

## Proposing a new/special topics course

### Faculty members interested in proposing a new class should:

1. Review the current course offerings at <https://catalog.uic.edu/gcat/course-descriptions/cs/>.
2. If the course description of an existing course seems to match what you want to propose, request the detailed course proposal (which list topics covered) from [cs-grad@uic.edu](mailto:cs-grad@uic.edu). If the topics have a significant difference, you can proceed to next steps.
  - a. If an existing course has overlap but needs an update, you can propose to update the course with current topics.
3. It is highly recommended a new topic be offered as a 'special topics' in its first offering to test interest of student and/or offer it while the course goes through lengthy approval process
  - a. See below 'how to propose a special topics course'

### What is the overall process to propose a new or change a course?

1. Once you decide if you want to propose a new course or update an existing course, you work with CS Student Affairs staff designate through the various approval steps.
2. Based on answer to 2 above, fill out a '[CRS fillable course form](#)' or email to request changing an existing course.
3. Once you fill out the appropriate forms, send the form to the staff designate for the course to be entered into the universities 'Courses Request System' (CRS) – the two of you work together to ensure everything is properly and completely transcribed into CRS.
4. Completed course proposal then goes to the respective committees for approval – you will be requested to be present to answer any questions
  - o CS 4xx has to be approved by both undergraduate and graduate committees
  - o CS 5xx needs only graduate committee approval
  - o If you want to propose an undergraduate technical elective at 3xx level, talk to CS undergraduate committee first
5. Once approved by the department, course is referred to College of Engineering's (COE) Education Policy Committee (EPC). EPC approves fully or conditionally, if approved conditionally CS EPC representative will contact you for the updates requested
6. Course approved by EPC is referred to UIC Academic Affairs for final approval by the Senate Committee on Education Policy (SCEP).
7. Course can be offered upon approved Academic Affairs approval.
8. Staff designate will keep you posted of progress of approvals.
9. TimeLine: entire process typically takes approximately 8-12 months for final approval

## How to fill the Course approval form

Detailed instructions with examples is available at:

<https://academicprograms.uic.edu/courses/course-resources/crs-instructions/>. Below is a summary of the critical ones:

- [General reason](#) – keep it concise. This is a rationale describing why the new course is needed, or why the existing course needs to be revised (if revisions - briefly describe why the course is being changed and what is being changed).
- Proposed approval term – automatically chose by university
- Course number:
  - Pick a number that is available (check current courses for what are in use)
  - Decide if the class is a 4xx or 5xx level
    - 4xx –both undergrads and graduate students enroll
    - 5xx – only graduate students are enrolled and reserved for....
  - We try to group the middle number by topics, so pay attention to that
  - Discuss course number selection with your research group if needed.
- [Course title](#) – limited to 100 characters - Choose a title that reflects the course content and that will attract students when deciding to register for.
- Short title – limited to 30 characters is use in transcripts
- [Course Description](#) - limit to 250 characters (~25-30 words) – Should be succinct, well-written statement that accurately reflects the content of the course.. The description should be accurate, informative and brief.
  - This is the description that appears in the catalog. It is used by students who are deciding whether to come to UIC, students already here who are registering for classes, and people at other institutions trying to figure out whether our classes are equivalent to theirs.
- [Course outcomes](#) - What do you want students to be able to do by the time they finish your course? List then by number and use active, measurable verbs that specify observable behaviors wherever possible.
- [Course learning outcomes assessment methods](#) - Explain how you are going to measure each of the course learning outcomes listed above.
- [Major topics](#) - Instructional activities should have minimum of 15 contact hours per credit hour, plus a minimum of 30 hours of student-directed activities per credit hour, or a similar combination of these, for an overall total of 45 hours of student work per credit hour awarded.
  - List the topics by number and contact hours by each topic
  - Midterm contact hours should be listed in this count, but no the finals
  - Total hours of all topics should total 45
- [Prerequisites](#) – Prerequisites should reflect a need for prior academic preparation.
  - List the course(s) needed. List any minimum grades required in prior coursework if needed.
  - List of CS graduate classes is listed at: <https://catalog.uic.edu/gcat/course-descriptions/cs/> and undergraduate at: <https://catalog.uic.edu/ucac/course-descriptions/cs/>

## How to propose a “Special Topics Course”

What is a ‘special topics course’?

A course is offered as a “special topics” if a permanent course does not exist and is a new topic that you propose as a permanent class in the future; or one-off special topics relevant only for the specific term.

What is course number for this ‘special topics’?

We have special topics at each level: CS 194, 294, 394, 494 & 594. Determine what level your proposed course is most appropriate and propose to offer it under the respective number.

What are the steps to propose the ‘special topics’ course?

1. Prepare the proposal
  - a. Proposal should have: rationale, course title, course objectives, textbooks/readings, weekly topics (15 weeks), class meeting format, method of instruction, student deliverables, prerequisites, exams, and overlap with other CS & non-CS classes offered by UIC.
  - b. There are no format restrictions for this proposal – annotated permanent course proposal form is a helpful guide - <https://uofi.app.box.com/s/5xgx0s8mqyp5jynbavqmtm3oki3k56mg>.
2. Submit the proposal to Director of Undergraduate Studies (if 194, 294, 394 or 494) and/or Director of Graduate Studies (if 494 or 594) with a cc. to current faculty scheduler
3. Undergraduate and/or graduate committees review the proposal. You will be required to be present at the meeting(s) to answer any questions.
4. If approved, faculty scheduler will work with you on the timing of the offering. This will depend on when the course was approved and how many other special topics are being offered.
5. Maximize exposure and enrollment by proposing and having the committee(s) approve the class well before registration for the proposed offering term starts. This means at the latest by end of September for proposed Spring offering and end of February for Fall offering.