

To: All Departments and Division of VUSE  
From: Hector O. Silva, Chief Business Officer, VUSE  
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Date: 2/7/2022  
Subject: School of Engineering Summer Course Policy, Procedures, and Principles

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**Purpose:**

Outline a policy and procedural document for requesting and subsequent approval/denial of undergraduate summer courses as well as graduate and professional didactic courses not already part of a separate financial model such as our Distance Learning Programs (DLP) Master's.

**Policy:**

The School of Engineering requires that net tuition (after aid and academic services fee) for a summer course generate at least twice the instructional personnel costs and that the course has a minimum of five students. The Sr. Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education makes the final decision on "GO" or "NO GO" for undergraduate courses and will consult with the Sr. Associate Dean for Graduate education with regards to combined undergraduate/graduate courses. The Sr. Associate Dean may consider other non-financial/non-enrollment minimum factors for courses that do not meet the criteria. The Sr. Associate Dean for Graduate Education makes the final decision on "GO" or "NO GO" for graduate/professional courses.

**Procedure:**

1. Any course listed in the university catalogs may be proposed to the hosting department chair or division director as a summer offering.
2. The instructor of record (IOR) for a summer course must have a current Vanderbilt faculty appointment and must be approved by the department chair/division director.
  - a. A postdoctoral fellow may be appointed as instructor of record with the above noted appointment and approval. If the individual does not have teaching experience, regular in-service training and evaluation by the department is strongly recommended.
  - b. An advanced graduate student may be appointed to teach a summer undergraduate course upon recommendation of the hosting department or division, provided these SACSCOC accreditation requirements are met:
    - i. The graduate student must hold a master's in the teaching discipline or have completed 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.
    - ii. A regular member of the faculty experienced in the teaching discipline must provide direct supervision of the graduate student.

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- iii. The graduate student must receive regular in-service training. The VU Center for Teaching is a good resource for this.
    - iv. The graduate student must receive planned and periodic evaluations.
3. The department chair or division director or staff delegate will forward proposals for summer courses and IOR's to the Office of Academic services.
  - a. This will trigger the Office of Academic services to send a link to an Excel form to be used to submit and maintain specific requests for instructor salary and TA / grader support at least one month before the start of the corresponding summer session.
  - b. For **Summer 2022**, courses may be taught fully in person or fully online. No hybrid courses are to be offered. Those courses proposed to be taught online must be designed for online learning with appropriate plans for facilitating student interaction and engagement and for assessing achievement in a manner appropriate for online education. Proposals for online courses must be discussed with and approved by the relevant senior associate dean.
4. The Office of Academic Services AND departments will maintain the Excel form (updates based on enrollment growth/decline, etc.) until final decisions are made.
5. "GO" or "NO GO" decisions for summer courses are made by the relevant associate dean in collaboration with the chief business officer generally two weeks before and no later than one week before the start of the corresponding summer session.
6. Those determinations will be communicated by the Chief Business Officer to the departments prior to the start of the session assuming proposing unit adheres to step 3.
7. Departments will use COA 150.05.15000.(appropriate natural account).036.000.000.0.0 for instructor pay and teaching assistant or grader support.
  - a. If applicable, for a graduate TA support charged to this COA may include the Student Services Fee (\$96 in 2022), Student Health Fee (\$ 102 in 2022), and the minimum tuition fee for TA's who are registered for zero credit hours in the summer (\$200 in 2022).
  - b. If the graduate TA must be registered in summer for more than zero credit hours, they must have permission of the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs and the source for tuition funds must be identified.

### **Guiding Principles**

1. Faculty may choose to offer a summer course in the full summer session, first half summer session, second half summer session, or Maymester. Unless otherwise approved by the appropriate Associate Dean, courses must meet in one of the standard meeting patterns (dates, days, and times).
2. Unless otherwise arranged, faculty are paid 1/9<sup>th</sup> of their academic year salary to teach a three-credit hour course in the summer if the faculty member is the sole instructor.
3. The school's summer course funding model as described in this document should not be used as a funding gap mechanism for unfunded summer RA's.
4. Teaching assistant support for each class should follow the normal practices for TA support in academic year courses with similar enrollment numbers and mode of instruction.

- a. A full summer session course may have up to as many TAs assigned as would be the case for a fall or spring offering of the same course with the same enrollment.
  - b. In recognition of the demands of a compressed timetable, a half summer session course may have up to as many as twice the number of TAs assigned as would be the case for a fall or spring offering of the same course with the same enrollment.
  - c. The cost of the TA stipend must be included in the cost for the assigned course the graduate student is supporting. Revenue for that course must exceed two times the total faculty and TA expenses for that course in order for the course to be offered.
5. Appointment of a graduate student to a TA-ship for a summer session is subject to these principles. Questions should be directed to the Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs.
- a. Assignments are made to support the instructional needs of the course; summer TA-ships are not meant to replace primary sources of graduate student support (i.e., research and fellowship support).
  - b. Summer TA support covers stipend, fees, and zero-hour minimum tuition only; any other tuition for the graduate student must come from other sources.
  - c. A graduate student assigned to be a TA in a summer session is expected to allocate no more than 19 hours per week to support the assigned class(es).
  - d. A TA may be assigned to support more than one summer class in the same session BUT must split their 19 hours per week between the classes and will be paid for only one TA-ship for that session.
  - e. A graduate student cannot hold more than one full TA or RA appointment at the same time.
  - f. A graduate student can hold a full TA appointment in the first summer session and a second full TA appointment in the second summer session.
  - g. For the purpose of TA-ships in the summer, one summer session is defined as a 1.5-month period (session 1 = May 16-June 30; session 2 = July 1-Aug 15). It is understood that this might not align perfectly with the actual dates of a summer session.
6. Vanderbilt undergraduate graders may be hired to support summer session courses if they are registered in the summer and/or following fall term. A student who graduates in May is not eligible to be hired as a VU student employee that summer.
- a. Expenses for these individuals must be included in the costs for offering the course. Typical grader pay is \$10 to \$11 per hour.
  - b. Graders may work up to 40 hours / week in the summer for all VU-jobs combined if not themselves taking classes.
  - c. Graders who are enrolled in summer classes may work up to 19 hours per week for all VU-jobs combined.
  - d. International undergraduate graders may work up to 19 hours per week for all VU-jobs combined, whether or not they are enrolled in summer classes. It is recommended that international students consult with the ISSS if they have questions about their ability to work given their visa status.