GCC
GUAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Academic Affairs Division

R. Ray D. Somera, Ph.D.
Vice President

October 31, 2013

To: All Faculty

From: Dr. R. Ray D. Somera
            Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Changes and SOPs for Special Project courses, etc.

Cc: Dr. Virginia C. Tudela, Dean, School of Technology and Student Services
            Dr. Juan P. Flores, Dean, School of Trades and Professional

Last spring, a Special Project Report was completed by Associate Dean Joanne Ige. As a result of that study, the Special Project Course Standard Operating Procedure was revised. An opportunity was given to faculty to provide input on two separate occasions: once before the close of the 2013 spring semester, and at the beginning of the 2013 fall semester. Faculty concerns submitted to the Registrar were incorporated into the revision of the Special Project Course SOP. However, it became evident during the revision process that the Pre-requisite Waiver SOP and the Course Waiver/Substitution SOP needed updating, as well, because they also relate directly to the approval of applications to take Special Project courses. Lastly, the SOPs and related documents were forwarded to the GCC Faculty Senate officers for their input.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to this comprehensive effort. I considered all the input carefully, and as a result, I have decided that Special Project courses, will henceforth be offered at the college under two circumstances only:

(1)   when a course is the only course left for a prospective graduating student in any given semester;

(2)   when a course is cancelled during the semester due to low enrollment.

Attached to this memorandum are the SOPs as a result of this intensive review. The SOPs, as revised, will become effective immediately beginning with courses in the 2014 spring semester.

This memo and the attached SOPS supersede all other information about Special Project courses found elsewhere in other college publications. Please be guided accordingly.

Attachments

GCC Application for Special Project
Course Approval
Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish procedures for applying, approving, monitoring and completing a special project course as supervised by faculty.

Procedures:

Application Process:

1. All applications to take special projects courses are initiated by the student. However, students must have exhausted all means of attempting to register for the course in the past before applying for a special project course. The advisor, with the assistance of the department chairperson responsible for the course (i.e. math DC for math courses), may assist the student with providing supporting evidence. For requests resulting from class cancellations due to continuous low enrollment, the Department Chair who has oversight of the course should also provide evidence that the department has been actively addressing these issues.

2. All applications to take special projects courses must include a clear and concise justification with supporting evidence attached. The advisor, with the assistance of the department chairperson responsible for the course (i.e. math DC for math courses), may assist the student with the justification.

3. Applications to take a course as a special project are only allowed for courses not offered during the term requested for the special projects course.

4. A complete syllabus must be submitted with the request for special project. The syllabi should contain all the information identified in the syllabi checklist.

5. To maintain integrity and ensure quality, it is important that special projects closely follow the appropriate course guide (if applicable). For example, if a 3 credit course during the regular semester is being offered via Special Project, it should have the same course description as stated in the course guide and the same expected SLOs. The proposal must demonstrate that sufficient contact with the faculty member will be maintained throughout the semester to support and monitor the student's learning. The assessment of the SLOs must be equal to the rigor of the assessment of the SLOs in a regular class. The assessments may be different, considering the nature of the learning experience.

6. Although the schedule of special project course may be more flexible and self-paced than regular courses, a schedule of activities or course calendar must still be included in the syllabus. The schedule of activities must show how the student will be provided with same

number of hours of instructional experiences (e.g. access to videos, contact time with the faculty, extra materials that makes up for classes, specific experiences other than assessment assignments – outside lectures, interviews with relevant individuals, observations of appropriate activities, etc.) specified by the curriculum document (e.g. 45 contact hours for a 3 credit lecture course). This speaks to the integrity and quality of the learning experience. Students have to be exposed to experiences that help them learn and then turn in assignments that demonstrate what they have learned.

7. Submit applications no later than three days before the course has started for HR payroll processing.

Approval /Monitoring Process:

8. All special projects courses must be approved by the department chairperson directly related to the course (i.e. math courses must be approved by the math department chairperson).

9. All special projects courses must be approved and start no later than two (2) weeks after the first day of classes for each semester for fall and spring, and one week prior to the start of Summer terms. (Note: As long as add and drop exists, the deadline should be two weeks after the last day of add and drop)

10. The request must be approved by the student's advisor, the advisor's department chairperson, and the dean overseeing the student's declared program. The Dean is the final arbiter in the approval process. If the Dean concurs with the request, it will be forwarded to the Registrar for verification and recording. If the Dean does not concur with the request, it will be returned to the student via the DC with an explanation.

11. Approval of a special project course does not include a waiver of any applicable course prerequisites or co-requisites. A special project course may require completion or a waiver before a student may be registered in a special project course.

12. If the special project course is to be used as a course substitution, the Course Substitution must be approved before or submitted with the application to take a special project course.

13. Special project courses will not be built in Banner until all signatories have approved the application.

14. As it is the department chairpersons' responsibility to provide periodic input to the Dean via classroom monitoring, the department chairperson overseeing a special project course is expected to monitor the progress of each special project course throughout the term.

Completion Process:

15. At the conclusion of instruction, the instructor is responsible for submitting a "Special Project Completion" form to the department chairperson whose department has oversight of the course. The instructor must sign the form attesting to the integrity of how the course was taught. The completion form will be reviewed and approved by the DC, and then submitted to the Dean. Special Project Completion forms are due no later than 5 working days after the last day of the course's instruction.

GCC Application for
Waiver or Course Substitution
Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish procedures of requesting for a course waiver or course substitution.

Procedures:

It is the policy of Guam Community College that certain courses can be waived, though credit requirements cannot be waived. Recommendation for a course waiver or course substitution is made by the department chairperson or academic advisor. For each course waiver there must be an accompanying recommended course substitution. Credit requirements cannot be waived. A declared student wishing to have a course waived or substituted must complete the following steps:

1. All requests for course waiver or course substitution are initiated by the student. Students, however, must have exhausted all means of attempting to satisfy the course requirement before requesting for a course waiver or course substitution.
2. All requests for a course substitution must include the course to be waived and the course to be used as the substitute. Substitute courses being transferred from other institutions of higher learning are subject to the criteria and guidelines specified in the Transfer Credit procedure specified in the GCC Catalog. In either case, GCC courses or other courses must meet the student learning outcomes in addition to the criteria specified in the Transfer Credit procedure.
3. The minimum grade for course substitutions is "C" grade for undergraduate level course and "P" grade for developmental courses or their equivalent based on the course syllabus.
4. The limit for course substitutions or course waivers for program requirements other than general education requirements or program electives is a total of two (2) courses.
5. All applications for course waivers or course substitutions must include a clear and concise justification with supporting evidence attached. The advisor in consultation with their department chairperson may assist the student with the justification.
6. The request must be approved by the student's advisor, the advisor's department chairperson, and the dean overseeing the student's declared program. The Dean is the final arbiter in the approval process. If the Dean concurs with the request, it will be forwarded to the Registrar for verification and recording. If the Dean does not concur with the request, it will be returned to the student via the DC with an explanation.

GCC Course Pre-Requisite or Co-Requisite
Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose:

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish procedures for waiving course pre-requisites or co-requisites .

Procedures:

The purpose of pre-requisites or co-requisites is to ensure the student has a proper foundation critical to completing a course successfully. Pre-requisites and co-requisites echo the College's commitment to academic excellence and student success. However, students may have college level instruction (or its equivalent) that provide the student with the minimum knowledge required (e.g. instruction from other accredited institutions, industry certification, etc.). In the event a pre-requisite or co-requisite will be waived, the following steps must be completed:

1. All requests for a course pre-requisite or co-requisite waiver are initiated by the student using the Registration Form. The student is responsible for assembling the necessary documentation that may be necessary to justify the waiver.

2. The registration form must be submitted to the department chairperson from the department overseeing the course to be taken (e.g. SO130 has EN100R/W as its pre-requisites. Therefore, SO130 prerequisites can be overridden by the DC for Social Science, not English).

3. The DC in consultation with his or her Dean will review the request and if the DC and the Dean approve the waiver, the DC must initial in the "Waiver Approval" box on the Registration Form (excerpt from form printed below). Also, the DC must write in the remarks section the reason for the waiver (e.g. "Student completed equivalent course at UOG, EN110").

CRN	COURSE	SEC	COURSE TITLE	ADD	DROP	WITH-DRAW	DAY	TIME	ADVISOR APPROVAL (Pls Initial)	WAIVER APPROVAL (Pls Initial)*
90123	EN110	01	Freshman English (SAMPLE)	√			MW	1801-1930		DC
REMARKS:										

WAIVE PREREQUISITES/ COREQUISITES: Dept Chairs, please initial to waive a course prerequisite and/or course co-requisite.
PERMIT MAXIMUM CREDITS: Advisors, indicate & sign to allow an excess of maximum credits in the REMARKS section above.
OVERRIDE CLASS OVERLOAD: Instructors, write "Approved for Overload" and sign in the REMARKS section above.

4.   Coursework from other institutions of higher learning can considered only if an official transcript has been submitted to GCC and is on file with Admissions & Registration. Courses from other institutions to be considered as a course pre-requisite or co-requisite must have a minimum grade of a "C" and the coursework must be equivalent to or exceed the instructional content, credit hours and student learning outcomes for the course being taken. More than one course or equivalent college-level education can be used for a pre-requisite or co-requisite (e.g. two courses being the equivalent or better than one GCC course).

5.   All registration forms with pre-requisite approvals must be submitted to Admissions & Registration within the registration deadlines established by Admissions & Registration.