate education task force recommended a decreased reliance on dual listed courses, and pointed out that graduate students were dissatisfied with these courses. In reviewing the courses, we have found that the original meaning of “senior-graduate” deteriorated in the 10 years since we changed to a dual numbering system. In further discussions with students:

- (1) Graduate students (who pay more per credit) feel that in some instances the coursework is not at the graduate level (i.e., they are not getting their money’s worth), particularly when there are sophomores and juniors in the course. The “senior” label is gone from the undergraduate bulletin for these courses, which appears to have led to more non-seniors enrolling.
- (2) The quality/quantity of the “additional work” required for graduate students varies widely, and graduate students are often told, “Write a longer paper.” There are no clear guidelines for departments to follow, and students sometimes get mixed messages from instructors.
- (3) When there are only a few grad students in a large section of undergraduates, the grad students feel disenfranchised.

On the other hand, for certain courses it is appropriate for seniors and beginning graduate students to enroll together, and many programs rely on a few dual-listed courses to provide a broader set of elective choices for their seniors and their graduate students.

The current policy is that dual-listed courses must:

- (1) Be noted in the bulletin at both levels.
- (2) Reflect the same content (i.e., the same bulletin description), with increased requirements for graduate students.
- (3) Go through the curriculum process with syllabi that show the difference in the requirements.
- (4) Be limited on a program of study to 12 hours for programs of 36 hours or more and to 9 hours for programs less than 36 hours in length. Note: We assume this is enforced by the programs.

Also important are the SACS Comprehensive Standards, particularly 3.3.1.1 (student learning outcomes for grad students) and 3.6.1 (ensuring grad programs are more advanced):

3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

3.3.1.1 educational programs, to include student learning outcomes

3.6.1 The institution’s post-baccalaureate professional programs, master’s and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than its undergraduate programs.

Some ideas that emerged from initial discussions, none of which at this point include eliminating these courses are listed below. Please provide feedback on the following:

- (1) Change the 9-and 12-hour limits to a small percentage (e.g., 20%) of the program of study. Perhaps eliminate the extra requirements if the percentage is small.
- (2) Do not allow dual listed courses on specialist and doctoral programs. Note: This is not currently an issue, since the departments housing these programs do not have dual listed courses.

- (3) Require a grade of B or higher in order to count a dual-listed course on a graduate program of study.
- (4) Use one syllabus (rather than two) and require a section that addresses the additional requirements for graduate students.
- (5) Create a set of guidelines for what constitutes “additional work” for graduate students, and require that each instance of the course meet the guidelines. Perhaps in the spirit of SACS 3.3.1.1, those could be related to student learning outcomes.
- (6) As an alternate to (4) and (5), restrict enrollment in the dual listed course to seniors and graduate students (as it used to be) and create a set of guidelines that provide a framework for the “advanced” expectations for all students.

Feedback on Dual Listed Courses:

I actually agree 100% with the task force recommendation on dual-listed courses.

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 Regarding dual-listed courses:

- 1. I think we should as programs be responsible for maintaining the level of rigor intended for dual-listed courses . We should not set up new regulations that obtain for ALL programs to stop problems in what is surely a smaller number of programs who are letting non-qualified undergrads into 4000/5000--level courses. We should only enroll senior-level (i.e. 4000-level) undergraduates alongside our graduate students in dual-listed courses. Period. Surely a "senior standing" check via Banner could be implemented to screen students from the very outset on that one, preventing them from enrolling in the first place.
- 2. I don't find the suggestion of further limiting on the PoS dual-listed courses to 20% (7.2 credits for a 36-hour degree) to be a significant improvement. It looks like a more rigorous number on paper, but then we're back to arguing whether this should be construed as 6 hrs or 9. To me, it's better to fix the root of the problem (not letting just any undergrad take a dual-listed course; requiring senior standing). That way there are NO courses on an MA PoS that are not rigorous enough to warrant graduate credit.
- 3. The suggestion to have an additional section on a single syllabus for a dual-listed course might be a valuable way of ensuring that professors are mindful of the fact that, when they do have a dual-listed course, there are supposed to be more rigorous assignments for graduate students. Since this would be a non-painful way to keep people aware of this, let's try it.

FYI--In our dept., we're currently offering just the 5000-level version of dual-listed courses anyway-- so our students appear to have taken some dual-listed courses in which in fact only grad students were enrolled. But in some terms (sabbaticals come to mind) we need the flexibility of serving a small number of undergrads in a dual-listed course. We are gradually trying to adjust this by adding non-dual-listed new grad courses, too.

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 dual-listed classes- I am OK with everything proposed for discussion except items 1 and 4. In the XXX concentration of the degree, there are 12 credits (4 classes) of dual listed courses. I don't see us being able to accept enough grad students to fill up the grad classes in this concentration on a regular basis so I would hate to see % limits placed on the program that we would have to violate (e.g., 20% of our program is 8.4 credits). I would be happy to limit the undergrad enrollment in their versions of these classes to seniors, though. For item 4, we like to keep the course numbers separate (and thus separate syllabi) in case we are able to offer them separately at any time. We are planning on removing the dual listing in a future round of AP & P proposals.

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Comments on the ideas mentioned:

(1) Using a percentage seems easier. 9 hrs in 30 hr program is 30% and 12 hrs in 36 hr program is 25%. So, the limit mentioned of 20% seems to be more restrictive. I'd favor 25% which holds the line for non-thesis and lowers it for thesis students.

(3) Sounds reasonable.

(6) I like this combination. It should be only seniors and grad students. I think instructors would do a better job if given guidelines.

More general thoughts on dual-listing follows. For small enrollment programs this is an issue because of class sizes, so allowing dual-listing is helpful. Even grad students would be benefiting more I think in a class of 6 that included seniors than a class of 2 or 3 that didn't. But I do think it should be only seniors. I wonder if it should only be for courses that are not required for undergrads?

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I think the new proposal is well thought out and I don't have any comments on the first two issues. I do however want to stress my frustration of being discouraged to teach dual listed courses. I think our situation, having a small number of masters students with varying degrees of interests, definitely warrants dual-listed courses. Otherwise what often happens is that the courses either fail to "make" because there aren't enough interest among the graduate students or we have to teach courses at the graduate level that are far outside of our expertise. I feel very strongly that we should have dual listed courses. That being said, the prereq for enrollment for undergraduates to these courses can be very strict and uncompromising. High GPA, senior standing, relevant prereq courses can insure that the course can still be very challenging.

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I favor leaving the current system the way it is because frequently both undergraduate and graduate enrollment is needed to have a sufficient number of students.