

APPROVAL OF UPPER-DIVISION COURSES AND BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS

Upper-division course proposals will be developed, reviewed and approved in alignment with RCCD's adopted definition of upper-division coursework and corresponding extension of our local curriculum process. In compliance with these approval requirements, Curriculum considers additional criteria in reviewing upper-division course proposals, ensuring that the course meets the appropriate standards. **RCCD defines upper-division coursework as requiring lower-division knowledge and applying that knowledge as demonstrated measures of critical thinking through writing, oral communication, or computation, and allows that upper-division coursework may encompass research elements, workforce training, apprenticeships, internships, required practicum, or capstone projects. Upper-division courses typically will have one or more lower-division or upper-division prerequisites that have been established using content review of the entry skills necessary to be successful as outlined in Title 5, § 55003. Courses that have been designated as upper-division are only intended to be applicable to baccalaureate degrees.**

In contrast to lower-division courses, upper-division courses must have one or more of the following characteristics, as verified by Curriculum, and are limited to students in the baccalaureate program.

1. **Depth/Focus:** Student learning outcomes include the development and understanding of the theories and methods of the discipline which may include the applications and limitations of those theories;
2. **Specialization:** Student learning outcomes include specific intellectual and professional abilities to enable success or progress in a particular field or professional practice;
3. **Refinement:** Students build upon their lower-division general education background, applying the associated skills in more discerning/challenging contexts;
4. **Preparation:** Prerequisites include more general courses, student class standing, GPA requirements, or admission to a pre-professional program;
5. **Capstone Courses/Projects:** Student learning outcomes, though not necessarily specialized or focused on in-depth study of one discipline, have an integrative function wherein students integrate knowledge from earlier studies. Student learning outcomes in such courses may correspond to program-level outcomes.

Upper-division general education courses associated with a baccalaureate program must have the following characteristics, as verified by Curriculum:

1. **Breadth:** Courses come from at least two disciplines outside of the major, one of which must have an emphasis in written communication, oral communication, or computation;
2. **Complementarity to Major Courses:** Courses may be developed in any discipline, but each must relate to the required major coursework of the program;
3. **Restricted Enrollment:** Enrollment is limited to students in the baccalaureate program.

For a baccalaureate program, a minimum of 40 semester units of total upper-division coursework,

including at least nine units of general education, are required. At least 36 units of lower-division general education are also required. The minimum total number of units required is 120. Curriculum may determine that a lower-division course meets the requirements for an identified upper-division course requirement, but the minimum number of upper-division units must still be completed. All courses designated as satisfying an upper-division major requirement must be completed with a minimum grade of "C" or "P", and such courses must conform to a major as defined in the Classification of Instructional Programs as belonging to a single field of study. In contrast to lower-division programs, upper-division programs must have each of the following characteristics, as verified by Curriculum:

1. **Depth/Focus:** Program-level outcomes include the development and understanding of the theories and methods of the discipline which may include the applications and limitations of those theories;
2. **Specialization:** Program-level outcomes include specific intellectual and professional abilities to enable success or progress in a particular field or professional practice;
3. **Refinement:** Students build upon their lower-division general education background, applying the associated skills in more discerning/challenging contexts;
4. **Preparation:** Prerequisites include more general courses, student class standing, GPA requirements, or admission to a pre-professional program.