GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Credit hour
A credit hour is defined as a reasonable approximation of one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Credit is based on at least an equivalent amount of work for other academic activities including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours and is established by individual programs. This definition represents the minimum standard. Student time commitment per credit hour may be higher in individual programs.

Course numbering system
All schools and programs within VCU use the following course numbering system. All course numbers consist of three digits (XXX). The first digit relates to the course level as follows:

0XX – Noncredit courses
Courses with these numbers are offered for students to make up deficiencies in previous training or to improve certain basic skills.

1XX and 2XX – Undergraduate, lower level
Courses offered primarily for undergraduate students and may not be used for graduate credit, although graduate students may be required to register for courses at this level to gain a necessary foundation for other course work.

3XX and 4XX – Undergraduate, upper level
Courses offered for advanced undergraduates and usually constitute the major portion of specific program work leading to the baccalaureate degree. On occasion, students will be advised by their graduate advisers to enroll in 4XX courses for prerequisite work. Graduate programs can require that 400-level courses be taken, but credit in these courses cannot count toward the graduate degree or in the graduate GPA.

5XX – Introductory graduate courses
Graduate students enroll for credit in these courses through the normal graduate advising system. Departments may limit the number of 500-level courses applicable to a graduate degree program. Advanced undergraduates may enroll in these courses for credit with consent of the offering department. Credit is applicable toward only one degree unless a student is admitted to a course of study that allows a defined number of shared courses.

6XX, 7XX and 8XX – Graduate courses
Graduate students enroll for credit in these courses through the normal graduate advising system. Credit is applicable toward only one degree unless a student is admitted to a course of study that allows a defined number of shared courses.

6XX and 7XX – Professional graduate courses
6XX: second-year first-professional [dentistry, medicine, pharmacy and physical therapy (second and third year)] courses normally open only to students enrolled in the D.D.S., M.D. and Pharm.D. programs. Certain courses of this group may be designated by the department and approved by the University Graduate Council for graduate credit.

7XX: third- and fourth-year first-professional (dentistry, medicine and pharmacy) courses normally open only to students enrolled in the D.D.S., M.D. and Pharm.D. programs. Certain courses of this group may be designated by the department and approved by the University Graduate Council for graduate credit.

Course interpretation
A single-number listing for a course, such as HIST 101, indicates it is a one-semester course and may be offered each semester or only one semester each year.

Courses listed with a double number, such as HIST 201, 202, are designated as semester courses. They consist of two one-semester courses either of which may be taken without the other.

Courses listed with a double number, such as CHEM 101-102, are designated as a continuous course. They consist of two one-semester courses, the first of which can be taken without the second, but the second of which cannot be taken without the successful completion of the first.

Course abbreviations ending in Z denote credit-bearing laboratories.

The university reserves the right to withdraw any course or program.