LAMAR UNIVERSITY
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Academic Affairs **MAPP 02.04.08**
AREA: Academic Courses, Programs & Curriculum

Syllabi for 4000-/5000-/6000-Level Courses

I. **POLICY**

   A. This policy provides guidance for creating syllabi for courses that are offered for either 4000-level (undergraduate), 5000-level (graduate) or 6000-level (doctoral) credit ("4000-/5000-/6000-level courses").

   B. **Separate syllabi are required for 4000-/5000-/6000-level courses**, one syllabus for students enrolled at the 4000 level, another syllabus for students enrolled at the 5000 level, and another syllabus for those enrolled at the 6000 level. Faculty shall make the distinctions between 4000-level (undergraduate course content), 5000-level (graduate course content), and 6000-level (doctoral course content) explicit in these syllabi.

II. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

   A. This policy has been prepared to assist the University in complying with accreditation standards for academic content in undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral courses. LU complies with the standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), which require that graduate degree programs must be progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate degree programs. The relevant SACSCOC standard is as follows:

   > **SACSCOC Standard 9.6.** Post-baccalaureate professional degree programs and graduate degree programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs and are structured (a) to include knowledge of the literature of the discipline and (b) to ensure engagement in research and/or appropriate professional practice and training.

   B. This policy falls under the authority of the accreditation standards of SACSCOC. This policy also falls under the authority of all applicable federal, state, and Texas State University System (TSUS) laws, rules, and regulations, including, but not limited to, the TSUS *Rules and Regulations*; Texas Education Code, Title 3, Higher Education; and Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Education.

III. **POLICY RATIONALE**

   A. For accreditation purposes, LU must be able to present syllabi from its graduate and doctoral degree programs to document that courses within its graduate programs are progressively more advanced in academic content than courses within the University's undergraduate degree programs.

B. Distinguishing between doctoral, graduate, and undergraduate course content is particularly important in the case of courses that are offered for: 4000-level (undergraduate) or 5000-level (graduate) or 6000-level (doctoral) credit.

IV. COURSE ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

A. To distinguish between undergraduate (4000), graduate (5000), and doctoral (6000) versions of a course for purposes of administration and reporting:

1. Separate syllabi should be submitted to the SACSCOC Liaison then to LU's University Curriculum Council and Graduate Council when seeking approval for new or revised 4000-/5000-/6000-level courses.

2. Faculty should distribute to students via Concourse separate syllabi, one for students enrolled at the 4000-level, another for students enrolled at the 5000-level and/or 6000-level.

3. All syllabi should be submitted to the department in which the course is taught; submitted to the SACSCOC Liaison and, if applicable, programmatic accrediting agencies; and posted to the University website, in keeping with Texas Education Code § 51.974.

V. COURSE DEVELOPMENT

A. Faculty must differentiate between undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral courses in areas such as content and context, textbooks or readings, student learning outcomes, course assignments or requirements, course assessment, and industry or field-based standards. Graduate and doctoral courses must indicate a higher level of academic rigor than undergraduate courses; doctoral courses should be more rigorous than graduate courses.

B. To differentiate graduate/doctoral courses from undergraduate courses:

1. Textbooks or readings for graduate/doctoral courses should:
   - Focus on content that indicates a depth of knowledge appropriate for graduate/doctoral education.
   - Require more challenging reading than for undergraduates. For example, graduate and doctoral students could be required to read professional journals in the field, textbook material that is more highly specialized or technical, or other advanced material.

2. Student learning outcomes for graduate/doctoral courses should:
   - Focus on professional, technical, or in-depth knowledge or skills.
   - Use higher level thinking skills indicated in the Analyze, Evaluate, and Create levels of the *Revised Bloom's Taxonomy Action Words*.
   - Clearly require more advanced knowledge or skills than undergraduate outcomes OR should indicate that the graduate/doctoral student is expected to attain a higher level of performance on an outcome shared by graduate and undergraduate.

- Focus, in many cases, on growing graduate/doctoral students' familiarity with the current knowledge and research in the field.

3. Course assignments/requirements for graduate courses should:
   - Not reflect more of the same types of assignments as those for undergraduates but should reflect more challenging assignments. For example, graduate/doctoral students might be assigned to conduct independent research and writing with standards appropriate to graduate/doctoral education. Or their assignments might emphasize analysis, synthesis, or critical review of current knowledge and research in the field.

4. Assessment for graduate/doctoral courses may
   - Reflect a higher set of expectations. For example, students might be evaluated on a different scale. If so, the scales should be clearly explained in the syllabi.

VI.   RESPONSIBILITY AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Responsible Party: Academic Policy Advisory Council

Review Schedule: Every three years on or before the date the policy was last revised and/or approved.

VII.   APPROVAL

Dr. Daniel A. Brown	01/05/2024
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Date

Dr. Jaime R. Taylor	01/05/2024
President	Date

REVISION LOG

Date	Description
1/5/2024	Initial version completed.
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