

# AACRAO Endorsed Course Prefix and Numbering Guidelines

The following is a description of the course prefix and numbering guidelines proposed to be used by the City University of New York. Whereas these guidelines do not constitute common course numbers it provides taxonomy of classifications for recording course offerings which will facilitate a more accurate Degree Audit system. As such it represents a slight modification of the common course numbering system endorsed by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). Several systems across the country have adapted these guidelines for the very same purposes. The intent of the guidelines is to provide a framework for abbreviating course disciplines in a standard method to maximize transfer benefits for students. Nothing in the guidelines is meant to abrogate curriculum development or specific transfer evaluations which remain the purview of the faculty. Additionally, assignment of a specific discipline to any course(s) is determined by the college faculty.

The department name and prefix need not be the same. For example a department at CSI is called Global Psychology, Sociology, and Anthropology (PSA). This department does not offer courses with the prefix PSA. The department offers courses such as PSYC 101, SOCY 101, and ANTH 102.

## **Course Prefixes**

A list of accepted and used prefixes can be found on the University Registrar Website. Rules for determining prefixes not on the list are as follows:

**Guideline #1:** In single word departmental titles use:

- A. The first four letters of the word: Astronomy=ASTR
- B. Where conflicts exist - if the title is a compound work, e.g. astrophysics or biochemistry, use the first three letters of the first syllable and the first letter of the second, e.g. ASTP or BIOC.
- C. If A and B have been exhausted and conflicts still exist, use the first three letters and the last letter of the word:  
Archaeology = ARCY
- D. If A, B, and C have been exhausted and conflicts still exist, use the first letter of the first syllable, the first two letters of the second syllable and the last letter of the word.  
**Example:** Ergonomics = EGOS

**Guideline #2:** In dual word titles use:

A. The first three letters of the first word and the first letter of the second word: Urban Economics= URBE

B. If a duplication exists use the two letters of the first word and the first two letters of the second word: Urban Economics= UREC

C. If A and B fail, use the first letter of the first word, and the first three letters of the second: Urban Economics= UECO

**Guideline #3:** In three word titles use:

A. The first two letters of the first word and the first letter of the second and third word: East Asian Studies = EAAS

**Guideline #4:** In multi-word titles use:

A. The first letter of the first four words (excluding articles and conjunctions). Classical Civilization and World Literature = CCL; Aviation Maintenance and Management Studies = AMMS

**Guideline #5:** In the case of subject titles which are fields within a given discipline, a common set of letters is used, e.g. all titles within education begin with "E", as do all titles within engineering. This does not have a large application in community colleges, but should be used in those rare cases where it is appropriate. **Examples:**

Secondary Education Theory = EDUT

Educational Statistics = EDUS

Agriculture Production = AGPR

Educational Methods = EDUM

Agricultural Science = AGRS

Educational Supervision = EDSU

Agricultural Engineering = AGRE

Educational Administration = EDUA

### **Course Numbers Guidelines**

**Guideline #1:** The course number will consist of a four alpha prefix and a maximum four digit number code. **Example:** ENGL 1000

**Guideline #2:** The first numeral indicates class level as follows:

Lower Division

0 = Remedial, Developmental, Preparatory, Non-Degree Credit

1 = Freshman or First Year Course  
2 = Sophomore or Second Year Course

Upper Division  
3= Junior or Third Year Course  
4= Senior or Fourth Year Course

6= Master's Level  
7= Doctoral, Professional Level

Other  
5= Undergraduate Independent Study, Internship  
8= Graduate Independent Study, Internship, Dissertation  
9= Experimental or Message Course

**Guideline #3:** The second numeral indicates the use of a previous course number with the same alpha prefix and same first and third numerals.

Example:

ENGL 1000: No English course precedes this one.

ENGL 1110: One English course precedes.

ENGL 1210: Two English courses precede.

ENGL 1310: Three English courses precede.

Example of sequences: ENGL 1000-1020-1030-1040 followed by

ENGL 1110-1120-1130-1140 followed by

ENGL 1210-1220-1230-1240 followed by

ENGL 1310-1320-1330-1340 etc.

**Guideline #4:** The third numeral indicates one of the following:

A. A sequence of courses such as CHEM 1210, CHEM 1220, CHEM 1230, etc. Use of this sequential numbering may indicate either required prerequisite courses or a recommended sequence of courses. Use numbers "1", "2", "3", or "4" for this purpose.

B. A stand alone course which does not have a prerequisite in the same year level. Use numbers "5" through "9" for this purpose.

Examples: SOCY 1050, SOCY 1150, PSYC 1350, BIOL 2060, PHIL 2090

**Guideline #5:** Fourth Digit

A. The default use of the fourth digit is to be zero (0).

**Guideline #6: Fifth Digit**

B. The default use of the fifth digit is to be zero (0).

A. Alpha codes may be used to identify experimental, message, or other designations as colleges deem necessary.

Examples: CSCI 9001E (experimental), INFO 1093T (industry training), CERT 9102M (message)

Questions about the application of these guidelines to specific courses should be referred to the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs.

References:

1. Course numbering system used by Colorado community colleges, <http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/CCCNS/AACRAO-Prefix-Guidelines.pdf>.
2. Course numbering system guidelines for the NCCA, [http://resource.mccneb.edu/cds/Guidance/course\\_numbering\\_guidelines.htm](http://resource.mccneb.edu/cds/Guidance/course_numbering_guidelines.htm)
3. Course numbering system used by Florida statewide, [http://scns.fldoe.org/scns/public/pb\\_index.jsp](http://scns.fldoe.org/scns/public/pb_index.jsp)