



Proposing a CCSA Course

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CREATING YOUR COURSE PROPOSAL

1. The Course proposal

CCSA courses must be approved *in advance* by the faculty member's home institution therefore it is recommended that faculty review their campus requirement and the CCSA-provided advisories on teaching abroad. ***The importance of starting the approval process early cannot be stressed enough since planning is a cornerstone of CCSA programs.*** The goal of the approval process is to assist faculty in creating an affordable program with the highest academic standards. Realistic and well-thought learning goals and field activities enable CCSA to develop an affordable program.

CCSA maintains an online course proposal system found at www.ccsa.cc.

CCSA faculty may arrange for inclusion of a non-CCSA course within a CCSA program provided there is no conflict with any scheduled CCSA event and provided further that prior approval has been obtained from the Executive Director.

2. Course Proposal and Review Process

Courses for CCSA consortia programs are submitted, reviewed and approved according to a process designed to ensure from the outset that courses have academic validity and are being taught by faculty with appropriate credentials.

Courses and non-credit programs outside the normal CCSA program structure follow a similar pattern, but are customized to the member institution's processes.

- Proposed courses need clear academic learning goals that incorporate the particular destination. Teaching abroad is unlike courses taught on campus in many ways and CCSA provides guidance on preparing to teach abroad along with the campus reps and education abroad offices at your home institution.
- Course Proposal and Approval for general CCSA programs begins on the member campuses, where faculty are solicited to propose courses. Before any course proposal can be submitted to CCSA for consideration, course proposals must be reviewed and approved by the relevant department chair(s) in which the faculty member teaches and/or credit would be granted on the home campus.
- As stated in Part 2, you may propose an undergraduate or graduate level course or both levels. Your draft syllabi will need to differentiate between lower and upper division UG credit, graduate credit and Honors credit (if applicable).
- Course proposals must also be reviewed and signed by the local CCSA campus representative. Without the signature of a local approving official and the CCSA representative from the relevant campus, course proposals are not sent to the CCSA curriculum committee for consideration.
- Faculty (usually through their CCSA campus representative) submit course proposals using an online proposal form. The proposal form requires faculty to state proposed academic content, readings, course assignments, and grade composition. For courses being proposed for more than one level of credit (i.e. upper division and graduate), the course proposal must differentiate the course requirements for the two levels of credit.

- Course proposals must be accompanied by a current CV for each faculty member teaching the course. In addition to our member schools certifying the qualifications of their faculty, CCSA also reviews the CV for all faculty who submit course proposals to ensure uniformity of standards.
- The Curriculum Committee carefully considers all aspects of the proposal, but particular attention is paid to faculty qualifications and academic content. The rubric plays an important role in guiding the review process.
- The Curriculum Committee provides written assessment to the Executive Director.
- The Curriculum Committee may (1) recommend for approval, (2) approval with minor changes (to be arranged by the Executive Director), (3) approval only with significant changes, or (4) non-approval.

Team taught course proposals:

- All courses that are envisioned from the outset as being team taught must be clearly submitted as such, with both faculty meeting the CCSA requirements for faculty participation.
- Cross disciplinary courses that are intended to be offered for credit in more than one discipline must be submitted as team taught unless a single faculty member has credentials acceptable in both disciplines.
- Faculty proposing courses as team taught should give some advanced written consideration to how responsibility will be assigned should the course not make at the level of 24 students enrolled.

The Executive Director and Academic Director contact faculty whose proposal needs changes.

In the case of non-approval, the Executive Director contacts the campus representative to discuss under what circumstances, if any, a course might be reconsidered. Grounds for rejection include but are not limited to the faculty member lacking necessary credentials to teach the subject area or level or unworkable logical requirements.

- The Executive Director, in coordination with the Academic Director, selects courses to be included in the catalog.
- Because registration for courses takes place on each CCSA home campus, individual CCSA member institutions review, approve and assign credit in the appropriate disciplinary level. While each school employs a slightly different process for doing this, generally speaking a student from a CCSA member institution can only take a CCSA course if it has received approval on his/her home campus. Consequently, information from the course proposal is made available to CCSA representatives should they need it for campus approval. Course faculty may also provide additional information about the course upon request from campus representatives and students.

3. Resubmission of proposals from the preceding year's offerings

- **In the event a program is cancelled**, for any reason, the course can be included in a subsequent offering of the program. The faculty member must resubmit the course proposal, accompanied by a written recommendation from the campus rep regarding the efforts made by the faculty member to recruit in the previous offering. If the course does not recruit successfully for the second time, that proposal cannot be resubmitted the following year.
- In the event a program does go but **a course has not recruited sufficient students** to be included, there are two options:

1. *Faculty who have recruited successfully in prior years* may resubmit the course. Resubmitting faculty should be apprised of the precedent that new (or at least "not recent") faculty proposals take priority. If the course does not recruit successfully for the second time, that proposal cannot be resubmitted the following year.
2. *Faculty who have **not** recruited successfully in prior years* cannot resubmit the course *unless* there are extenuating circumstances that affected either the ability of the faculty to recruit or school participation/recruitment, e.g., a family or personal illness, loss of a campus rep, etc. These situations should be brought first to the Academic Director to make recommendations to the Executive Director. After having sat out one year, the faculty may resubmit a course proposal.

1. What are some keys to successful course proposals?

The keys to successful course proposals are the keys to successful recruiting and successful teaching on a CCSA program. CCSA Board members and campus reps developed a rubric to guide faculty to create a complete proposal. The curriculum committee uses the rubric to assess the proposal, so using the rubric from the start enables faculty to address essential elements needed to select courses. Our goal is to empower faculty to design the most effective and enjoyable course to teach that is evaluated in a transparent manner.

[Click here
for the
rubric.](#)

- **The course as proposed must give evidence of academic rigor with the special considerations of experiential learning**, and the proposal needs to give a sense that the faculty member has given thought to the following questions.



Does the course have legitimate academic goals and content and is this detailed in the proposal?



Are the required assignments/assessments appropriate to the credit level(s) requested for the course?



Does the faculty member have credentials in the field(s) in which the course is being offered?

- **The proposal must also make clear that the faculty member is aware of the special learning environment characteristic of short-term study abroad programs** and has found ways to take advantage of this unique setting in conveying the academic content of the course. Issues the CCSA Curriculum Committee will often raise about proposals is whether or not it is possible for the faculty member to do what is being proposed. For example, given that there is no computer lab, and sometimes even limited WiFi, would students be able to do certain projects that have been proposed?

Similarly, if group projects are required, has the faculty member given thought to the issue of the students coming from different institutions?

On two-week programs, if a course as proposed is particularly content-heavy, will there be sufficient dedicated class time and space to do what is being proposed?

Most importantly, however, how is the content going to be linked to place?



- **The course as proposed must be location specific** or at least offer a sound pedagogical and learning benefit for the course to be taught in this location. Such location specificity should begin even with the course title and description, but it should also continue into proposed course assignments, fieldtrips and activities. Even faculty without personal experience of a location should be able, through research, to envision and specify such connections.
- **Evidence must show that care and thought went into the preparation of the proposal.** Not all the details of the course need to be ironed out in the proposal, but have enough specifics been provided to reassure the Curriculum Committee that the proposal is well-conceived?
- **The course title and description must be appealing yet convey something about the content and focus of the course.** This may be the single hardest part about constructing the course proposal, but it is also one of the most important as the title and 100 words or so are a faculty member's best chance of grabbing the attention of students beyond his or her personal sphere of influence. Even among students known to the faculty member, this title and description are often essential to engage and hold student interest. One task the Executive Director takes on during the preparation of the catalog is to modify descriptions, especially if they have been noted by the Curriculum Committee as being somewhat lackluster.
- **The faculty member has given thought at least to a recruitment plan.** Recruitment takes a lot of time and effort. It's the rare course that "recruits itself" and even when that happens it's usually because the faculty member has done an excellent job on the item above.
- **The faculty member has obtained the academic permissions required.** For each discipline in which a course is being offered, the faculty member must obtain discipline-specific approvals by the appropriate person on his/her campus. For example, if a faculty member teaches in the History Department and a course is being proposed for credit in Political Science as well, then approval is needed in both areas. If History and Political Science are in the same department, it should be noted by the chair that the course has been approved for credit in both fields.

As a rule, faculty bringing proposals should review them in draft with their local CCSA representative before submitting them to that person for approval. The Academic Director and Executive Director of CCSA is also available if questions arise in the process of constructing a proposal.

When proposals are weak in one area or another, the CCSA Curriculum Committee will often recommend that a proposal be approved but with modifications, meaning that although there were issues, it was perceived that the proposal had enough merit to be worked on further. In such a case, the Executive Director, usually working together with the faculty member's Campus Representative and the Academic Director, will work directly on the issues raised by the committee.

On occasion, too many proposals in a single discipline or two proposals that are extremely similar in focus are submitted in a single application round. When this happens, the Executive Director may request that one or more proposals be tabled for a subsequent year. The common practice is to give a new faculty preference over a faculty member who has taught previously in order to open up more opportunities and to encourage the differentiation of course proposals. If this occurs, those proposals will generally not need to be resubmitted the following year and will be given priority for approval the next year.

4. Contacting the CCSA Office

If you have questions about the program and what you might be able to offer, please contact your home campus CCSA representative or the CCSA Central Office at 270-745-4512. The staff is always available to discuss your question and concerns.

We look forward to receiving your CCSA course proposal.

