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General Overview of the Academic Approval Process for UCLA Extension Information for Department Chairs and Other Course and Instructor Approvers

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of UCLA Extension's academic program and how it fits into the teaching mission of the University, to identify structures of governance articulated in Senate Regulations, and to provide a sketch of what an academic approver of Extension's programs and instructors can expect in an academic year.

The Senate regulations governing the approval of Extension's instructors, courses and certificate programs can be found at:

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/manual/rpart3.html#rpart3-IIIch5>

UCLA Extension is committed to providing a quality educational experience for its students comparable to other UCLA courses and programs. To that end, we seek to work in partnership with academic units so that we can ensure the desired levels of quality. This document provides a foundation for the continued maintenance of strong partnerships and effective oversight of academic quality.

Why are these approvals important?

Most UCLA Extension courses yield academic credit and, per policy, Extension cannot promote a credit-bearing course without academic approval. Faculty review and approval of these courses provide important validation and quality assurance. Extension has internal controls in place to ensure that only approved courses are announced and only approved instructors teach credit bearing courses. The approval process also provides a mechanism for faculty to become informed about UCLA Extension programs.

Why is "time of the essence" during the approval process?

UCLA Extension's Continuing Educators are specialists who are responsible for planning over 4,500 class sections from a menu of 2,300 different courses drawn from 75 different disciplines. We serve approximately 50,000 students each year. Extension is completely self-supporting. Our programs must be fresh and relevant. About one fourth of our credit-bearing class sections will require some form of academic approval within any given year. We therefore operate with

well-defined deadlines, using a development and approval cycle that concludes roughly six months prior to classes' start dates. We rely on our campus partner approvers to quickly approve courses and instructors or communicate any concerns or suggestions in a timely manner. If this does not happen, students may miss out on opportunities to take courses that specifically address their educational and/or professional needs.

What types of courses will I be approving?

What will I look for in these courses and the instructors who teach them?

Baccalaureate degree credit courses (X and XL 1-199)

University of California Academic Senate Regulations authorize UCLA Extension to offer undergraduate degree credit courses that are deemed equivalent to courses offered in the regular UCLA session. Approximately 10% of Extension's courses fall into this category. The majority are lower division courses. Credit earned is transferrable to all baccalaureate degree programs in the UC system. Exams are always proctored, whether the course is offered in a traditional or online format.

These courses allow non-matriculated students to obtain degree transferable unit and subject matter credit to further their academic or professional goals. Many Extension students are working professionals and enrollment through UCLA Extension allows them to take courses toward a degree or prepare for professional and graduate school on a part-time basis. UCLA students may enroll and apply credit from these courses prior to matriculation and between regular sessions.

When reviewing a proposed course at this level, look to the syllabus for *equivalence in learning outcome* with its counterpart in the regular session curriculum. It is essential that Extension courses be the same as those offered on campus.

The department responsible for the subject area at UCLA and the *Undergraduate Council* review instructors proposed by Extension to teach. Extension proposes instructors we believe are well-qualified to teach, typically with credentials you would consider for a lecturer or adjunct faculty member. In the lower division, graduate students can practice their craft with UCLA department approval. In the upper division, only instructors with terminal degrees in their field are proposed. Postdoctoral scholars and faculty from other institutions may be engaged to teach these courses. *UCLA faculty are welcome to teach their own courses without further approval.*

When reviewing a proposed instructor at this level, consider the *curriculum vitae* and letters of recommendation. Only those instructors endorsed by the campus department will be subsequently submitted for further review by the *Undergraduate Council*. Approvals by the council expire after five years. For *renewals*, we employ course and instructor evaluation scores and comments, not letters of recommendation. Extension will *annually* resubmit for

your departmental consideration any continuing graduate students we propose to employ again.

Professional credit courses (X300-399 and X400-499)

UCLA Extension is authorized in Senate Regulations to offer courses at the 400-499 level for professional practice, and 300-399 for the practice of teaching. The bulk of UCLA Extension courses fall into this category. We provide a range of post-graduate, professional development and continuing education courses and certificate curricula to meet the needs of adult learners in our region. Courses bearing credit in the professional series are typically career-related, but may also explore subjects of general academic interest to a well-educated adult population. Ninety percent of our students have earned their bachelor's degree, and fully one third already hold higher degrees. You can therefore expect to see course proposals and syllabi that are academically rigorous, with high-level learning outcomes defined; requirements for textbooks, reading and out-of-class assignments; traditional assessment and grading regimes, and both traditional and experimental delivery formats in this category. As you might expect, the content of these courses is more specialized and focused than a typical undergraduate degree-credit course. The students bring to the classroom already well-developed reasoning and communication skills and a wealth of life experience from which to draw.

Instructors proposed to teach professional credit courses typically have qualifications similar to those of adjunct faculty. Though we seek instructors with terminal degrees, a balance of professional experience and teaching experience combined with a masters-level degree can define a satisfactory background. On occasion—particularly in some business disciplines, writing, and art—those with a bachelor's degree combined with *extraordinary professional achievement* and teaching experience will be proposed. Instructors are approved to teach courses in the professional series *course by course*. Approvals to teach in the professional series do not expire, but our *Continuing Educators* will only extend appointments if direct observation and students' evaluations show continuing measurable success in the classroom.

Non-credit courses (700-999)—No approval needed for the courses or instructors

These courses bear no academic credit. The Regents have directly authorized the Extension divisions to administer non-credit personal enrichment courses. A small proportion of UCLA Extension classes fall into this category. Although exempt from academic approval, it has long been our practice at UCLA to respect faculty interests in the overall reputation of the University. We therefore will forward *advisory notices* of any new non-credit courses in advance of our catalog's publication. We welcome your comments and feedback.

How does the approval process work?

What will I approve?

What will I receive?

When am I likely to receive it?

Instructor approvals

In most cases, you will be asked to review instructor credentials in the context of courses that are already approved. In some cases, you will be asked to review both the merits of the instructor's credentials *and* the structure and objectives of a newly proposed course. In either case, you will receive a dossier, by mail or email, containing:

- A **biography**, current to within 24 months, which will identify earned degrees and the awarding educational institutions; list any teaching credentials; identify employment history and professional experience relevant to the course(s) proposed; list books and articles authored or edited; and identify any honorary degrees, professional honors and awards.
- The **titles** and **course descriptions** (as they would appear in catalog) for all courses for which instructor approval is sought.
- The **course syllabus** for each course for which an instructor approval is sought. The syllabus will identify the texts to be used in the course(s), if any; a list of the topics to be covered in each course meeting, a statement regarding the techniques to be used in the evaluation of student work, (exams, papers, presentations, etc.); notation regarding program meeting format and the number of hours outside of class to which students will typically be expected to commit; the number of contact **hours** of instruction, and the value of quarter-unit credit the students can earn.
- A minimum of **three letters of reference** from persons familiar with the academic background of the instructor-candidate, and their assessment of the candidates' qualifications for teaching in the proposed field of specialization. Whenever possible, local references or references by members of UC faculty will be obtained. (If for a *renewal* of approval to teach a course numbered 1-199, cumulative scores and reports of instructor and course evaluations will be provided in lieu of letters of reference.)

New course approvals

Extension will sometimes seek approval for a new course *in the professional series* that is unrelated to an instructor approval. This will occur when our Continuing Educators have authored a new course to round out a proposed certificate curriculum (see below), before it is offered for the first time and before the recruitment for an instructor has been made.

On rarer occasions (typically less than one instance per year) Extension will seek approval from a department and the *Undergraduate Council* for a course to be prefixed by "X" *in the baccalaureate series* rather than "XL." This indicates that the course is not exactly equivalent to its UCLA curricular counterpart, and *subject credit* therefore cannot be promised on a transfer because the class is not exactly the same. Even so, as an "X" prefixed course numbered in the baccalaureate series, it may be deemed sufficiently equivalent to permit a unit-credit transfer. This can arise because of a variation in the course description, or a minor variation in the learning outcomes, or because UCLA Extension proposes to retain a structure or course series historically offered by the department and approved by the *Undergraduate Council* which has since been abandoned in the regular session.

In these rare cases, you will receive a dossier by mail or email with a cover letter explaining the exceptional request, containing:

- The **title** and **course description** of the course.
- A sample **course syllabus** which will identify the texts to be used in the course, if any; a list of the topics to be covered in each week of instruction, a statement regarding the techniques to be used in the evaluation of student work, (exams, papers, presentations, etc.); notation regarding program meeting format and the number of hours outside of class to which students will typically be expected to commit; the number of contact hours of instruction, and the value of quarter-unit credit the students can earn.

Timeline

Though Extension is programming new courses throughout the academic year, you can expect to receive the majority of course and instructor approval requests during these time periods.

- May (for the Fall Quarter)
- August (for the Winter Quarter)
- November (for the Spring Quarter)
- February (for the Summer Quarter)

Certificate program approvals and reviews

Certificate programs are curricular sequences designed to support the high-level training needs of various entertainment, service and manufacturing industries, particularly those important to the local economy. UCLA Extension currently supports 140 different programs which lead to certificate award and in some cases licensure for professional practice in California. New certificate programs are proposed occasionally, and are subject to decanal-level approval and the review of UCLA academic chairs and other agencies. Proposals will explain the rationale for the program, present a market survey and needs assessment, define the curriculum, declare rules for the minimum requirements for completion, and describe the formation of an *advisory board*. Advisory boards draw on content experts and distinguished professionals in the field to help develop the curriculum and to provide oversight after program launch. Extension's goal is to have faculty participation on certificate advisory boards. We may be contacting you for recommendations of potential advisory board members.

Certificate programs are subject to rigorous review every five years, in some cases conducted by external accrediting agencies. These five year reviews and the continuous work of the advisory boards give rise to recommendations for curricular changes. If there are any changes to the listing of required courses, changes to any admission rules and standards, or changes to program duration and minimum unit valuations for completion, you will receive a notice requesting your comments and feedback.

Understanding that UCLA Extension seeks some form of approval for over 1000 class sections each year, is there a way to streamline this process to reduce my paperwork?

Yes. The Senate *Committee on Continuing and Community Education* (CCCE) oversees the general approval requirements for credit-bearing courses numbered in the series 300—399, and 400—499 offered through Extension. On January 22, 2008, the CCCE, without objection from the Graduate Council, approved a procedure by which UCLA's academic departments and schools could elect to delegate highly routine professional series instructor approvals to the Dean of Extension. If you elect such a delegation, we would observe the following conditions:

- the proposed instructor has a PhD, (or other terminal professional degree such as EdD in Education, JD in Law, or MFA in Art) in the discipline relevant to the course being taught *plus* a minimum of **two years** of professional experience in the field; or,
- the proposed instructor has an MA/MS in a discipline relevant to the course being taught plus a minimum of **five years** of distinguished professional experience in the discipline; or,
- the proposed instructor possesses other appropriate relevant qualifications *as defined by the related School or academic department*; and
- for courses numbered in the 300 series only, the proposed instructor has BA/BS and a teaching credential plus a minimum of **five years** of teaching experience at a level relevant to the course being taught
- The campus department may request an audit for compliance with these standards for instructor approval at any time.
- Delegations expire and are subject to renewal at five years.

To learn if your department has a delegation in place, to request an audit, or to approve a new delegation for instructors proposed to teach in the professional series, contact Justin Heyerdahl at Extension's Office of the Dean by email at JHeyerdahl@uclaextension.edu. Also, call him at x5-2362 or email him if you would like to know the name of the continuing educator for your subject area. He will be happy to arrange an introduction.

Final Note

UCLA Extension strives to work closely with our academic partners. If you have suggestions regarding how the processes outlined above can be strengthened or how we can enhance the relationship between academic units and Extension, please contact the Dean at wsmutz@uclaextension.edu.