Operating Instruction 3.36.1.1 Course Numbering Convention

Part 1. Purpose
To establish consistent practices for course numbering at Minnesota State colleges and universities.

Part 2. Authority
Minnesota Statutes § 135A.08, subd. 2, requires the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to develop and maintain a common numbering convention to distinguish remedial, lower-division, upper-division, and graduate-level coursework.

Part 3. Guideline Requirements
Colleges and universities shall develop and maintain a common numbering convention to distinguish developmental, lower-division, upper-division, and graduate-level coursework.

A. Courses will have three or four digit numbers. The first number designates the course level. The numbering system is as follows, with xxx representing two or three digits:

0xxx - Developmental courses designed to prepare students for entry into college-level courses and do not apply toward a certificate, diploma, or degree

1xxx - Lower-division courses primarily for undergraduate students in their first year of study

2xxx - Lower-division courses primarily for undergraduate students in their second year of study

3xxx - Upper-division courses primarily for undergraduate students in their third year of study

4xxx - Upper-division courses primarily for undergraduate students in their third or fourth year of study

5xxx - Courses primarily for graduate students and upper-division courses for undergraduate students in their third or fourth year of study
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6xxx - Courses for graduate students or post-baccalaureate students in professional degree programs

7xxx - Courses for graduate students or post-baccalaureate students in professional degree programs

8xxx - Courses for graduate students or post-baccalaureate students in professional degree programs

9xxx - Courses for graduate students or post-baccalaureate students in professional degree programs

B. Colleges and universities may adopt numbering conventions for other kinds of courses including independent studies, directed studies, thesis credits, topics courses, internships, practicums, and field studies.

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Date of Last Review: 05/26/22

Date and Subject of Revision:
5/26/22 – Reviewed as part of the five year review cycle. Added “with xxx representing two or three digits” to Part 3A, added “and upper-division courses for undergraduate students in their third or fourth year of study” to the 5xxx, and added the word “practicums” to Part 3B.

No Additional HISTORY.