Principles for assessing Harvard Chan Courses
Committee on Education Policy

The following principles were developed to use primarily in assessing newly proposed courses. New courses go through the CEP to be approved. Those proposing new courses should be able to answer questions related to these criteria. Department chairs and program steering committees may wish to use these criteria in reviewing how any new course may impact the broader set of offerings.

1. The course aligns with educational priorities

   Compelling rationale
   • The course meets an important educational need or priority at the level of the department, the degree program, and/or the School
   • There are specific educational outcomes that will be accomplished through this course

   A compelling rationale is not person-specific:
   • A course should not be offered just because it allows someone to qualify for a faculty appointment
   • A course should not be offered just because a faculty member wants to teach it

   Designed with knowledge and consideration of existing courses and curriculum
   • There is a demonstrable understanding of how the course overlaps with, enhances, and/or complements one or more of the School’s educational program(s)
   • There is a demonstrable understanding of how the course impacts all the degree requirements within a department and across the School
   • The course instructors and staff have thought through whether the course may meet accreditation requirements and if so how to implement in such a way that the course does meet the relevant competencies

2. The course meets minimal standards for good pedagogy

   • The learning objectives and outcomes are apparent to prospective and enrolled students, for example from the course proposal, description, and syllabus
   • The assessments planned for the course are aligned with the learning objectives
   • The teaching methods for the course are reasonable given the learning objectives
   • The qualifications of the instructor(s) and staff are reasonable given the learning objectives

3. The administrative and logistical “costs” of offering the course have been considered and approved of by department and program chairs

Developed by the CEP Committee, February 2019
• The scheduling of the course follows School protocols
• The materials/fees required of students are reasonable
• Resource trade-offs have been considered
  o There is known student demand or good reason to expect student demand
  o Offering this course will not adversely impact the ability to offer existing required courses (e.g., because of teaching assignments)
  o Offering this course will not make demands on physical space and classroom use that will adversely impact the ability to offer required courses
  o *NB: The CEP has suggested that the Office of Education provide baseline data and organize discussions with Departments about the value of establishing a target number of courses (with a built-in flexibility factor).*