

# Ursuline College

## Undergraduate and Graduate Course Level Standards

1. Ursuline College sets high standards for student learning across the curriculum. Students will participate in a series of experiences that develop their understanding, challenge them to integrate learning both within and across disciplines, and prepare them to succeed in an increasingly complex world.
2. The Curriculum Committees of Ursuline College establish the following definition of rigor:
  - A. A rigorous liberal arts curriculum balances foundational coursework, inclusion of diverse perspectives, and in-depth analysis to provide students with appropriate knowledge as defined by college-wide and program learning outcomes. The rigor of an Ursuline College undergraduate degree is ensured by the diversity of courses required by the liberal arts core and by the depth of study required by majors. The rigor of an Ursuline College graduate program is ensured by a solid liberal arts foundation and interaction with advanced scholarly concepts and skills.
  - B. A rigorous curriculum:
    - i. Requires students to synthesize and apply course ideas.
    - ii. Reflects views and content that are relevant to current thought and practice.
    - iii. Provides a platform for students to demonstrate mastery of knowledge.
    - iv. Requires students to take active responsibility for learning.
3. Substantive evidence that a program meets these standards may include assessment reports, program reviews, and/or standards set by the discipline or external accrediting agencies. At the course level, evidence should include a combination of examples from the following: learning objectives, course assignments, exams, and/or descriptions of student activities. For both programs and courses, evidence to demonstrate rigor should be selected as appropriate to the discipline.
4. Departments shall ensure that programs and courses meet the Ursuline College standards for rigor. In the ordinary course of curricular review, departments may be called upon to demonstrate to the next level(s) of review (i.e., Dean, Curriculum Committee, VPAA, President) that programs and courses meet these standards.
5. The faculty of Ursuline College establish the following general, minimum criteria for course level designations:

**100 Level:** Courses at the 100 level prepare students for academic success by developing foundational knowledge and skills.

**200 Level:** Courses at the 200 level require students to develop connections between concepts both within their field and between disciplines, expand on ideas central to the discipline, and enrich their own perspectives of the world.

**300 Level:** Courses at the 300 level expose students to specialized concepts and techniques central to the discipline. Students apply knowledge and skills previously learned to unfamiliar topics and problems. Students engage in this work in a supervised or guided manner.

**400 Level:** Courses at the 400 level require students to synthesize advanced knowledge and master skills in the discipline and/or guide students to independent production and engagement in the craft.

### **500-600 level course designation**

Master-level graduate courses numbered 500-600 require a bachelor's degree and admission to a graduate program. 500 level courses are more rigorous than undergraduate courses. These courses require a higher level of critical thinking, necessitate considerably more intellectual rigor, and demand integration and application of information into frameworks of knowledge. The 600 level courses are at times used for advanced level tracks which contribute to advanced certification or licensure.

Assumptions:

The Graduate Programs are specifically designed to enhance the student's knowledge, skills, and attitudes in their chosen academic arenas and to prepare them to accept advanced professional responsibilities. Success in the Graduate Program is based not only on completing the required course work but also on demonstrating competencies and attitudes appropriate to the profession.

Expectations:

Students should:

1. Be capable of sustained, independent inquiry and analysis
2. Have a mastery of writing skills in the format required by the discipline.
3. Understand and conduct research at the master's level in preparation for making their own scholarly/professional contributions to their discipline.
4. Possess a thorough understanding of the literature within the discipline.
5. Possess the ability to communicate effectively on topics within the discipline of study.
6. Be able to demonstrate advanced scholarly knowledge and master skills in the discipline as practitioners in their clinical/field experience under the supervision of qualified professionals as required.

### **700-level course designation for Doctoral level courses**

These courses are reserved for clinical work in the discipline. Assumptions:

Courses at the 700 level are designed to prepare the graduate student for becoming an advanced practitioner within the field.

Expectations:

1. Students should be able to function as practitioners in their field under the supervision of qualified professionals.
2. Students should be able to self-evaluate while accepting guidance from supervisors.

### **800 level course designation**

These courses are offered at the doctoral level. Students must have been admitted into a doctoral program within the university.

Assumptions:

A doctoral program involves a serious commitment of time and energy. Requirements for completion of the degree go far beyond completion of courses, examinations, and a dissertation. Throughout the doctoral program, students are expected to be involved in the research projects of faculty members, assist in teaching courses, provide group and individual supervision when assigned, attend, and present at professional conferences, and generally immerse themselves in professional activities at the university. These activities are designed to prepare doctoral students to become faculty members or leaders in their field.

Students at this level should have completed a master's degree in the discipline and/or have mastered the requirements necessary to enter a doctoral program. These students should have leadership qualities and the ability to work independently toward completing, not only rigorous coursework, but independent research leading to a dissertation or action research project.

Expectations:

Students should be able to:

1. Extend and contribute to theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field.
2. Demonstrate the ability to engage in critical thinking, decision making, and independent judgment.
3. Design, conduct, evaluate, and disseminate research in the discipline
4. Translate research into practice and evaluate outcomes
5. Practice advanced leadership skills in collaboration with members of the profession.
6. Evaluate the impact of theory and practice as it relates their field.
7. Accept individual responsibility and accountability for personal and professional

growth through lifelong learning

8. Design and complete independent research leading to either a dissertation or actionresearch project.
9. Prepare to move into advanced leadership/practice roles in their field.