

SECTION 3, COMPREHENSIVE STANDARD 3.6.1

The institution's post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master's and doctoral degree programs, are progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs.

JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

Compliant

Partially Compliant

Noncompliant

RATIONALE FOR JUDGMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The University System of Georgia/Board of Regents (USG/BOR) has authorized NGCSU to offer graduate degrees at the Masters and Education Specialists levels [1]. The following graduate degrees are awarded at NGCSU:

1. Education Specialist in Teacher Leadership
2. Master of Education
3. Master of Science in Community Counseling
4. Master of Science in Physical Therapy
5. Master of Public Administration
6. Master of Science in Nursing

The professional programs also require accreditation by national and state accrediting bodies. The following programs are currently accredited or approved by the following professional organizations [2]:

1. School of Education
 - a. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
 - b. Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC)
2. Department of Nursing
 - a. National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)
 - b. Georgia Board of Nursing
3. Department of Physical Therapy
 - a. Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
4. Community Counseling
 - a. Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) – recognized by the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation (COPA)

The *2006-2008 Undergraduate Bulletin* published by North Georgia College & State University indicates that “Undergraduate students may not take courses numbered 5000-8999” [3, p. 67]. At its October 11, 2005 meeting, the Graduate Council changed the policy so that 5000-5999 courses are designated as graduate courses only. Previous to that time, those courses were open to both undergraduate and graduate students.

Therefore, the *2006-2008 Graduate Bulletin* includes the following statement: “The course numbering systems used by NGCSU is such that in general, the first digit of the course corresponds to the level of the class (1000-4999, Undergraduate, and 5000-8999, Graduate). Students must be admitted into Graduate Studies in order to take courses numbered 5000-8999.” [4, p. 11] Likewise, the *2006-2008 Undergraduate Bulletin* also reflects the change in policy: “The course numbering system used by NGCSU is such that in general, the first digit of the course corresponds to the level of the class (1-Freshman, 2-Sophomore, 3-Junior; 4-Senior, 5000-8999-Graduate).” [5, p. 67] The new designation will be reflected on the reverse of the official NGCSU transcript once current stock is used; however, currently the reverse of the official North Georgia College & State University transcript [6] indicates the following course levels: 1000-4999 Undergraduate and 6000-7999 Graduate.

The syllabi of Master’s of Education content-area classes that are cross-listed as 4000/6000 level courses indicate clear differences in the course work according to the BOR policy regarding new academic programs [7]. In section 4.d, the policy requires documentation that if courses are cross-listed “safeguards are employed to ensure that courses taken as undergraduates are not repeated or that requirements are significantly different for graduate students and undergraduates enrolled in the same course.” These criteria are considered by the Graduate Council in its course and program approval process, as described in its duties in the NGCSU Bylaws [8].

Additionally, all course changes, additions, and/or deletions to the graduate curriculum must satisfactorily pass review and approval at several levels within the University, commencing with the departmental curriculum committee. From there, recommendations are forwarded to the University’s Graduate Council [9] after approval from the department heads and dean. As shown on the Course Review Form [10], the Graduate Council examines a variety of information in its deliberations including specific course content and course level. Once proposed changes are approved by the Graduate Council, they are forwarded to the Academic Activities Committee [11] for consideration by that body if they involve undergraduate departments. All proposed changes are then forwarded to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and approval.

This approval process was changed January 2005 so that changes involving only graduate programs would bypass the Academic Activities Committee. That change to the NGCSU bylaws [12] was approved by the Graduate Council [13], Academic Activities [14], and Faculty Senate [15], and announced to Faculty [16].

Graduate education in Nursing's MS/FNP program builds on the knowledge and competencies of baccalaureate education in nursing and provides for the attainment of advanced knowledge and practice of nursing. For example, the emphasis of the undergraduate research course is on the use of research in practice, whereas the graduate course involves more research development and requires a project proposal, development, and implementation in the area of primary care. The undergraduate pharmacology course focus is administration of medications and knowledge of their side effects and drug-drug interactions. In the advanced pharmacology course, the nurse practitioner student develops the expertise to independently formulate a therapeutic pharmacologic treatment regimen. Health assessment at the undergraduate level focuses on a thorough physical assessment. Advanced health assessment provides greater depth to the assessment (for example, correlating that an S3, S4 would be consistent with chronic hypertension or heart failure and extending the exam and diagnostic testing to rule these differentials in or out of consideration) and also a broader capacity for diagnostic testing (e.g., performing pap smears, GC and chlamydia cultures, obtaining and reading wet mounts, and interpreting x-rays). While in advanced physical assessment the student learns to begin a problem list and to identify associated differentials as well as order appropriate laboratory and diagnostic testing.

Graduate education in Teacher Education builds upon the foundation from undergraduate courses in the content field. For example, in BIOL 3220-Genetics and BIOL 6220-Genetics, graduate students are expected to extend their learning in genetics and to complete a research paper. Also, all graduate students in Education must complete a core of courses: EDUC 6001 (Educational Research in Contemporary Schools); EDUC 6002 (Leadership for Effective Schools); and EDUC 6004 (Personal and Interagency Strategies for Student Success. This begins to prepare the teacher for leadership roles within the school setting.

Document Reference:

Number	DB Num	Document Title	Resource
1		Board of Regents, Degrees & Majors of NGCSU	https://dss.usg.edu:3377/pls/portal/dma.dma_advanced_search.Show_view_results_screen?fic_e=001585
2		NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2004-2006, Accreditation and Memberships	http://www.collegesource.org/displayinfo/catalognk.asp?pid={A0BA6F5B-46EF-41E2-A425-C3574803691F}&oig={1FD70D8E-2B26-4AEB-B696-5991983E2CD1}&vt=5 , p. 9 in PDF, p. 5 in hard copy.
3, 5		NGCSU Undergraduate Bulletin, 2006-2008	http://www.ngcsu.edu/academic/catalog/2006_2008/Academic%20Regulations.shtml , p. 67 in hard copy.
4		NGCSU Graduate Bulletin, 2006-2008	http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/gradBulletin/gradBulletin%202006-2008/C_Academic%20Guidelines.html , p. 11 in hard copy.
6		NGCSU Transcript, Reverse side, Fact Sheet	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/NGCSU_documents/transcript_fact_sheet.pdf
7		Board of Regents, Section 2.03.02, New Academic Programs	http://www.usg.edu/academics/handbook/section2/2.03/2.03.02.phtml
8		NGCSU Bylaws	http://www.ngcsu.edu/academic/senate/Bylaws/Bylaws_Rev_10-13-05.htm
9		NGCSU Graduate Council	http://www.ngcsu.edu/enrollment/Graduate/gradCouncil/index.shtml
10		NGCSU Course Review Form	http://www.ngcsu.edu/Resource/forms/CourseReview.PDF
11		NGCSU Academic Activities Committee	http://www.ngcsu.edu/academic/senate/Ay04-05/Committees/acdmacty.shtml
12		NGCSU Bylaws	http://www.ngcsu.edu/academic/senate/Bylaws/Bylaws_Rev_10-13-05.htm
13		NGCSU Graduate Council Minutes	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/NGCSU_minutes/Graduate_Council_Minutes/GC_Min_02-19-04.pdf
14		NGCSU Academic Activities Minutes	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/NGCSU_minutes/Academic_Activities/AA_Min_01-19-05.pdf

Number	DB Num	Document Title	Resource
15		NGCSU Faculty Senate Minutes	http://www.ngcsu.edu/academic/senate/Ay03-04/9sm04-04.htm
16		NGCSU Faculty Meeting	http://www.ngcsu.edu/sacs/Reference_Room/documents/NGCSU_minutes/Faculty/Faculty_Mtg_Min_01-18-05.pdf