

Complete Policy Title:
Graduate Course Outlines

Policy Number (if applicable):

Approved by:
Senate

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May 19, 1993

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Responsible Executive:
**Associate Vice-President and Dean of
Graduate Studies**

Enquiries:
[University Secretariat](#)

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A course outline is a document that sets the expectations for graduate students in terms of course objectives and content, format, assignments, and evaluation. Graduate courses vary considerably in structure and expectations, and no single policy can anticipate all situations. This policy outlines the minimum elements to be included in all graduate course outlines.

- A graduate course outline must include the following:
 - Administrative details, such as the year and semester of the course, contact information for the instructor, instructor availability for student consultation, and any prerequisites
 - Course objectives
 - Required readings and any other required course material
 - Overview of the course content and its format
 - Description of all assignments (including participation), methods of evaluation, the weight given to each course component, due dates for student work, as well as penalties for late submissions
 - The Academic Integrity Policy
 - Any additional relevant statements, such as policies or statements referring to the possible modifications of the course, or research ethics

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- The graduate course outline must be made available to the Department/Graduate Program at least one week before the start of the course, and to students either before or at the first course meeting.
 - It is sometimes difficult to predict accurately the content and direction the course will take, so course outlines may indicate that alterations might take place as the course progresses. Instructors who wish to revise the course outline during the term should inform students in writing as early as possible in the course.
 - Departments/Graduate programs reserve the right to change dates, deadlines, and/or methods of assessment for courses in the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as illness of the instructor or a labour disruption.
 - Many graduate students register for 'reading' or 'independent study' courses, often taken by an individual student working with an instructor. In lieu of a course outline, instructors should negotiate early in the term a written agreement that outlines the work to be done by the student, the methods to be used to evaluate the student's work, the number and duration of face-to-face meetings, and any penalties for late submission of student work.
 - It is the responsibility of the Department/Graduate Program to keep the course outline up to date; the graduate course outline should be kept on file by the Department/Graduate Program for a minimum of one year after its last use.