

Resolution #2
Transcript Best Practices

The following are guidelines; not all the points listed will be applicable to all schools.

Purpose:

In recent years, receiving institutions are increasingly relying on electronic systems to read and store student course data from the sending institution's transcript. It is thus important for colleges and universities to aim for consistency in the variety of places in which their courses are referenced. For example, a course call number such as "SOC 1" should appear in the identical form in the college catalog, on the college transcript, and in the ASSIST curriculum file. Courses which are not represented in uniform fashion, (such as course that appears as "SOC 1" in the catalog, and "SOCIOL-001 on the transcript) may not be recognized by a degree audit system that has been programmed to recognize only one version of a course number.

Transcript essentials:

1. Course prefixes on the transcript.
2. Don't use numbers in prefixes.
3. The catalog course prefix & transcript course prefix must match.
4. Prefix information in Assist must match prefix information in catalogs and transcripts.
5. Keep historical prefixes intact when changes are made to future prefixes (don't change old prefixes to match new versions).

Highly Desirable:

1. Catalog needs to define the prefix, for example, at the beginning of the department – Biology (BIOL).
2. No hyphenated prefixes.
3. Prefix and course number should not exceed 15 spaces.
4. Prefix/course number should not be re-used for a different course.
5. Prefixes should not include hard-to-read symbols (e.g., periods).

Preferences:

1. No spaces in prefixes.
2. Strive for consistency in prefixes within districts.
3. A district transcript (one from various colleges in one district) needs to have a clear indication of individual schools on the transcript – not just an "X".

Transcript/Catalog pointers:

1. Courses on transcript must correspond to those listed in the catalog along with a course description (unless an addendum has been created).
2. Courses from other colleges should be clearly indicated on the transcript.
3. Clearly indicate credit by exam, life experience, high school courses, AP credit, etc. on the transcript.
4. All catalogs should have an index with the department's page numbers. In addition, the index should include a page number for the "course numbering system" and "grading standards".
5. Course numbering should be evident indicating lower division, upper division, or graduate level.
6. It should be obvious if a grade was changed and whether or not it is included in the GPA.
7. Separate labs must be clearly indicated on the transcript and in the catalog. Separate labs must be listed on the transcript with a grade. If the lab and lecture are combined, no separate listing for the lab should be included on the transcript, i.e., a "0" unit lab course.
8. Community College catalogs should clearly state which level of foreign language is equivalent to two years of high school foreign language.