

Tips for Receiving a Rapid Review by the Curriculum Committee

When reviewing new course proposals submitted through [Curriculog](#), the Curriculum Committee primarily focuses on six items: (1) catalog description; (2) course cap; (3) credit hours; (4) all-college requirements, if applicable; (5) major/minor requirements, if applicable; and (6) syllabus.

You can expedite CC's review of your requests by making sure of the following:

(1) Your **course description** follows the Skidmore catalog style (please note: your catalog description does not have to be the same as the course description on your syllabus):

- Begin the description with a sentence fragment (e.g. "An exploration of...").
- Avoid the use of academic jargon or terms that the average undergraduate may not be familiar with.
- Use student-centered language whenever possible (e.g. "students will learn" rather than "this class will teach").
- Strive for clarity and conciseness.

Examples of particularly well-written and well-conceived course descriptions are available on the Curriculum Committee website

(https://www.skidmore.edu/curriculum_committee/forms/index.php).

(2) Your **course cap** is the same as the College's prescribed course cap for the designated course level (i.e. 28 for 100-level courses, 26 for 200-level courses, and 18 for 300-level courses). Please refer to the next page for guidelines on requesting a lower course cap.

(3) Every **credit hour** for the course fulfills the standard of two hours of work outside of class for every one hour in class (e.g., one credit hour of work includes 15 hours in class + 30 hours outside of class for a total of 45 hours). If you use the flexible 4th credit hour, you must provide a detailed description of the workload and activities that will account for the additional *45 hours*.

(4) If you want your course to fulfill an **all-college requirement**, review the guidelines on the Curriculum Committee's website (https://www.skidmore.edu/curriculum_committee/all_college.php) to make sure that it satisfies all of the relevant criteria before you check the box.

(5) You consult and include all the departments and programs that will **cross-list** the course when selecting "Department or Program" on the form and identify which specific requirements this course will count towards (Cluster, Area, Group, Core, etc...) within the major/minor in Boxes 16b and 16c.

(6) You attach a complete syllabus, preferably with the recommended statements (e.g., academic integrity, special accommodation, Title IX, and S/U, if S/U is a grade option).

Requesting a Lower Course Cap

Faculty who wish to have a lower course cap than prescribed for the course-level they are teaching should review the “Course Cap Guidance” section in the Curriculum Committee’s Operating Code (http://www.skidmore.edu/curriculum_committee/documents/CC-OperatingCode1.2.pdf). This section underscores that the CC allows lower course caps only when there are space, equipment, or safety considerations; course-type considerations (e.g., Scribner Seminars); and specific pedagogical reasons. Although the CC will consider requests for a lower course cap by faculty who plan to use unconventional pedagogical approaches, such petitions must make a compelling case that the lower cap is essential for the instructor to pursue his or her pedagogical approach (i.e., the students’ academic experience would be severely compromised if the CC did not approve the lower cap).

Guidelines for Assessing Course Fees

The Curriculum Committee will typically approve course fees for the following reasons:

- (1) To allow for the department/program to purchase non-reusable materials at a discount for students.
- (2) To pay for private instruction.

The Curriculum Committee will typically not approve fees for the following reasons:

- (1) To defray the cost of the repair or replacement of equipment.
- (2) To purchase reusable materials.

Faculty interested in charging a fee on students must provide a rationale for the fee level. Faculty should bear in mind that all requests for new course fees must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.