

Pacific University
Curriculum Committee Proposal
General Course-Level Guidelines
12/5/2011

This document provides a general, college-wide meaning for the definition of course levels. Determination of the degree of conformity to these guidelines is under the purview of each department and the Curriculum Committee.

100/200-level Course Designation:

1. Courses designed for freshman and sophomores, but open to all levels.
2. Courses with no prerequisites (or 100-level prereqs for 200-level).
3. Courses of beginning to intermediate college-level difficulty.
4. Introductory or survey type courses devoted to particular areas or fields within a discipline that define basic concepts, terminology, and methodologies
5. Expectations: students have basic writing, reading and comprehensive skills needed to accomplish the required work

300-level Course Designation:

1. Courses designed for sophomores, juniors and seniors
2. Courses must have lower-level courses as prerequisites or at least sophomore standing
3. Courses of intermediate to advanced college-level difficulty
4. Course extends student's understanding of a subject beyond the introductory level, featuring a more focused and in-depth study of a particular area or field within a discipline. Courses often explore current perspectives, controversies, and scholarship on the topic.
5. Course may be geared toward majors and non-majors or it may be specifically for majors (and as such should be stated in the course pre-requisites)
6. Expectations: students have acquired higher skills in writing, reading and comprehension with the ability to perform needed analysis and synthesis and research; students are required to produce some substantial work, such as an in-depth research paper or creative or experimental project

400-level Course Designation:

1. Courses designed for juniors and seniors
2. Courses must have 300-level related courses as prerequisites or a certain year of standing
3. Courses of advanced college-level difficulty
4. Courses are geared specifically toward majors and minors
5. Course is designed to closely examine a single topic or limited range or topics; often consisting of a seminar setting which encourages student discussion and interaction
6. Expectations: students have completed a substantial amount of work at the lower and 300-levels that enables them to be comfortable in the field and work fairly independently to produce a substantial project