

Common Course Numbering -- Frequently Asked Questions

The following is a list of answers to frequently asked questions related to Common Course Numbering (CCN). If you have additional questions PLEASE, stop at the university Registrar's Office and ask, or, call the Registrar (406 683-7471).

What changes will be made as part of the Common Course Number (CCN) initiative?

A: The CCN initiative will require that many course subject headings, subject prefixes, course titles and course numbers will be changed to a system wide "common" course naming and numbering scheme. The best way to see what specific changes have been made to date is to go to the CCN translation guide at:

https://dawgs.umwestern.edu:4445/blckprd/uwgccneq.p_CCN_Equivalencies

The guide can be accessed from the UMW on-line student system (DAWGS) by clicking the "New Common Course Translation Guide" link.

Q: Will the content of individual UMW courses change as a result of CCN?

A: No, only subject headings, subject prefixes, course titles and course numbers will change as a result of CCN. If the content (subject matter) of a specific course changes, it will be because faculty in that department requested the change as part of a routine curriculum modification process.

Q: Have ALL Montana Western courses been converted to the new CCN scheme?

A: No, only about one-fourth of the approximately 800 courses listed in the Montana Western catalog have been converted to date. The goal of the Montana University System Board of Regents and the Commissioner of Higher Education is to convert all courses at all MUS units to the CCN scheme over the near future. Use CCN translation guides to view which courses have been converted at any given time.

Q: What is a Common Course Translation Guide?

A: A CCN Translation Guide is a course conversion chart showing (old) Montana Western courses and their equivalent (new) MUS system-wide common courses. There are two ways to view CCN information using the translation guides. One method is to select an old subject area – the guide will list old UMW courses and the equivalent new CCN course. The other method is to select a new CCN subject area – the guide will list new courses and the equivalent old UMW course. On-line guides are likely to contain the most up-to-date CCN conversion information.

Q: When will these changes take effect?

A: New CCN course titles and numbers will begin appearing in class schedules, catalogs, web listings, etc, beginning with Fall 2009. As additional courses are approved and converted to the CCN scheme they will be communicated via these same methods or publications. Students should keep themselves informed of CCN related changes affecting courses required for their particular program of study.

Q: Will my transcript change as a result of Common Course Numbering?

A: Courses you have already taken will appear on your permanent academic record (transcript) as they always have. New CCN course subject codes, titles, numbers will begin to appear on your transcript beginning with Fall 2009 courses completions and thereafter.

Q: What if I repeat a course and the number has changed?

A: Remember, course content is not affected by CCN. So, if you took BUS 241 – Financial Accounting in Fall 2008 and earned a poor grade, and you successfully complete ACTG 201 – Principles of Financial Accounting in Fall 2009, the ACTG 201 course will count as a repeat of BUS 241. The BUS 241 class will remain on your transcript (the UMW repeat policy has not changed), but the ACTG 201 course (most recent UMW equivalent course attempted) grade will replace the BUS 241 grade in calculation of your GPA.

Q: I transferred to Western from another college, will my old transfer work change on my transcript?

A: No, CCN will not impact what is currently posted on your UMW transcript nor courses you attempted at another MUS unit prior to Fall 2009.

Q: I have not taken ENG 102 (as part of the GenEd core for my degree), what course can I take beginning in Fall 2009 in place of ENG 102?

A: WRIT 101 – College Writing I is the new CCN course subject prefix, course number, and course title that identifies ENG 102. Be advised that it will take time for university officials to edit all of the old advising materials (degree check-sheets, catalogs, web pages, etc) and there will be a need to publish addenda to the university catalog as additional changes occur. The university will make every

effort to keep students informed of CCN changes as they occur, however, such action will be wasted unless students take an active role in keeping themselves informed of latest changes (by visiting the UMW CCN web page, reviewing current and future class schedules and catalogs, and by asking questions of appropriate officials).

Q: How do I find out what the new courses are called in my discipline?

A: Go to the Common Course Translation Guide (via DAWGS login page or the UMW web page) and select the old subject title you want to learn about. Remember, not all UMW courses have been evaluated and converted to the new system, Common Course Translation Guides show only those courses that have approved and changed to date. Existing/old courses that have not been evaluated via CCN will appear in class schedules, etc, under the old headings and titles as before. The CCN conversion process will continue into the future until all UMW courses have been reviewed and changed to the new system.

Q: Some academic departments used to have only one subject heading and prefix, courses that used to appear under those subject headings now show up under three different prefixes in the class schedule (example English – ENG – courses appear under LIT, WRIT and/or ENG), why?

A: To create a system that is workable across all MUS campuses, evaluation teams (faculty representatives from all MUS campuses) had to move away from course codes based on local departmental names to those based on system-wide common subjects. So, in instances where a multidisciplinary department (like “English” at UMW) had all of its courses (regardless of the subject) listed under one subject heading and course prefix, evaluation teams had to adopt new subject headings (and prefixes) and slot courses from each campus into the newly adopted “common” subject areas.

Q: What happened to the HIST subject code?

A: HIST – History – has been replaced by: HSTA – American History or History - American, and HSTR – History of the rest of the World. Refer to the CCN translation guide to see what specific changes have occurred to courses in the (old) History department (as well as others).

Q: Why did perfectly good course codes (e.g., MATH) have to change?

A: In most subjects, there are/were so many courses being taught across the state using so many different numbers that keeping a popular course code would necessarily have meant renumbering courses to something that was already in use for a different course. Imagine the confusion if MATH 111 was changed to MATH 201 and MATH 201 was changed to MATH 172, etc. The same course number could appear on a student’s transcript (once from before the CCN conversion and once after the conversion) but end up representing different courses (different content). The adoption of entirely new course subject headings and prefixes eliminates much of this difficulty and confusion.

Q: What can I do to avoid problems that might result from the CCN conversion process?

A: Keep yourself informed; read relevant materials (catalogs, class schedules, information posted to web pages, etc) and ask questions on a timely basis. Refer to appropriate information sources frequently to see what’s changed and make good use of the CCN translation guides.

Q: Will changes resulting from the CCN initiative delay my planned graduation date from Montana Western?

A: NO disruption in planned graduation dates should result from the switch to common courses, but CAUTION is urged. Students and advisors should take great care when scheduling classes in order to avoid repeating courses or in overlooking a course requirement that has been converted to CCN.

Q: Will changes resulting from the CCN project create problems for me if I decide to transfer from Western to one of the other units of the Montana University System?

A: Adoption of a common course numbering system should prove invaluable to students who transfer within the MUS. Ease of transfer within the MUS is a central goal of the CCN initiative.

Q: How will students know if a UMW course is equivalent or “common” to a course at another MUS unit?

A: Eventually, all courses offered at one MUS unit that have been reviewed and deemed equivalent to courses offered at another unit will share the same subject prefix, the same course number, and the same course title. Assuming a student passes an equivalent course at one MUS unit with the required minimum grade, s/he will be able to transfer that course directly into a program at any other unit requiring the same course, no questions asked.

Q: Does it matter what grade I earn in a “common” UMW course if I’m transferring to another MUS unit?

A: Yes. The MUS Board of Regents Minimum Grade Policy (Policy 301.5.3) still applies system wide. Also, some MUS units require higher minimum grades than those mandated in the BoR Minimum Grade Policy in selected program courses. For example, some Education department courses at UMW require minimum grades higher than a “C-“, and all students (native or transfers) must meet those minimum grade standards at Western.