

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS, SYMBOLS, AND TERMS

## Course Descriptions, Symbols, and Terms Explanation of Course Notations

Certain notations are uniformly used in the course descriptions in this Bulletin.

- Courses are not repeatable for credit unless a statement, “May be repeated for credit,” appears in the course description.
- The figure in parentheses following the course title indicates the number of semester units for the course. Some courses may be offered for varying units and are indicated by specifying the range of units; e.g., (1-3).
- All course prerequisites are listed at the beginning of the course description.
- An “\*” denotes that a course prerequisite is enforced at the time of registration. Prerequisites without a “\*” may be enforced by the instructor up to the end of add/drop.
- “Restricted to” denotes that the programs listed in the prerequisite are enforced at the time of registration.
- The statement “Topics to be specified in the Class Schedule” at the beginning of the course description indicates that a more specific topic has been developed and the specific topic(s) will be listed in the Class Schedule.
- Some courses are offered jointly by one or more departments; e.g., I R 321 is also offered as PLSI 321. This notation appears at the end of the course description. “May not be repeated under alternate prefix.”
- Course attributes are listed below the course descriptions signify General Education courses [GE], U.S. History and Government requirement courses [USH, USG], California State and Local Government courses [CSLG], and Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement courses [GWAR].

### Course Descriptions

Course descriptions briefly describe the content or subject matter to be covered and provide additional information on units of credit, the level of instruction (see course numbering system), and prerequisites.

Students may not earn credit in a cross-listed course a second time under an alternate prefix.

Information on specific offerings (times, rooms, instructors) will be found in the Class Schedule which is available on the SF State website in advance of fall, spring, and summer semesters. Experimental and variable topic courses which are offered each semester can be found in the Class Schedule.

### Course Numbering System

Because of the differences in the organization and content of the various disciplines and professions, there is no uniform way of numbering courses that would be equally useful in all fields of knowledge.

In general, it may be assumed that advances in division level (lower, upper, graduate) correlate with more difficult and challenging academic work. Upper-division courses typically include a statement that indicates the prerequisite coursework. Sometimes, however, disciplines organize

their course numbering partly in terms of criteria other than the degree of difficulty. It should be noted, too, that some students find introductory courses to be more demanding than advanced, specialized courses. In such courses, a more comprehensive approach and the first exposure to new ways of thinking may be harder for some individuals than covering a smaller, more familiar area in much greater detail. Also, please note that the 9000–9999 series is designated for professional level courses which award Continuing Education Units (CEUs). CEUs are nationally recognized units of measurement for participation in education and training programs for which academic credit is not awarded. The following course numbering system is used at this University:

0-99	Remedial instruction and non-credit courses (units and grades earned will not count towards graduation requirements)
100-299	Lower-division
300-699	Upper-division
700-899	Graduate courses
900-999	Doctoral courses
9000-9999	Professional level courses offered for Continuing Education Units (CEUs); may neither be applied to nor substituted for graduation requirements.

### Paired Courses

It is the policy of the University to permit individual departments or program areas to develop advanced undergraduate and graduate level courses with virtually identical subject matter and to offer them in a paired arrangement with a single instructor and a common meeting schedule. The mechanism of pairing graduate and advanced undergraduate courses is a means of facilitating programs or circumstances where limited resources otherwise would require that the quality of one program be sacrificed to maintain the quality of the other.

### Special Course Numbers

For uniformity, certain types of courses have been listed by all departments and colleges with the same numbers:

- 699 and 899 are used for undergraduate and graduate independent study
- 893 for written creative works
- 894 for creative work projects
- 895 for field study or research projects
- 896 for directed reading
- 897 for graduate research
- 898 for master's thesis

### Experimental and Temporary Courses

All departments are authorized to offer experimental or temporary courses. These are not specifically described in the Bulletin. Descriptions may be obtained from the online Bulletin when such courses appear in the Class Schedule. The numbers 274, 277, 674, 677, 874, and 877 are used by all departments to designate lower-division, upper-division, and graduate levels, respectively. The standard Bulletin description for these courses is:

**274/277 Exploration in (name of discipline): (subtitle specifying content) (1-6)**

A course involving exploration of a major problem or theme or an experimental method of instruction, with variable content as specified in the course subtitle in the Class Schedule. May be repeated for credit when different content is involved.

**Remedial Instruction and Non-Credit Courses**

Courses numbered 0-99 are remedial courses. Units and grades earned will not count towards meeting graduation requirements.

**International Study Courses**

San Francisco State provides the opportunity for students enrolled in the California State University International Programs to receive credit for special study or for subjects taken at universities abroad. For details of the program, consult the International Programs page. The numbers 292, 492, and 792 are used to designate lower-division, upper-division, and graduate levels, respectively.

**292 Projects in Study Abroad (subject to be designated by Overseas Resident Director, International Programs) (1-3)**

Prerequisite: consent of the major advisor. Open only to students in California State University International Programs. May be repeated for credit when different subjects are involved.

**Independent Study**

Under independent study courses, upper-division and graduate students can pursue topics or problems of special interest beyond the scope of a regular course under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The work is of a research or creative nature, and normally culminates in a paper, project, comprehensive examination, or performance. Before registering, the student must have the topic approved by the instructor who will be supervising the independent study, as well as by the advisor and the department chair. (Forms are available in department offices and online at <http://registrar.sfsu.edu/>.) The course numbers for independent study are 699 and 899. In most cases, independent study courses may be repeated for credit. Check the description for limitations.

**Methods of Instruction**

The forms and methods of teaching vary widely in specific classes. The more traditional methods of lecturing, discussion, laboratory work, and individually supervised research or projects are being supplemented by such learning resources as group and individual exercises, television, films and records, and videotaping. Modern specialized facilities and equipment are used in many courses in different fields. These include: laboratories for teaching the sciences, a planetarium, studios for teaching the fine arts, a variety of facilities for teaching communications, a language laboratory for teaching foreign languages and linguistics courses, a speech and hearing clinic, the Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies, the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, and the Sierra Nevada Field Campus.

SF State encourages experimentation and innovation in teaching and welcomes a diversity of approaches. Increasingly and with growing help from students, efforts are being made on the campus to examine, evaluate, and improve the learning experiences.