UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE
Published Academic Program Information

Catalog Purpose & Guidelines

- The catalog is considered the official university document regarding academic programs and associated policies. The catalog's purpose is to:
  - Publish and disseminate academic policies that accurately represent the academic programs of the institution
  - Make information about programs of study, including clearly defined requirements regarding what is necessary to complete the program, accessible to faculty, students, and prospective students (prior to enrollment)
- Guiding questions to consider (from SACSCOC Standards 9.7 and 10.5) when reviewing catalog content include:
  - Based on the catalog page, could a prospective student *understand all of the requirements for admission and successful program completion* prior to making an enrollment decision?
  - Do published requirements provide *clear, complete, and consistent* information about each program?
- ***Important note about misrepresentation:*** The US Department of Education has issued regulations prohibiting substantial misrepresentation or misleading statements by institutions of higher education; these regulations apply to published/written materials in addition to verbal statements. Program faculty and staff involved in updating and reviewing catalog and website content should familiarize themselves with regulatory definitions and examples of misrepresentation, specifically those relating to the nature of the educational program or the employability of graduates. Compliance with these regulations is required to maintain accreditation and the institution's ability to offer Title IV federal financial aid. More information is available on the UofL Statement on Misrepresentation page.

What should be in the catalog?

- Detailed information about admission requirements and policies that are specific to the program
- A clearly specified, coherent course of study including any prerequisite courses, any college-level general education components, particular program requirements including requirements in any tracks, concentrations, or specializations, and any cross- or co-curricular requirements (if applicable)
- The total number of credit hours required for completion of the program and of any unit or institutional requirements that must be satisfied before completion
- Specific grade (GPA) requirements for completion of program, especially if they deviate from broader institutional policies
- Graduate programs should also include any requirements for written and oral comprehensive examinations, theses and dissertations, professional practice, etc.
- Programs that are designed to lead to professional licensure should have a Professional Licensure tab with general information and a link to the OAPA Professional Licensure page

Why is it important to sync catalog content with unit/program webpage content?

SACSCOC standards 9.7, 10.1, and 10.3 emphasize the importance of published academic policies and program requirements. It is essential that content is aligned between the catalog and program/unit webpages in order to meet these standards. The academic catalog is considered a "critical publication" and serves as the official authoritative source for information about course and degree requirements. In addition, UofL web content standards require that all content on a university website must provide correct and up-to-date information to the user. Using the API (Application Programming Interface) to sync content will ensure that unit/program webpage content will align with any approved catalog updates.

Catalog vs. department/program websites

- The catalog should be the original and sole source of anything listed in the "what should be in the catalog" section; this content should be published to the department website from the catalog using the API
- Additional information about program rationale, design, and outcomes consistent with the mission of the institution can be included as catalog content on the overview tab
- The department website can be the source of any content outside of the two preceding bullets (e.g., supplemental information with additional instructions for specific admission or program requirements, information about department faculty that may change from year to year, etc.). If appropriate, a department website link can be included on the catalog page. Sites where additional information is linked should be public so they can be accessed by prospective students.

Flight Plans

Flight Plans are required in the catalog for all undergraduate degree programs to provide an example of how students can stay on course to graduate in four years. A draft statement to add to the Flight Plan is under development:

DRAFT "The Flight Plan outlined below is intended to demonstrate a possible path to completing the degree within four years. Course selection and placement within the program may vary depending on course offerings and schedule, elective preferences, and other factors (study abroad, internship availability, etc.). Please consult your advisor for additional information about building a flight plan that works for you."