KNUST POLICY 0005

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi

Guidelines for Course Codes, Names and Credit Hours

GUIDELINES FOR **COURSE CODES, NAMES & CREDIT HOURS**

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMASI-GHANA
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PLANNING UNIT

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Forward

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi has a mission to advance knowledge in science and technology through creating an environment for undertaking relevant research, quality teaching, entrepreneurship training and community engagement to improve the quality of life. In order to achieve this mission, there is the need to have Guidelines for Course Codes, Names and Credit Hours.

This publication traces the development of the principles and practices of course coding and credit loading to ensure consistency.

The University is therefore, grateful to all those who ensured the initiation, development and approval of this Policy.

Professor K. Obiri-Danso
VICE-CHANCELLOR

Acknowledgement

As part of the strategic planning mandate of the Quality Assurance and Planning Unit (QAPU), university policies are initiated and proposed for approval by the Academic Board. The University therefore, initiated the Guidelines for Course Codes, Names and Credit Hours which was approved by the Academic Board.

This policy provides a framework to appreciate the structure of our academic programmes by explaining the principles under which our courses are assigned some codes, names and credit hours.

The QAPU is grateful to Prof. Imoro Braimah for drafting these guidelines, and the members of the various committees that reviewed it. We are equally indebted to the staff of QAPU who facilitated the entire process.

Lastly, we wish to appreciate the contribution of all staff of this University who contributed in several ways in developing and approving this Policy.

PROF. CHRISTIAN AGYARE
HEAD, QAPU
AUGUST, 2018

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Guidelines For Course Codes, Names & Credit Hours

Introduction

In order to appreciate the structure of our academic programmes, we need to understand the principles under which our courses are assigned some codes, names and credit hours. The purpose of this publication to is to trace the development of the principles and practices of course coding and credit loading to ensure consistency. For the purpose of this publication a good understanding of some concepts by way of definition is essential.

Definition of Concepts

A **programme** comprises a number of courses of studies that are related and all together lead to the achievement of an objective which is normally the award of a certificate indicating that the awardee has acquired some knowledge or set skills. The duration of the programme of study may be fixed in terms of the number of years of study and/or comprise a number of credit hours of study. In other words a programme comprises a number of courses of studies successfully carried out over a certain period that could contribute towards the award of a degree or certificate.

A **course** comprises a number of related subjects/topics that are delivered to students through an appropriate medium that could include lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, project work, laboratory work etc. The choice of mode of delivery is at the discretion of the lecturer in consultation with the head of department.

A **transcript** of academic record is normally issued to a student/graduate indicating the courses studied and the grades earned for each

course. In most instances the marks earned are used together with the credit hours to determine the class (e.g. first class, second class etc.).

Levels of Academic Programmes

The level of an academic programme indicates the type of certificate that will be issued at the end of the programme. The table below indicates the levels and the corresponding degrees issued.

Table 1: Levels of Academic Programmes

No.	Level	Type of Certificate/Degree
1.	Certificate	Certificate
2.	Diploma	Diploma (Undergraduate)
3.	Degree	Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) Bachelor Education (B.Ed.)
4.	Diploma	Postgraduate Diploma
5.	Masters	Master of Arts (M.A.) Master of Science (M.Sc.) Master of Education (M.Ed.) Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)
6	Doctorate (Terminal Degree)	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Doctor of Education (Ed.D) Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

As a result of some educational reforms in Ghana a policy directive was issued in the early 1980s requesting the Universities in the country to cede off the certificate and diploma programmes to the then polytechnics. The Universities were then expected to concentrate on undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

Each of the levels stated in table 1 has a total number of minimum and maximum credit hours that a student must accumulate in order to earn the certificate or degree. By registering a number of courses that are often on offer each semester, students accumulate credit hours for graduation.

Course Codes

Every programme has a set of courses that progressively transfer a set of knowledge, skills and competencies. These courses are structured in such a way that they complement each other even though they may be covering different subjects. For the purpose of recognition and distinction they are named and coded. The names and codes are designed in such a way that they can easily be identified to belong to a certain family or body of knowledge, year or level and the semester that the course is being offered.

A course code has two components, i.e. a letter code and a numerical code. The letter code normally can be between two to four or five letters and they are chosen carefully to indicate the name of the programme. Three to four letter codes are more common than one and five letter codes. The letter codes are chosen to identify the name of the programme of study e.g. PHY for Physics, CE for Civil Engineering, SP for Settlement Planning, SOC for Sociology, and ECON for Economics etc. The letter code should neither represent names of courses nor names of Faculty/University.

The numerical component of the course code is fixed at three. The first number represents the year of the programme. So the first year is 1, year 2 is 2, year 3 is 3 and year 4 is 4. Year 5 (5) and Year 6 (6) are for masters while 7, 8 and 9 are reserved for PhD.

The middle numeric character in the course code indicates whether the course is a core course or an elective course to the area of specialization as well as the level of the programme. All pre-degree programmes ranging from certificate, diploma to higher national diploma have codes ranging from 0-5. All degree programmes start from 5. Core courses for degree programmes are assigned 5 while elective courses are assigned 6. For example CHE 155 is a core course in Chemical Engineering in the first year and the first semester. CHE 165 is an elective course in the first year and the first semester.

The last numerical code indicates the semester in which the course is being offered. Before the advent of the semester system the courses were numbered serially in a year. With the semester system which has

two semesters the codes are conveniently divided into odd numbers for the first semester and even numbers for the second semester. For example code numbers ending with 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 for first semester and 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 for second semester.

The two components of the course codes are expected to make the course unique within the University. It is important for the University to ensure that course codes are not duplicated. It is important to note that the numerical code could be repeated but the two components of the code must not be repeated within the same University. An example of two course codes are PL 253, ECON 253. In this example the numerical code 253 is the same in both courses but the letter codes are not the same.

The numerical codes by level of degrees are indicated in table 2 below.

Numerical Code Range	Level of Certificate/Degree
101 – 149 201 – 249	Certificate Diploma
151 –	Degree Year 1
251	Degree Year 2
351	Degree Year 3
451	Degree Year 4
551	Masters Year 1
651	Masters Year 2
751 851 951	PhD Year 1 PhD Year 2 PhD Year 3

Course Names

In addition to course codes, names are assigned to courses to indicate the topics or subjects that are to be covered in that course. This name is specific to the area of knowledge being promoted by the course. It is actually the title of the course. Examples include Planning Surveys and Research Methods, Statistics, etc.

Credit Hours

Each course is assigned a number of credit hours. It is a weighted factor in the computation of the average points earned by students at the end of the semester. Credit hours normally labelled C, could comprise only theory hours normally labelled T or a combination of both theory and Practical hours normally labelled P. A course could comprise only theory or only practical or both theory and practical. The theory hours indicate the number of contact hours used by the lecturer in teaching the theoretical aspect of the course. The practical hours on the other hand, indicate the number of contact hours used to deliver the practical aspect of the course and it may be in the form of laboratory work, studio/workshop, field work, etc.

For each programme, the relationship between the Credit Hours and the Theory/Practical Hours must be established. The practice in KNUST is as follows:

1 theory hour is equivalent to 1 credit hour (i.e. 1T = 1C)

2, or 3 or 4 practical hours is equivalent to 1 credit hour (i.e. 2P = 1C or 3P = 1C or 4P = 1C)

For the purpose of consistency, if a department decides that 2P = 1C that should be maintained throughout the programme. If they adopt 3P = 1C, it must be so through out the programme.

Thus the relationship between C, P and T could be summarised as follows:

T + P/xi = C where xi is the scale factor that could be 2, 3 or 4.

In a typical course structure there is an indication of the minimum and maximum credit hours a student can register per semester as well as the total minimum and maximum credit hours that a student must accumulate for graduation (see table 3). The KNUST policy is that the minimum credit hours per semester should be 15 and the maximum should be 21.

Table 3: Total No. of Credit Hours by Level

Programme Level	No. of Semesters	Minimum – Maximum Credit Hours a Semester	Minimum – Maximum Cumulated Credit Hours
One (1) Year Certificate	2	15-21	30 – 42
Two (2) Year Certificate	4	15-21	60 – 84
Two (2) Year Diploma	4	15-21	60 – 84
Three (3) Year Degree	6	15-21	90 – 126
Four (4) Year Degree	8	15-21	120 – 168

Programme Structure

The programme structure is the framework that summarises the content of the programme in a tabular format. It contains a summary of the courses codes, names and hours of delivery. The hours of delivery comprise theory hours normally labelled as T, Practical hours labelled P and the Credit hours labelled C. Table 4 below is an example of a programme structure.

Table 4: Programme Structure

YEAR 1 SEMESTER 1				
CODE	COURSE NAME	T	P	C
MIP 551	Introduction to Intellectual Property	3	0	3
MIP 553	International Intellectual Property System and Institutions	3	0	3

MIP 555	Industrial Property	2	3	3
MIP 557	Respect for Intellectual Property Rights, Infringement and Litigation	2	3	3
MIP 559	IP on Biotechnology, Public Health, Food Security, Plant Breeders Right	2	3	3
MIP 561	IP Management, Audit, Valuation and Monetisation	2	3	3
	Semester Total	14	12	18
YEAR 1 SEMESTER 2				
MIP 552	Protection of Traditional Knowledge, Folklore and Genetic Resources	2	3	3
MIP 554	IP & Social Dimensions	2	3	3
MIP 556	Branding	2	3	3
MIP 558	Research Methods, Pedagogy and Statistics	3	0	3
MIP 560	Copyright and Neighbouring Rights	2	3	3
	Semester Total	11	12	15
	Electives			
MIP 562	Intellectual Property Rights for Engineers and Scientists	2	3	3
MIP 564	Intellectual Property, Innovation and Creative Economy	2	3	3
MIP 566	Intellectual Property and Business Environment	2	3	3
MIP 568	Intellectual Property and Cyber Space	2	3	3
	TOTAL	8	12	12
YEAR 2 SEMESTER 1				
MIP 651	Integrated Study Assignment	0	6	3
MIP 653	Research Project and Seminar I	0	12	6
	Semester Total	0	18	9

YEAR 2 SEMESTER 2				
MIP 654	Research Project and Seminar II	0	12	6
	Semester Total	0	12	6

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