Common Course Numbering
Protocol and Processes

Introduction

The purpose of common course numbering is to ease transferability of courses between and among the 34 community and technical colleges. This project was directed by the presidents of Washington community and technical colleges with leadership from the Washington State Instruction and Student Services commissions and support from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' staff. The project scope is limited to academic transfer courses commonly offered in Washington State higher education institutions and institutions across the country and are defined by the Intercollege Relations Council (ICRC) agreement (Appendix B of the ICRC Handbook, pages 22-25).

The list of common courses can be seen on the State Board website at: https://ccn.sbctc.edu/ViewCommonCourses.aspx.

Definition of a common course

Courses delivered by a number of community and technical colleges are considered common if the official college catalog descriptions are similar enough to be accepted as equivalent at a receiving college for transfer purposes. Courses not similar enough to be accepted as "common" in transfer from one CTC to another are designated as unique and identified as separate.

General rules for common course numbers and titles

Common course number designation includes a common department abbreviation followed by the "&" symbol and a common 3-digit number.

- Less advanced courses have numbers lower than more advanced courses within the same department/division abbreviation.
- Colleges may use a designator (i.e. Q for quantitative reasoning or W for writing across the curriculum or C for cultural competency requirement, etc.) after the 3-digit common course number when that serves an individual college need and does not impact how the course is accepted as common within the CTC system.

Determining a common course number

Rules governing use of the three digit common course numbers:

000-099	Below college level
101-199	First year courses
200-299	Second year courses
100-119	Introductory and exploratory courses
200-209	Standard second year offerings
120-189	Series and discrete courses
210-289	Courses ending in:

        1-3   Courses in series, with prerequisites—FRENCH I, II & III

              Special Note: Students will need to be advised that when taking courses in a series, they should do so at the same college for ease of transferability

      0, 4-9 Discrete offerings (stand alone courses), or a series with no prescribed order—AMER HIST I, II & III

  190-199 & 290-299   Experiential Learning, including Internships, Cooperative Learning, and Field Experience. Also, Individual Research, Special Seminar, Special Topics, and Independent Studies.

Determining a common course title

- Due to limits on the Student Management System, common course title field is 24 characters long, including punctuation and spaces.

- Common course titles use upper and lower case letters.

- For course series that are not similar enough to be "common" but serve similar intents in transfer when the whole series is taken , colleges should distinguish the series by using roman numerals for one, Arabic for another, and letters for a third, if needed. For example, Engineering Graphics I, II & III (three course series); Engineering Graphics 1 & 2 (two course series); and Engineering Graphics (stand alone).

- After the common course title (24 characters), colleges may put a colon (:) then append a customized title, using an additional 24 characters for a total of 48 characters in the title field.

Avoiding course collisions

To avoid common course number and title duplication or collisions, colleges should check the SBCTC website for common course numbers prior to assigning number and titles to courses that are changed or new courses related to the direct transfer agreement.

To prevent course number or title confusion with unique courses, it is recommended that unique college courses (those not common) similar to common courses be renumbered and titled. For example, a college should avoid having both a SOC& 101 (common) and SOC 101 (unique).

NEW SECTION
Adding an existing common course number to a college inventory

Colleges that wish to add an existing common course number to their curricula may do so at anytime by following these steps:

1. Review the course descriptions of three (3) colleges that currently offer the common course. This is to ensure that your course is common to those already offering as a common course.

2. Seek approval for the common course through local college processes.

3. If you don't already have a userID and password for the online CCN database, contact Brook Allinder at SBCTC for access.

4. Add common course(s) to your college inventory at http://apps.sbctc.edu/ccn/.

5. SBCTC reviews added course(s) to ensure accuracy of title and number.

6. Common course is on the college inventory.

Method for adding or changing a common course (Effective after summer 2008)

Additions or changes to common courses will be initiated through the Articulation and Transfer Council with final approval by the Instruction Commission. The Articulation and Transfer Council will have a Standing Committee to oversee the review process and recommend additions and changes to the ATC general membership. The process will follow an annual cycle that begins in winter and concludes in the fall and will involve faculty experts as needed.

- Prior to January 15
  Any member of the community and technical college community may request a change or addition to the common course numbering list. To do so, the requesting person will need to notify their college ATC member regarding the request prior to January 15 each year. ATC members will bring all requests for changes and additions to the Standing Committee by January 15.

- <u>Winter ATC meeting:</u>
  The Standing Committee will recommend the necessary scope of review (faculty teams, ATC discussion, etc) to the ATC. If faculty teams are needed, the Standing Committee will recommend ATC members or other campus leadership to facilitate the faculty discussion.

- <u>Winter/Spring</u> During winter and spring quarters, all requests for additions and changes will be reviewed and a formal recommendation created by the Standing Committee based upon the review process.

- <u>Fall ATC meeting:</u> Recommendations from the Standing Committee will be presented to ATC. ATC takes action to recommend changes/additions to the CCN list to IC.

- <u>Fall Instruction Commission (IC) meeting</u>: Final approval of the change/addition to the CCN list effective the coming summer quarter.

The first cycle will begin winter 2009 for use in schedules and catalogs summer 2010.