

FAQ: Common Reasons Course Proposals Are Returned

This document outlines common reasons course proposals are returned by the [UCR Course Committee](#). Reviewing this guidance prior to submission may help minimize the likelihood of return and avoid delays in the review process.

1. Incomplete or Insufficient or Missing Syllabus:

A complete ten-week syllabus must be submitted with the proposal. The syllabus should include:

- a week-by-week or topic-based schedule,
- clear descriptions of instructional activities (lectures, discussions, laboratories, or other instructional formats), and
- student expectations/ responsibilities inside and outside of class.

For online course proposals, an in-person syllabus should be submitted along with the online version.

2. Course activities not clearly described:

- The course activities listed in the syllabus should be **consistent** with those described in the proposal.
- Discussion sections or instructional activities should describe student engagement, participation, and any related activities.
- Independent or Non-Lecture Activities need to be adequately explained
 - Describe the nature and structure of independent work,
 - Indicate how these activities are evaluated, and
 - Confirm that instructional time supports the assigned units.
- Courses offered in online modality should include:
 - indication of teaching format (synchronous/asynchronous),
 - description of which (if any) course activities will take place in-person, such as exams,
 - clear documentation of contact hours between students and instructors,
 - demonstration that contact hours meet the policy standard for regular and substantive interaction.

3. Course Content Alignment and Overlap Clarification: Need to state whether content overlaps with existing courses:

- Explanation of how the proposed course is distinct in scope, level, focus, or approach with existing courses, or
- Justification for overlap: provide an academic rationale when overlap exists

4. Course structure clarity:

- Units, contact information, office hours and instructional format must be clear and **consistent** across the syllabus, proposal form, and unit calculations, and
- Syllabi should explain how components (lecture, discussion, laboratory, and independent work) fit together, and contribute to total units.

Pre-Submission Review Checklist for Common Reasons for Return

Prior to submitting a course proposal, confirm that the following items have been addressed:

- A complete and current syllabus is **attached**
- The syllabus includes a detailed weekly or topic-based schedule
- All instructional activities are clearly described
- Student expectations and responsibilities are clearly stated
- Potential course overlap is identified and addressed
- Units, contact information, office hours are clearly explained and consistent across documents

Useful Resources:

1. [UCR Course Committee Homepage](#)
2. [General Policies Governing Courses of Instruction \(Course Approval Guidelines-Complete\)](#)
3. [Syllabus Template](#)
4. [Faculty Approver's Course Proposal Checklist](#)
5. [Course Change Proposals: Add Online Modality to an Approved Course](#)
6. [Request to Revise a Course for Online only](#)
7. [Request for Extension of Courses Proposal Submission Deadline](#)
8. Contact if there are questions or concerns:

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