Most “new” undergraduate course titles printed in the course schedule are unnumbered topic titles offered under a base topics course number.

**Base Topics Course**
- Published in the undergraduate catalog
- Usually has a generic title, such as “Topics in American History”
- Contains the degree plan statement: “May be repeated for credit when the topics vary.”
- Scheduled either as numbered or unnumbered topics.

**Numbered Topic**
- Published in a Catalog & Course Schedule
- Topic number is included in the course title
- Title & statements may be updated via the Course Inventory system

**Unnumbered Topic**
- Published in Course Schedule only
- New or infrequently offered course topics (“titles”)
- Must have an approved course description on file in Doc Library

**Unnumbered Topics Base Course Assignments:**
Departments should assign unnumbered topics courses to the appropriate base topics course number.

- All of the attributes of the base course, such as contact hours, degree plan statements, and prerequisites, must be true for all topics offered under that base number. Topics should also meet all learning competencies required if the course satisfies Core, Area, course-level flag, or a specified major requirement. An unnumbered topic, or a cross-listing of one, should **not** be offered if it does not meet these conditions. Academic units will need to wait to offer the course until it is added to the undergraduate catalog course inventory as either a stand-alone course or as a numbered topic under an appropriate base topics course.
- Once assigned to a base topics course, the unnumbered topic may **not** migrate to another base topics number.
- If the topic will be used to satisfy specified degree requirements (see Degree Applicability section below), it should be added to the undergraduate course inventory as a stand-alone course number as soon as possible. Because of the
variable degree applicability of topics courses, it may be best to wait to schedule the course until it is listed in the catalog course inventory.

**COURSE CONTENT OVERLAP:**
New unnumbered undergraduate topics courses must have **less than a 30%** content overlap with a previously offered course, including Plan II and Signature courses or those taught in a foreign language. If the proposed topics course contains more than a 30% content overlap, the course must be listed under the previously offered course title/number. If that is not possible, the topic may not be approved.

**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**
A new unnumbered undergraduate course topic, or title, must have an approved course description on file before it can be scheduled for publication.

Course descriptions are **topic course number- AND instructor-specific.**

Descriptions must include the following:

1. course number and title,
2. semester and year,
3. instructor name & academic rank,
4. cross-listing information,
5. one- to three-paragraph description of course content,
6. proposed texts/readings (N/A, TBD, or course packet are not acceptable),
7. basis of grading, and
8. signature of the department chair or associate chair.

**DEADLINE:**
Course descriptions should be submitted to Document Library by the “home” department by the fifth working day following the close of Original Phase for the corresponding semester. It is the “home” department’s responsibility to submit course descriptions for approval; “guest” departments do not need to submit them.

Approved descriptions are valid for **four years.** If a different instructor will teach the same course title within the four-year period, an updated course description must be submitted.

The base topic title may be used to schedule topics that have not been approved as of the closing of Chair’s Proof to departmental users. These topics should have “real” titles assigned by the official academic advising period. A Course Schedule Update and a course description need to be submitted for this change to be processed.
Course Description Renewals:

Course descriptions may be “renewed” after the initial four-year period, as long as the topic will not satisfy any specified degree requirements, including majors, minors, and certificates.

Degree Applicability of Unnumbered Topics Courses:

• May not satisfy specified degree requirements (e.g., major(s), minor(s), certificate(s), Core, CoLA Area). This is a university-wide policy.
• May satisfy major, minor, certificate, and other degree requirements by satisfying specified base topic course requirements or elective hours. This includes track/area/concentration requirements within majors.
• May only be added to the inventory once it has a defined role in the curriculum (major, minor, certificate, Core, CoLA Area) with at least two instructors dedicated/willing to teach it for the next 4-5 years and at least once a year. In most cases, topics should be added to the inventory as stand-alone courses.