

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

(Final; Action)

EP.24.068 Adopt a Campus-wide Definition of Upper Division Coursework and Impose a Minimum Requirement of 40 Upper-Division Hours on All Undergraduate Students

BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) modified [Title 23, Part # 1050 of the Illinois Administrative Code](#) – *Approval of New Units of Instruction, Research and Public Service at Public Institutions* to require that all new baccalaureate programs at institutions under its jurisdiction, including the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, require students to earn a minimum of 40 hours of “Upper Division” coursework. IBHE defines Upper Division as “course content and teaching appropriate for junior- and senior-year students in a baccalaureate program or other students with expertise in the subject,” but otherwise left it up to individual institutions to define what this means for their campuses.

While the 40-hour criterion was approved by IBHE in 2012, it began being enforced for proposals to establish new undergraduate programs since 2017. Since that time, the University’s working definition of Upper Division has included courses at the 300- and 400-levels, as well as 200-level courses with two or more prerequisites in related course content.

Although the IBHE requirement applies only to new programs, the desire to create uniform requirements for all undergraduate programs, including those created before and after the IBHE requirement went into effect, and the view that the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign should be a leader among its in-state peers, almost all of whom have extended the requirement to all programs, led the Senate Committee on Educational Policy in September, 2023, to form a task force (EP.24.021) aimed at studying the issue and provide recommendations to the Senate on adopting a campus-wide version of the 40 Upper-Division Hours requirement. The report of the task force and another document proposing a working definition of Upper-Division course work and discussing the reasoning behind it are attached as appendices to this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION #1

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Senate adopts the following definition of Upper-Division courses:

For the purposes of satisfying the IBHE requirement, “Upper-Division” courses are defined on our campus as courses at the 300 or 400 level as well as designated 200-level courses. For each currently existing course at the 200 level, the offering department should, in consultation with higher units such as its school (if applicable) and college, designate whether that course should be treated as Upper-Division.

RECOMMENDATION #2

The University shall begin work on implementing the requirement that all baccalaureate degree programs require students entering the university in the Fall of 2028 or later to complete at least 40 hours of Upper-Division coursework in order to earn their degree.

RECOMMENDATION #3

The Senate Committee on Educational Policy shall work with the Office of the Registrar, Office of the Provost, Division of Management Information, and the Colleges and other Academic Units to implement this requirement. The Committee on Educational Policy shall monitor progress toward meeting this goal and report to the full Senate for review any necessary amendments to the definition, timeline, or policies.

Nothing in this resolution should be viewed as substituting for ordinary governance procedures.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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Definition of “Upper Division” Courses and Recommendations for Implementing the 40 Upper-Division Hour Requirement

Background

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in 23 Illinois Administrative Code Section 1050 lists among the criteria for approval of baccalaureate programs that all such programs must have “at least 40 semester credit hours (60 quarter credit hours) in Upper-Division courses,” where “Upper Division” is defined as “course content and teaching appropriate for junior- and senior-year students in a baccalaureate program or other students with expertise in the subject.” Importantly, IBHE does not directly specify which course numbers correspond to “Upper-Division” instruction, which is natural as course numbering conventions differ across the universities in its jurisdiction. In fact, they differ even within the University of Illinois system, and even among universities that number their undergraduate courses between 000 and 499. For example, the University of Illinois Chicago defines 200-level courses as “Courses numbered 200–299 are intended for sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have completed the 100-level prerequisites,” while the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign defines 200-level courses as “the 200-level generally corresponds to ‘sophomore-’ level courses.”¹ Thus, the Urbana-Champaign definition makes no explicit reference to prerequisites. Due to these and other variances across universities, IBHE has left it to individual universities to define “Upper Division” in a way that makes sense given the history and practices at each. The Urbana-Champaign campus has adopted this approach, and in recent years when applying for IBHE approval for a new program the campus has included as Upper Division courses at the 300- or 400-levels, but also 200-level courses with at least two prerequisites.

An important event in the history of course numbering practices on this campus was the change in the numbering system that occurred around 2001. Prior to that time there were no 400-level undergraduate courses, and courses numbered at the 300 level were open to undergraduate and graduate students. Because of this, units often gave advanced courses 200-level numbers in order to preclude graduate students from taking them for graduate credit. This was referred to at the time (see EP.01.22) as the “200-level problem,” and manifested itself in the campus policy on undergraduate minors (EP.97.18), which defined Upper-Division as “300-level or designated 200-level advanced courses.” Although it was likely intended that these 200-level courses would eventually be renumbered to the 300-level, there was never a comprehensive effort to ensure that this was done.

¹ For UIC, see <https://academicprograms.uic.edu/courses/course-resources/course-numbering-system/>. For UIUC, see EP.01.22, https://www.senate.illinois.edu/ep0122_a.pdf.

The “200-level problem” illustrates one way in which historical practice on this campus has led to advanced courses numbered at the 200 level. However, even without the change in the course numbering system, the fact that the campus has never had a clear convention for what distinguishes a 200-level course from a 300-level course has resulted in situations where advanced courses remain numbered at the 200-level. Historically, units have chosen numbers for courses that made sense in the context of their programs and offerings, and until the implementation of this IBHE policy there has been no need to interfere with units’ own judgment in these matters. In fact, this deference is consistent with the strong tradition of shared governance on this campus which, while active, leaves it to the subject experts in individual departments/schools/colleges to make these types of decisions.

One approach to the problem of defining Upper Division would be to encourage units to renumber 200-level courses to the 300 level and adopt a definition of Upper Division as including only 300- and 400-level courses. Importantly, this, in itself, would not make a course with content that is appropriate for freshmen and sophomores meet the IBHE definition of Upper Division (i.e., appropriate for juniors and seniors and other students with expertise in the subject). The IBHE category is about the subject matter of the course, and that content corresponds to upper- or lower-division independent of the course’s number. There are additional logistical challenges to wholesale renumbering of courses. Renumbering takes time and effort and may disrupt programs not only in the unit offering the course but in other units as well. Renumbering requires an available 300-level number for the course and there may not be appropriate 300-level numbers to move into. At the same time, renumbering vacates a 200-level number, which then cannot be reused for some time in order to prevent confusion for students seeking grade replacement or returning to the university to complete a program after an absence. Finally, renumbering a 200-level course that serves as a prerequisite for other courses may necessitate additional course renumberings to avoid confusion. Although these issues could be addressed by creating new rubrics, doing so would not be without its own challenges, and logical implementation of a new rubric would likely involve large-scale changes to the unit’s courses and programs. Last, but not least, in many cases courses in the range under consideration are involved in transfer and articulation agreements with other colleges and universities, and renumbering courses could also disrupt these. For example, concern has been expressed that in some cases renumbering could risk a finding of non-compliance with the requirements of the Illinois Articulation Initiative for transfer students.

Proposed Definition of Upper Division and Recommendations

For these reasons, for the purposes of satisfying the IBHE requirement, the task force proposes that the Urbana-Champaign campus should adopt a definition of “Upper Division” that is informed by the campus’s history and respects our tradition of trusting the judgement of subject-area experts closest to the matter to make pedagogical decisions.

Definition of Upper Division: For the purposes of satisfying the IBHE requirement, “Upper-Division” courses are defined on our campus as courses at the 300 or 400 level as well as designated 200-level courses. For each currently existing course at the 200 level, the offering department should, in consultation with higher units such as its school (if applicable) and college, designate whether that course should be treated as Upper Division.

Recommendations:

1. The University should adopt the above definition of Upper Division and move toward implementing the requirement that criterion for all undergraduate degrees for students entering baccalaureate programs beginning in the Fall of 2028.
2. The *Student Code* should be updated to include this definition and require that each candidate for a bachelor’s degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign must earn 40 hours of Upper Division credit according to this definition. Sections potentially requiring revision include but are not limited to §3-704(d) (Course Numbering System) and §3-801(a)(1) (Credit Requirements for Degrees).
3. The Office of the Registrar should develop a method of identifying Upper Division courses on student records and maintain a list of all 200-level courses designated as Upper Division for the purpose of degree auditing
4. A convenient notation should be adopted in the course catalog system to make it easy for students to distinguish Upper-Division 200-level courses from lower-division 200-level courses.
5. For review of whether an existing 200-level course should be treated as Upper Division, individual units/departments are encouraged to develop clear, internally consistent standards for determining whether a 200-level course is Upper Division. Colleges are encouraged to develop clear criteria for review of departmental decisions, including the need for justifying a course’s designation as Upper Division. The Educational Policy Committee is encouraged to provide guidance to units and colleges to ensure consistent application of standards.
6. Although determinations are left up to the department and colleges, having 2 or more prerequisites or demonstrating sufficient academic rigor may provide evidence that a course is Upper Division. Following current practice on campus, existing 200-level courses with two or more pedagogically necessary prerequisites can be treated as Upper Division. Units offering such courses should be aware that other programs may have relied on counting such courses as Upper Division and should work to ensure that such programs have been informed of their classification decisions.
7. Whether a particular 500-level course counts as Upper Division should be left up to the unit/college/advisor to determine in conjunction with whether the student should be granted permission to enroll in the course.

8. New courses created in Fall 2025 or after (i.e., after this definition of Upper Division is adopted) that are intended to be Upper Division should be given numbers at the 300 level or above. New courses numbered at the 200 level or below should be considered Lower Division. Exceptions to this rule should be made only in consultation with the Offices of the Registrar and Provost.
9. The General Education Board should review any 200-level course that has been deemed Upper Division and determine whether it should continue to carry General Education credit.
10. The Educational Policy Committee should monitor progress in the implementation of this policy and recommend amendments as needed.

Discussion

This is not likely the approach that would have been adopted if the campus was redesigning the course-numbering system from scratch, but it is one that makes sense given current offerings and conventions, and it can be adopted at lower cost and with less confusion than other approaches to coming into compliance with the IBHE requirement.

Since approximately 2017, for the purpose of submitting new programs to IBHE for review, the campus has treated 200-level courses with two or more prerequisites as Upper Division. This policy does not change this. Rather, it proposes two paths to a 200-level course being treated as Upper Division. For courses in disciplines with natural course sequences, a course will be Upper Division if it has two or more prerequisites, while in disciplines without natural sequencing but where students gain intellectual maturity with experience in the subject, a course will be Upper Division if it meets whatever criteria are deemed by the subject experts to signify that the course is intended for such students.

If the approach described above (designated 200-level along with 300- and 400-level courses) were adopted, one challenge would involve how to deal with 200-level courses that currently satisfy General Education Requirements. With the exception of the Advanced Composition and, to a certain extent, the Quantitative Reasoning II requirements, courses satisfying General Education requirements are supposed to be accessible to students who do not have expertise in the subject. Consequently, being designated as “Upper Division” would seem to be inconsistent with satisfying General Education requirements (except for Advanced Comp. and QR II). In general, this distinction should be maintained, although the General Education Board should retain the ability to determine that a course that a unit has designated as “Upper Division” should nevertheless be allowed to carry credit toward the General Education requirement.² Due to the

² In general, determination of whether a course is upper division should come before review by the General Education Board, and changing the designation of a General Education course to make it upper division should trigger review by the General Education Board.

inconsistencies in the definitions of Upper Division and General Education courses on this campus, any course receiving General Education credit that is designated Upper Division by the unit should be re-assessed by the General Education board.

A second potential complication involves courses that have exact equivalences at community colleges. Designating such courses as Upper Division may be inconsistent with the view that courses taught at two-year community colleges are inherently Lower Division. While broadly true, it is certainly possible that a community college could teach a course that is more appropriate for Upper-Division students. Once again, the disciplinary experts in the unit offering the campus equivalent of the course are the ones most qualified to make these judgments. However, given the possible appearance of inconsistency, in these cases a more specific justification for why the course is properly viewed as Upper Division should be provided. Logistically speaking, treating a course as Upper Division only if it is taken on this campus is likely to be practically impossible.

A minor complication concerns undergraduate students who take graduate (500-level or above) courses and whether they should count as Upper Division. The number of such students is rather small, and undergraduates in the position to take graduate courses likely have sufficient Upper Division hours that the graduate course in question is not needed to meet the requirement. While many 500-level courses build upon 300- and 400-level courses, others are introductory courses for students who enter graduate study in an area outside of their undergraduate major. Since undergraduate students require permission to enroll in 500-level courses, it is the view of the committee that whether a 500-level course is counted as Upper Division should be left to individual units/colleges to consider in conjunction with whether to allow the student to enroll. For the sake of simplicity, it is the committee's recommendation that 500-level courses be presumed to be Upper Division. However, colleges should be mindful of this issue and take care in allowing advanced undergraduate students to enroll in 500-level courses that may be introductory and/or duplicative of the student's other coursework.

Other approaches to the issue of defining Upper Division, in addition to going against the campus' tradition of deference to subject-area experts, would also likely have unintended consequences. Some of the issues involved with renumbering were described above. Maintaining the current definition of Upper Division as including 200-level courses only if they have two or more prerequisites could result in units adding prerequisites to courses that do not make sense pedagogically, which would in turn introduce unnecessary barriers to students' progress through their degree programs. This practice should be discouraged. Adopting a definition of Upper Division where all 200-level courses are included could also be problematic for similar reasons, as it would deem some 200-level courses to be Upper Division even when the experts offering the course do not intend them to be. This practice could also complicate the process of determining

whether a course should carry General Education credit. Practically speaking, making all 200-level courses Upper Division might require many 200-level General Education courses to be renumbered at the 100-level, with all the costs and disruptions that that would entail.

Once the proposed definition of Upper Division is adopted, the IBHE 40-hour requirement could likely be adopted for all students on campus without being overly burdensome for the vast majority of units, programs, and students on campus. The timeframe for implementation should be chosen to give units time to make the designations described above and make desired adjustments to their course offerings in a pedagogically sound manner. Time will also be needed to incorporate the new requirement into the university's record-keeping systems. In light of that, a practical goal would be for the requirement of 40 Upper-Division hours using this definition to be imposed for all students entering baccalaureate programs at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign beginning in the fall of 2028.

The goal of the proposed definition of Upper Division is to leave, to the greatest extent possible, judgements as to whether a course is Upper Division with the units, schools, colleges offering the courses. The key to whether a course is Upper Division involves determining whether the course content is appropriate for juniors or seniors or other students having a similar level of experience in the subject. What, exactly, this means in the context of any subject area is best identified by the unit offering the course. However, whatever criteria the unit comes up with should be clearly stated and consistently applied. The Educational Policy Committee should aid in this process by identifying questions that units seeking Upper-Division designation for a course should address. If feasible, these questions should be incorporated into the CIM-C system. While the Educational Policy Committee should be responsible for designing the questions/form, answering them and evaluating those answers should be left to the unit and college, respectively.

This policy proposes designating 200-level courses as Upper Division as an alternative to renumbering them to the 300 level. When a course renumbering is proposed, there is a standard approval workflow that includes approval steps at the department and college levels. The approval process for designating a 200-level course as Upper Division should maintain this same process (e.g., Department Committee, Department Head, College Committee, College Head, COTE if applicable, Provost) so that designating a course as Upper Division is not seen as a way to circumvent college-level governance. In particular, colleges retain the power to reject a unit's proposal according to whatever standards they have set.

Questions remain as to how this requirement could be implemented for transfer students and whether the need to take 40 Upper-Division hours, however defined, is consistent with other state-level policies meant so ensure that transfer students make timely progress toward degree completion. The task force spent substantial time considering the potential impact of the 40-hour requirement on transfer students, and the more expansive definition of Upper Division

recommended above is motivated in part to address the challenges faced by both intercollegiate and off-campus transfer students. Allowing transfer students to count some 200-level courses toward this requirement, if the offering units deem it appropriate, will be helpful in achieving 40 Upper-Division hours in their time on campus. The task force's view is that adopting the 40-hour requirement and monitoring student progress can be incorporated into existing college-level procedures without the need for modification of the proposed policy on Upper-Division hours. Generally speaking, colleges have the responsibility to monitor the progress of all students, including transfer students, toward timely graduation, and the autonomy to take steps to ensure their progress.

Report to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy from the Task Force on Undergraduate Curriculum (40 Hours of Upper Division Courses)

January 24, 2025

Background

In September 2023, the Senate Committee on Educational Policy established a task force (EP.24.021) to examine a 2012 Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) modification made to the [23 Illinois Administrative Code 1050](#) (IBHE Administrative Code). The purpose of the Task Force has been to review the impact of the Administrative Code, which requires 40 semester credit hours of Upper Division courses in a 120 minimum semester credit hour undergraduate degree program. Currently, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's *Student Code* requires students to have 21 hours of Upper Division or upper-level courses in an undergraduate degree. "Upper Division" is defined in the IBHE Administrative Code as "course content and teaching appropriate for junior- and senior-year students in a baccalaureate program or other students with expertise in the subject." On this campus, upper level or Upper Division coursework is defined in the [Academic Catalog](#) and the [Student Code](#) as 300- or 400-level courses. With the 2012 revision to the IBHE Administrative Code, a 120 semester-hour undergraduate degree now requires one-third, or 40 hours, of Upper Division coursework. At this time, current policy requires only one-sixth of Upper Division coursework for a 120-semester credit hour undergraduate degree (21 hours).

While the 40-hour criterion was approved by IBHE in 2012, it has been enforced in proposals to establish new undergraduate programs since 2017, where Upper Division courses have been defined as courses at the 300- and 400-levels, as well as 200-level courses with two or more prerequisites in related course content. The Senate Committee on Educational Policy manages this oversight process at the campus level.

Illinois Four-Year Institutions and IBHE Administrative Code Compliance

According to public information regarding graduation requirements for undergraduate degrees, all but two four-year public universities in Illinois currently follow the IBHE guidelines requiring a minimum of 40 hours of Upper Division courses: Eastern Illinois University (40 hours), Northern Illinois University (40 hours), Northeastern Illinois University (40 hours), Western Illinois University (40 hours), Governor's State University (40 hours), Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville (42 hours), Southern Illinois University-Carbondale (42 hours), University of Illinois Springfield (48 hours), University of Illinois Chicago (40 hours: select 200-level courses and above are considered Upper Division), and Illinois State University (40 hours: uses only 100- to 300-level courses for undergraduates). Chicago State University is undefined, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign still requires only 21 hours of Upper Division courses according to the *Student Code's* graduation requirements (Article 3, Part 8).

With the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign being one of two non-compliant four-year public universities in this state, there is an expectation that all our degrees will be compliant at some future point in time. To address this issue, the Senate Educational Policy Committee established

the 40-Hour Task Force to study the impact of compliance on all undergraduate programs and determine a reasonable timeline for implementation. Note: the 40 hours of Upper Division courses can come from all parts of the undergraduate program; they are not restricted to the major area.

Task Force Membership

The Task Force membership is comprised of a diverse group of 14 stakeholders who represented faculty, staff, students, and administrators from various units, including the College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES), College of Applied Health Sciences (AHS), College of Fine and Applied Arts (FAA), Gies College of Business (GIES), Grainger College of Engineering (GRAINGER), College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS), College of Veterinary Medicine (VET MED), Senate Committee on Educational Policy, Registrar's Office, Provost's Office, General Education Board, and the Council of Undergraduate Deans, with LAS representing five of the 14 members on the committee, including two full time academic advisors from LAS.

Task Force Purpose

The Task Force met over three semesters to collect information, develop a survey, engage stakeholders, and develop recommendations. Key objectives included identifying pathways to compliance with the IBHE Administrative Code, identifying potential impacts on programs, staff, and other key personnel; identifying potential impacts on time-to-degree completion; and identifying impacts to inter-/intra-collegiate transfer (ICT) students and external transfer students.

The Task Force worked within the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Educational Policy as an information and fact-finding body to compile documentation, meet with stakeholders, and solicit feedback to create an informational report with recommendations for the Senate Committee on Educational Policy for further study or action. In addition to gathering information from other Illinois institutions, the Task Force's charge was to (1) identify on campus the undergraduate programs (degrees/majors) which do not meet the 40-hour Upper Division requirement, (2) identify all undergraduate programs that have successfully implemented 40-hours of Upper Division courses, (3) identify colleges and/or units that are acutely challenged in moving to 40-hours of Upper Division courses in curricula revisions, (4) identify reasons why such challenges may exist, (5) identify potential solutions for these challenges, (6) identify areas to be updated in the *Student Code* and Academic Catalog which relate to Upper Division hour requirements, and (7) make recommendations for further study or action.

Task Force Survey

In Spring 2024, a Task Force Survey was sent to colleges and schools which offer undergraduate degree programs. The survey asked about undergraduate programs in relation to 40 hours of 300- and 400-level courses, 200-level courses with prerequisites, challenges in meeting compliance, impact on students who start as freshmen, impact on ICT and external transfer students, impact on the unit, and potential guidance for implementation, including timelines. Forty-seven responses were collected from seven colleges and two schools from various personnel including academic deans, assistant deans, unit admissions directors, unit heads and associate heads, directors of undergraduate programs, advisors, program directors, program coordinators, directors, and associate directors of curriculum and instruction, associate heads of budget and operations, and

teaching faculty. The units included ACES (4 responses), AHS (2 responses), EDUC (1 response), FAA (1 response), GIES (1 response), MEDIA (1 response), and LAS (37 responses).

In May and June 2024, Nolan Miller (Educational Policy chair) and Linda Moorhouse (Task Force chair) arranged to meet with eight colleges and two schools as part of a “Task Force Listening Tour” to answer questions about the Task Force Survey, and collect information about undergraduate programs and the 40 hours of Upper Division hours: College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences (ACES), College of Applied Health Sciences (AHS), College of Education (EDUC), College of Fine and Applied Arts (FAA), Gies College of Business (GIES), Grainger College of Engineering (GRAINGER), College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS), College of Media (MEDIA), School of Information Science (iSchool), and the School of Social Work (SSW). Listening Tour meetings on the following dates: ACES (May 14), AHS (June 27), EDUC (May 23), FAA (June 17), GIES (May 21), GRAINGER (June 26), iSchool (May 22), LAS (June 3), MEDIA (May 24), and SSW (May 23).

Campus Programs Already in Compliance

Feedback from the Survey and Listening Tour resulted in learning that most colleges and schools which offer undergraduate programs are already compliant with meeting the 40-hours of Upper Division coursework or are in the process of revising existing curriculum to meet compliance. These programs have built the 40 hours of Upper Division coursework into the program of study, or they use electives for the remainder of the required Upper Division hours. They are using 300-level, 400-level, and 200-level courses with two prerequisites as part of the Urbana-Champaign campus definition of “Upper Division” courses.

Units within two colleges (ACES and LAS) reported difficulty at this time to meet compliance.

Observations from the findings in the Task Force Survey and Listening Tour

- With the *Student Code* requiring only 21 hours of Upper Division coursework, there are programs in LAS which are challenged because of how a degree program is structured in its requirements. Moving to requiring 40 hours of 300-level, 400-level, and/or 200-level courses with two prerequisites is difficult because so many LAS 200-level courses (with no prerequisites) currently complete degree requirements. Some units regard many of their 200-level courses as Upper Division courses.
- Programs in ACES are challenged by a requirement for students to take a number of entry-level (100-level) courses as part of the program’s requirements.
- Transfer students may be disproportionately affected, as transfer credits don’t always articulate cleanly to campus courses. These students often re-take similar courses in their new campus major, which causes a delay to taking upper-level coursework. Transfer students may also have difficulties with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign not articulating Upper Division courses from other institutions.

- Some academic units report that they do not have the personnel to make necessary changes to curriculum, whether this is with staff or faculty.
 - Some academic units may want to renumber 200-level courses, which they believe are truly Upper Division, to 300- or 400-level courses. This renumbering process could tax personnel and/or financial resources in some units. Equivalents to renumbered courses will have to be rearticulated for transfer credit. It will be important for units that do any renumbering to communicate with the transfer credit unit in Undergraduate Admissions, which is the Coordinated Course Articulation Unit.
 - Some units do not have enough 300- and 400-level numbers available to renumber 200-level courses which are deemed “Upper Division” and may need to create another rubric (subject area). Creating new rubrics can be time consuming and there may be instances where there is no choice but to create a new rubric. However, the first step should always be to do a review of existing courses to determine if any course numbers can be reused (after seven years of inactivity).
 - Some units wish to have existing 200-level courses with no prerequisites be considered for Upper Division designation. If this happens, these courses will need to go through some type of evaluation process. Only existing 200-level courses would be considered for Upper Division designation. New courses should use 300- or 400-level numbers.
 - If a 200-level Gen Ed course receives Upper Division designation, then the course would conflict with itself as the definition of a Gen Ed course and the definition of an Upper Division course conflict with one another. While some 200-level Upper Division courses may lose Gen Ed status, these courses might easily retain student enrollment with their (new) Upper Division status since students will need Upper Division courses to complete graduation requirements.
 - Some academic units may need to expand their Upper Division course offerings to meet the increased demand for Upper Division courses. This may require additional instructors.
 - Additional support for course development and/or advising may be needed.
 - Given the majority of undergraduate programs on campus are in compliance with the 40 hours of Upper Division courses, a Fall 2028 compliance date seems reasonable for all campus undergraduate programs. This date is offered with the understanding that the campus definition of “Upper Division” will be expanded beyond the current “300- and 400-level courses” as it appears in the current *Student Code*.
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Recommendations

1. Since 2017, IBHE has allowed “200-level courses with two prerequisites” to serve as Upper Division courses on the Urbana-Champaign campus. Campus needs to continue with this practice for these existing courses, ensuring that the prerequisites directly relate to the 200-level course they precede.
 2. Existing 200-level courses should not be adding prerequisites to meet this current campus Upper Division definition.
 3. Any 200-level General Education courses moving to new upper-level numbers (e.g. 300-level, 400-level) require a General Education Board review to determine if they still meet the appropriate criteria for a General Education course.
 4. Many programs encourage students to earn multiple minors to accrue Upper Division hours, and this practice is recommended and expected to continue. (Undergraduate Minors need a minimum of six (6) credits of 300- and/or 400-level courses.)
 5. Units are encouraged to continue to monitor transfer credit policies to articulate more transfer courses, where appropriate.
 6. Establish Fall 2028 as the deadline for the campus to ensure all baccalaureate programs meet the requirement of 40 hours of Upper Division courses for graduation.
 7. The requirement to have 40-hours of Upper Division coursework in an undergraduate degree by Fall 2028 needs to be added to the *Student Code*.
 8. For programs which identify “electives” as an area for students to take Upper Division courses, transparency and marketing will be important to identify a set of Upper Division courses which have no prerequisites and are not restricted for students in specified programs of study.
 9. Identify and advertise 200-, 300- and 400-level Upper Division courses which are open to all majors on campus much the same way General Education courses are identified and advertised. Consider offering online/hybrid options to increase access.
 10. All 200-level courses identified as “Upper Division” need to be marked as such in the course description and should be coded in CIM-C as such by the Registrar’s Office for Degree Audit Reports.
 11. Revise and expand the campus definition of 200-level courses. See the accompanying document outlining this proposal, which reiterates some of the recommendations listed above.
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Task Force on Undergraduate Education

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