

***General Principles Related to Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Courses***  
***Taken from AP-AA-03.4 Preparation of Instructional Schedules for Credit Courses (pp.10-11)***

Graduate curricula should consist predominately of courses, independent activities, and experiences (e.g., research, internships) which demand a deeper and/or broader level of performance than would be found in undergraduate courses.

Graduate programs should consistently provide sufficient opportunities for students to directly interact with faculty and students at their same level or beyond. The achievement of an undergraduate degree that is acceptable as a credential for acceptance into a graduate program indicates there would be minimal value to graduate students if the opportunities for student to student and faculty-to-student interactions are dominated by undergraduates.

In those cases where a course must be delivered to both undergraduate and graduate students simultaneously, there must be a "substantive difference" in the experiences of these two groups of students. Two examples of ways in which a course might demonstrate substantive differences are:

- Assigning additional and/or different reading assignments, writing assignments, problem sets, or examinations;
- Holding regularly scheduled additional meetings or discussion sessions that provide a "graduate only" environment.

The substantive differences described above, or others designed by the professor, should be described in either a separate syllabus for undergraduate and graduate students, or if only one document is produced in separate sections of the single syllabus. In any case, the professor is responsible for outlining in detail the differences in the assignments, activities, and standards for demonstrating mastery.

If there are assignments or examinations that are common to students at both levels, and the only difference is in the criteria for mastery (i.e., grading criteria) then the faculty member must articulate clearly how those criteria differ. This should be a part of the syllabus so that students have a clear and fair understanding of the standards that will be applied to their work.

This articulation of criteria for evaluation is also necessary to ensure the coherence of the Program of Study is not compromised by unnecessary variance across courses and/or instructors. The principle under operation is that students and faculty must be able to identify and understand how the acceptable mastery of the course content at the graduate level differs from successful mastery of the course content at the undergraduate level.

A characterization of grading or evaluation criteria as being "harder" or "more demanding and rigorous" is not sufficient. These terms must be defined in a way that creates mutual understanding among the various parties (students, faculty), as well as by an outside observer with appropriate expertise (e.g., external review committees, accreditation committees.).