

SPECIAL COURSES

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AUTHORITY	SENATE
PRIMARY CONTACT	APPROPRIATE DEAN

POLICY

The University recognizes that student learning can be enhanced by providing students the opportunity to go beyond the usual curriculum thereby enriching a program of study. Three methods through which such enhancements may occur are Selected Topics courses, Directed Studies courses, and SERV courses.

REGULATIONS

I. SELECTED TOPICS COURSES

- 1) Selected Topics courses contain content that varies from year to year and/or from instructor to instructor. The variability in content is sufficiently large that it would be appropriate for students to gain credit for taking multiple ‘versions’ of this course. These courses may also be used to offer instruction in a specialised area that is only possible due to the presence of short-term/visiting faculty.
- 2) These courses are identified in the calendar in the form of a ‘shell’ that defines the broad field of study with titles such as ‘Selected Topics in ...’ or ‘Topics in ...’ or ‘Studies in ...’ or Special Topics in ...” Academic approval of the ‘shell’ will follow Policy ED 8-2 Undergraduate Course and Program Approvals or the graduate course and program approval process.
- 3) Given that students may be able to receive credit for multiple versions of a Selected Topics Course, such courses will have a subtitle description to differentiate one version of the course from another on student transcripts. Approval of the subtitle offering is by the department Chair and Dean.
- 4) Individual programs may choose to limit the number of credits a student may accumulate from Selected Topics courses.

II. DIRECTED STUDIES COURSES

- 1) Directed Studies courses - are offered to small groups of students only.
- 2) These courses are identified in the calendar in the form of a 'shell' titled 'Directed Studies'. Academic approval of the 'shell' will follow Policy ED 8-2 Undergraduate Course and Program Approvals or the graduate course and program approval process.
- 3) Given that students may be able to receive credit for multiple Directed Studies courses, such courses will have a subtitle description to differentiate one version of the course from another on student transcripts. Approval of the subtitle offering is handled by the faculty/school as indicated in II. 4. below.
- 4) After consulting with the proposed faculty supervisor or OL Program Coordinator, the student or instructor must submit a description of the course or project on the Directed Studies form to the Department Chair and/or OL Program Coordinator and subsequently to the Dean (or Dean's designate) for approval. The description of the course or project will include a topic or project title (the subtitle which will appear on the transcript), a list of learning outcomes, major content or task areas, a list of resources to be used (text, bibliography, etc.), a method of evaluation, a supervision schedule, a start date , and a completion date.
- 5) Programs and departments may determine specific eligibility requirements (e.g. minimum GPA, fourth-year standing) for Directed Studies courses in their area.
- 6) Students register for Directed Studies courses following the usual registration procedures by providing a copy of the approved Directed Studies form at registration.
- 7) Individual programs may choose to limit the number of credits a student may accumulate from Directed Studies courses.

III. SERV COURSES

The University supports the use of experiential learning in all programs, and as such, the regulations that follow are not intended to restrict the use of experiential learning in regular course offerings at the University. The intent of these regulations is to outline the use of the acronym SERV (Service Learning) at TRU.

- 1) SERV courses provide a venue for students to share their knowledge and skills with the community and to acquire new knowledge and skills through approved community-based projects. To be eligible to receive SERV credit, the student's service learning must demonstrate civic participation and community involvement, and must require some measure of formal critical reflection; in addition, the project must involve students (normally 3 - 5 hours per week) in organized community service that addresses local needs. These courses are titled SERV and are not part of a standard program of study, nor are they offered on a regular cycle; otherwise the course would be given a discipline specific acronym.
- 2) SERV courses are offered to small groups of students only (normally no more than five students at any time).
- 3) These courses are identified in the calendar in the form of a 'shell' with the acronym SERV and the title "Service Learning". Academic approval is required for each faculty/school that intends to offer the 'shell' according to Policy ED 8-2 Undergraduate Course and Program Approvals.

- 4) Given that students may be able to receive credit for multiple SERV courses, such a course will have a subtitle description to differentiate one version of the course from another on student transcripts. Approval of the subtitle offering is handled by the faculty/school, as indicated in III. 6. below.
- 5) Students must have the agreement of a TRU faculty member who will supervise and support the individualized/group learning project.
- 6) Service learning projects may be initiated by students; by community members, groups, agencies, and organizations; or by faculty. For the project to qualify for service learning credit, a faculty member must first authorize the course and then agree to supervise, support, and evaluate the project. The Service Learning Form, which describes the SERV course, must be approved by the supervising faculty member, the Chair, and the Dean (or Dean's designate). The description of the course will include, at a minimum, the sub-title of the course, a list of learning outcomes, a method of evaluation, a supervision schedule, a start date, and a completion date.
- 7) Students registering for SERV courses follow the usual registration procedures by providing a copy of the approved Service Learning form at registration.
- 8) Programs and departments may determine specific eligibility requirements (e.g. minimum GPA) for SERV courses in their area.
- 9) SERV courses normally carry elective credit, although, with departmental approval, courses that are directly related to the student's program of study may be used to satisfy Major requirements.
- 10) Students may take up to twelve credits of SERV toward their degrees. Individual programs may choose to further restrict the number and level of credits a student may accumulate from SERV courses.