1. Academic Courses at the 500-Level

A graduate course is a course whose contents require a high level of cognitive processing, including synthesis, conceptualizing, critical evaluation, and problem solving. When many courses are mapped within a student’s program of study, the end goal is to prepare them to critically evaluate and communicate original research, scholarship, and creative activity.

The guidelines for a graduate course are as follows:

- The course should not be a survey and introductory course to the discipline. The course content should be commensurate with the expectation that students in the class already possess knowledge of the discipline equal to that of a typical undergraduate degree holder.
- The course should contain a communication component and include relevant required and suggested readings of research, scholarship, and creative activity in the discipline.
- A faculty member teaching the course should (a) have a terminal degree relevant to the course and be current in the course discipline or (b) be a current and recognized contributor to the course’s discipline. (Requests for exceptions to this policy should be approved by the vice provost for graduate and professional education.)
- The course size should be governed by course objective, funding, opportunity for student and faculty interaction, and the special requirements of the course.
- Some 500-level courses may be graded as S/F. These can be listed on a Program of Study, but do not count toward the minimum graded (A-F) credits.
- A graded course (A-F) can be taken under the Pass/Fail grading option; however, such P/F coursework cannot be applied to a student’s Program of Study.