

Graduate review of 400-500 dual-level courses

This document provides guidance on how to address the differences in expectations and evaluation between students in the undergraduate and graduate sections of 400-500 dual-level courses when developing a CIM course action or a course syllabus.

A **dual-level course** combines a 400-level undergraduate section and a 500-level graduate section, with both sections being offered through the *same* lectures. For instance, the lectures for F2F dual-level courses take place at the same time and location for both sections. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) states that courses with both undergraduate and graduate enrollment should “ensure that there is a clear distinction between the requirements of undergraduate students and graduate students” (Principles of Accreditation, Comprehensive Standard 3.6.1). It further states that institutions should “maintain higher rigor for graduate and post-baccalaureate programs if the same course is offered (or cross-listed) to both graduate/post-baccalaureate students and undergraduate students” (Principle 9.6).

Therefore, the CIM course record and the syllabus of a dual-level course must address both levels and clearly articulate the distinct requirements, illustrating the way the graduate section of the course aligns with graduate-level expectations for academic work. To ensure clear compliance with SACSCOC’s standards, the Graduate School requires that faculty developing or editing a dual-level course include the following in their dual-level course proposals.

1. Develop and include at least one graduate-specific student learning outcome (SLO), in addition to SLOs common to both populations of students. The graduate SLOs will generally correspond to the higher levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy¹ (analysis, evaluation, creation). A description of the assessment method for each graduate SLOs must also be included.
2. (i) Provide a detailed description of the student evaluation methods for both populations of students. In particular, in the CIM form, create a row for each evaluation method for both graduate and undergraduate sections and indicate in the text box the differences in content, expectations, and outcomes for each level;
or
(ii) Explain, in the justification section of the CIM form, the nature of the differences in expectation and evaluation between both populations of students.

¹ See for instance Armstrong, P. (2010). Bloom’s Taxonomy. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>.