

## Guidelines for Topics Courses

### 1. Introduction

Two types of topics courses are offered at AUBG:

(a) *Topics Courses* – These are courses whose title usually begins “Topics in ...”; as in, BUS 469 Topics in Marketing, ECO 400 Topics in Econometrics, ENG 350 Topics in British Literature. (A few Topics courses do not contain the term “Topics” in their title – e.g. ENG 380 Major Authors.) The framework of these courses has been approved by the Curriculum Committee (CC) and the Faculty Assembly (FA), and they are listed in the catalog.

(b) *Special Topics Courses* – These are courses that have the course code DDD L96 or DDD L97. DDD L96 designates a special topic course that carries General Education credit. DDD L97 designates all other special topics courses. These are catch-all codes for courses that do not fall within any other Topics category in the catalog. The most common use of the DDD L96 / L97 designation is for the transfer of courses from other universities, where there is no equivalent course at AUBG. Otherwise, the DDD L96 / L97 designation is used by departments for experimental courses that do not fall within the framework of topics courses categories in the catalog, or to gauge student demand for a course before asking the course to be regularized.

### 2. Topics Courses

- a. Departments approve syllabi that fall within the framework of a Topics category approved by the CC and the FA and listed in the Catalog. Syllabi can be approved by the Department Chair at his or her discretion, though the practice in many departments is that syllabi are approved at department meetings.
- b. Syllabi for topics courses do not require the approval of the CC or the FA. These are approved at the discretion of the department.
- c. Syllabi only go to the CC when the department wants the course to carry General Education and/or WIC credit.
- d. There is no limit to the number of times a syllabus can be used for a topics course. However, if a syllabus is being used on a regular basis, departments are encouraged to consider making the topics course a course in its own right with its own code and title.
- e. Departments should ensure that syllabi for topics courses meet the same academic standards as syllabi approved by the CC and FA. At the very minimum, syllabi should meet the requirements of the Master Syllabus Template in the Faculty Manual.
- f. Department Chairs can refer syllabi to the CC for review, though they are not required to.

### 3. Special Topics Courses

- a. Departments approve syllabi for Special Topics courses. Syllabi can be approved by the Department Chair at his or her discretion, though the practice in many departments is that syllabi are approved at department meetings.
- b. Syllabi for Special Topics courses do not require the approval of the CC or the FA. These are approved at the discretion of the department.
- c. Syllabi only go to the CC when the department wants the course to carry General Education and/or WIC credit.
- d. There is a limit to the number of times a Special Topics course can be offered. Special Topics courses can be offered a maximum of two times. If departments want to offer a Special Topics course a third time, the course needs to be regularized. This means that the course has to be referred to the CC and FA for approval, and will be listed in the catalog with its own course code and title.
- e. Departments should ensure that syllabi for Special Topics courses meet the same academic standards as syllabi approved by the CC and FA. At the very minimum, syllabi should meet the requirements of the Master Syllabus Template in the Faculty Manual.
- f. Department Chairs can refer syllabi to the CC for review, though they are not required to.
- g. Departments should use the DDD L96 or DDD L97 course code when they want to offer a course once or want to trial a course before regularizing it. However, Departments should create a topics course category with its own code and title (e.g. "Topics in ...") for inclusion in the catalog, when they want to rotate a number of courses that fall within a common framework.

### 4. General Education / WIC Credit

- a. Departments cannot approve General Education and/or WIC credit for any course.
- b. *Transfer Courses* – Department Chairs do not have the discretion to approve WIC credit for transfer courses. These have to be approved by the CC. General Education Credit needs the approval of the program head and the Dean of Faculty. A special form for General Education Credit is available from the registrar's office.
- c. *Topics Courses* – Some topics courses categories have been approved by the CC and FA for General Education credit. In such cases, departments need to refer the syllabus to the CC for approval of General Education credit and/or WIC credit. Syllabi do not need to be approved by the FA.
- d. *Special Topics Courses* – Syllabi need the approval of the CC and the FA to receive General Education and/or WIC credit.

- e. Where a department seeks General Education credit, the syllabus should contain a description of the course content, readings and learning outcomes corresponding to the goals and criteria of the specific GE “mode(s) of inquiry,” for which the department is seeking approval.
- f. Where a department seeks WIC approval, a WIC approval form should be completed. (This is available from the Chair of the CC.)
- g. The CC can refuse to grant General Education and/or WIC credit for a syllabus that does not meet the same academic requirements as regular courses.

5. Deadlines

- a. Approval of General Education and/or WIC credit has to be granted before pre-registration.
- b. Departments should submit syllabi seeking General Education and/or WIC credit at least four weeks before the start of pre-registration. As the CC may refer syllabi back to departments for clarification or revision, departments submitting syllabi after this date risk not having their syllabi approved.

