

Style for Course Descriptions in a Course Catalog

The rules of style for course descriptions in a catalog are different from those appropriate to many other forms of writing. What is good style for the syllabus that an instructor hands out to students may be poor style for a catalog entry, and *vice versa*.

<link>[Examples of course descriptions written in the proper style](#)

<link>[Guidelines for writing course descriptions](#)

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GEA 2210 Geography of the United States and Canada

A comprehensive systematic survey of the physical, economic and social character of the geographic regions of the United States and Canada and their significance in the economic and political affairs of the world.

Template 2: <Noun phrase>.

<Noun phrase>

Examples:

CLA 2100 The Glory That Was Greece

A broad cultural view of the classical Greek world. Greek sources read in translation.

CHM 2210 Organic Chemistry 1

The first half of the CHM 2210/2211 sequence intended for majors and preprofessional students. A study of the structures, syntheses and reactions of organic compounds.

ECP 3203 Labor Economics

Determinants of demand for labor and labor supply. Labor market equilibrium and changes in the equilibrium due to changes in unionization, public policies, technology and trade. Study of the effects of skill, job amenities and discrimination on wage differentials

Template 3: <Noun phrase>.

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PHY 3221 Mechanics 1

First part of two semester sequence in classical mechanics. Topics include matrices, vector calculus, Newtonian mechanics, frames of reference, conservation laws, harmonic oscillator.

Template 6 : <Adjectival phrase>. <One or more complete sentences with additional information> .

Examples:

LIN 4033 Studies in Etymology: The Roots of English

Designed to equip students with principles of etymology and an ability to recognize the origin of words by their form. Focus is on word formation and change in form and meaning, the linguistic background of English; the sociocultural history of English in England; and the input from classical sources.

TUR 2340 Turkish for Heritage Learners 1

For students with significant bilingual speaking and listening backgrounds. The main emphasis is on reading, writing and expanding vocabulary.

Template 7 : <One or more complete sentences whose subjects cannot be omitted>.

Examples:

AMH 4317 History by Hollywood

Hollywood films are compared with traditional historiographic accounts to explore the cultural and political history of the 1950s, '60s and '70s, including the Montgomery Bus Boycott, civil rights, the Vietnam War and political assassinations

EAP 2932 Introduction to Campus Culture for International Visitors

Through a (1hour) lecture and (2 hour) discussion session per week, the students learn about the major aspects of U.S. university life and activities and contrast them with equivalent structures in their respective countries.

WST 2611 Humanities Perspectives on Gender and Sexuality

This course uses close readings of cultural representations (in literature, the visual arts, movies, television, the Internet, etc.) to understand intersecting categories of identity such as gender, sexuality, class and race. The course will examine how such categories operate in everything from novels to YouTube to the evening news.

Guidelines for writing course - descriptions

1. Complete sentences are usually not necessary, although most other rules of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and usage should be followed

2. If the subject of a lead-off clause is the same as the subject of the main clause, the subject should usually be omitted. In these cases, the sentence structure is implicit: the noun phrase is the

Some examples of how to edit a draft of a course -description

Below are a few examples intended to illustrate some ways that common stylistic errors can be fixed, and unnecessarily -long descriptions shortened. All are taken from Forms UCC1 (New Course Transmittal Form) submitted to the College Curriculum Committee.

1. Initial draft:

This course is an introduction to X. In this course, we will discuss A, B, and C.

Acceptable version for catalog:

An introduction to X. Topics include A, B, and C.

In this example