

## Background

The utility and fate of 5000 level courses have been debated during the past several years. The issues centered on if they should persist within curricula, and if so, if separate undergraduate and graduate teaching goals should be delineated at the level of the syllabus. The collective outcome of discussions on 5000 courses within the Graduate Curriculum Committee and the GSAB resulted in the delineation of best practices concerning 5000 level courses, which were presented to, and discussed at length during the January 9, 2012 meeting of the Graduate Council. The discussion was tabled in order to better define the conditions a) favoring the elimination of a 5000 level course, and b) creating parallel undergraduate and graduate courses to replace a 5000 level course.

These issues were discussed at the February 6, 2012 Graduate Council Executive Committee, and the Council's recommendations are listed below. Recommendations 1-3 remain essentially unchanged from that originally presented to the Graduate Council on January 9 because they met with general approval at that time. Items 4 and 5 address the issues that needed additional clarification.

Note that reference to "(3.6.1)" in item (1) refers to a SACS directive to differentiate the educational goals of undergraduate and master's and doctoral programs.

The Graduate School would assume the task of determining temporal trends in undergraduate and graduate enrollment in 5000 courses.

### **Recommendations for utilizing 5000 level courses :**

*(1) The GCC and GC recommend that use of 5000 level courses is appropriate for advanced undergraduates and graduate students in as much as graduate program rigor (3.6.1) is assessed at the program level, not at the individual course level;*

*(2) There should be differentiated learning outcomes for undergrad and grad students enrolled in 5000 level courses;*

*(3) 5000 level courses could be used as electives for advanced undergrads in undergrad majors, but should not be used as a required course in any undergraduate major;*

*(4) In current 5000 level courses where enrollment is predominantly undergraduates (>50% over 4 consecutive course offerings), the unit offering the course should propose a new course at the appropriate undergraduate level and remove the 5000 level course;*

*(5) If units desire both undergraduate and graduate students to be able to simultaneously take a course having essentially similar content and where graduate student representation is a minority, the unit must offer a course at the undergraduate level and a separate course at the graduate level with appropriate rigor.*