USAC SPECIALTY PROGRAMS

The academic procedures below apply to all USAC Specialty programs. Students participating on USAC Partnership programs, are bound by the academic policies of those universities.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply for most USAC programs, a student must be in good academic and judicial standing at his/her current institution, be at least 18 years old at the start of the program, and have an overall GPA of 2.5 or better in a 4.0 system. We strongly recommend that students have at least one college semester completed prior to departure. Some programs may have higher GPA and/or class standing requirements. Students who do not meet the stated GPA eligibility may apply, but will be asked to submit additional information in order to be considered.

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance to a USAC program will be granted to a student who meets eligibility requirements and has submitted the required documents and fees by the stated deadlines.

Acceptance to or participation in any USAC program can be rescinded if a student’s eligibility status changes, if any information provided in the application is discovered to be untrue or inaccurate, or if program fees are not paid when required.

MINIMUM / MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT

Only for-credit, graded courses are counted toward minimum and maximum enrollment.

Undergraduate students:

Fall or Spring semester - minimum 12 credits/ maximum 18 credits
January terms – minimum 3 credits/ maximum 4 credits. One 3-credit course required.
Summer terms – minimum 3 credits. One 3-credit course required.

- 3 week term – maximum 4 credits
- 4 week term – maximum 5 credits
- 5 week term - maximum 6 credits
- 6 week term- maximum 7 credits

Graduate students taking classes numbered 600 or above:

Fall or Spring semester- minimum 9 graduate credits/ maximum 12 graduate credits
January terms – minimum 3 credits/ maximum 3 credits. One 3-credit course required.
Summer terms – minimum 3 credits. One 3-credit course required.

- 3 or 4 week term – maximum 3 credits
- 5 or 6 week term - maximum 6 credits
Students may request permission to take additional credits by contacting the Resident Director or USAC Enrollment Services

**ADD / DROP/ CHANGE DEADLINES**

Permission is required from the Resident Director in order to add, drop or change the status of a course. Additionally, instructor permission is required for adding or changing the status of a course.

A student who participates in a course with without officially enrolling in it, will not receive credit.

Each USAC Resident Director shall establish the appropriate add/drop/change deadlines within the following guidelines:

- Spring and Fall semester courses - add/drop/change deadlines shall be no more than 2 weeks, 10 class days, after the start of a semester course.
- Summer and January sessions - add/drop/change deadlines shall be no more than 3 class days after the beginning of courses.
- Multi-course language tracks - add/drop/change deadlines for specific courses within the track shall be no more than 3 class days after the beginning of each course in the track.
- Short courses within a term or those that have late start dates – add/drop/change deadlines shall be no more than 3 class days after the beginning of the course.

**WITHDRAWAL DEADLINES**

Each USAC Resident Director shall establish appropriate course withdrawal deadlines. However, these deadlines should be no later than two months prior to final exams in semester programs and two weeks prior to final exams in month-long and summer programs.

If a student abandons a class without officially withdrawing from it, the grade will be reported as an F.

**ACADEMIC REASONS FOR DISMISSAL**

A. A student may be dismissed for failing to:
   a. Complete full time academic coursework unless arranged with the appropriate advisor.
   b. Achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0.
   c. Enroll in the required number of academic credits.
   d. Prepare for and/or attend class.

B. A student may be dismissed for reasons involving academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, plagiarism and cheating.

**SYLLABI**

USAC course content and requirements will be described in syllabi, which will be made available to member universities and to students prior to the beginning of a term. A course syllabus will be given to students the first day of class.

**COURSE NUMBERS IN THE USAC CATALOG**

Consortium students are registered through different U.S. universities, using course titles and numbers appropriate to each institution. The USAC catalog utilizes generic course titles and numbers. Courses numbered 100 and 200 are lower-division. The 300-400 numbers are upper-
division courses. A 600 number refers to upper-division courses that may be taken for graduate credit with prior approval from the student's home institution.

**PREREQUISITES**

Students are responsible for noting and adhering to course prerequisites. Taking a course without the required preparation is likely to result in unsatisfactory grades and may render the course unacceptable for degree purposes.

Students are urged to review all course selections in advance with their home university academic advisors.

In USAC programs where placement tests are used to determine readiness for various language levels on-site advice will consider both test results and completed prerequisites. A student who is technically eligible for a certain language level may enroll in the course, but is urged to consider the placement test indicators and may be asked to sign a waiver when taking a course against the advice of the Resident Director.

**CONTACT HOURS**

Each USAC course meets or exceeds the national accrediting standard of 15, fifty-minute contact hours per credit for a traditional lecture, discussion or seminar course.

Internships, service learning courses and certain field or lab studies require a greater number of contact hours as described in the specific syllabuses. They typically adhere to a standard of 45 hrs. for one credit, 90 hours for two credits, 135-150 hours for 3 credits.

Contact hours do not include long distance or inter-site travel time, tours outside the focus of a specific course, meals, recreational activities, receptions or local travel. Contact hours can include course-specific tours, guest lectures, student projects or any other activities furthering the specific objectives of the course.

**CLASS ATTENDANCE**

USAC courses rely not only on the expertise of the professor, but also on the active participation of the students, therefore regular class attendance is mandatory.

Students are allowed one unexcused absence in USAC courses. The class participation grade will be lowered by .5 step for each unexcused absence, i.e., from an A to an A-.

Each tardy is .5 of an absence.

Course instructors will record class attendance and notify the Resident Director when a student is not attending regularly.

Should a student fail to fulfill his or her academic obligations (i.e. has not attended class for four consecutive days without approval of the Resident Director, is routinely late for class, etc.) the student may be withdrawn from the program, thereby forfeiting all privileges enjoyed by program participants such as program housing, field trips, tours and other events/activities. In these circumstances no refunds will be given.

**EXAMINATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Normally, each USAC course requires a mid-term evaluation and a written final examination. The nature of a particular course may dictate a form of assessment other than a written exam.

Examinations must be taken as scheduled and students should be informed of the results of the exams and other assignments in a timely fashion.
Students are responsible to confirm all assignments are received by their instructors. This includes assignments submitted electronically or left on the instructor's desk or mailbox when the instructor is not present.

Students are responsible for monitoring their progress in courses and for maintaining contact with professors regarding assignments and grades.

Students are responsible for the material covered in class, and are expected to arrange for the completion of all missed class assignments and homework. Students who are arranging make-up should do so in advance whenever possible and be prompt in the completion of missed work. Students should recognize that requests to instructors regarding missed work should be timely and reasonable and may or may not be granted in cases of unexcused absences. Requests for completion of an assignment or the administration of an examination at a time that would impose an unreasonable hardship on the instructor or the university will not be granted.

USAC recognizes the religious obligations of its students. Any student who misses class, quizzes, examinations or any other class or lab work in order to observe religious holy days shall, whenever possible, be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed assignments. The make-up opportunity must be arranged in advance and will apply only to the specific religious holy day absence.

**COURSE CANCELLATIONS**

The list of Consortium courses is subject to change. USAC reserves the right to cancel a course due to insufficient enrollment or other contingencies.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Independent study may be permitted under certain conditions. Students shall be limited to no more than three credits of independent study per term.

A. Substitution for a Cancelled Course

If a student enrolled in a cancelled course can demonstrate, in writing, that the specific course is required for graduation and there will be no other opportunity to take it, USAC will offer the course on an independent study basis and the student will not be charged any additional fees.

B. Special Request

Students willing to pay for the cost of arranging for an independent study course may request such a course. The student may propose a project in detail and in writing. The supervising faculty member contracted by USAC, as well as the Resident Director and the home university, must approve the course proposal. The granting of a Special Request course is subject to various considerations such as availability of faculty, schedules, and approval of the student’s home university and the USAC university, if applicable.

C. Home Institution-Directed Study

Students may request directed studies which are supervised and evaluated by their home institution faculty. Students who request directed studies will be responsible for all costs associated with them and must present a written home institution authorization at the time of registration. While directed studies may be used to fulfill USAC course load requirement they will not be listed on USAC grade sheets. Home Institution-Directed Studies are limited to 3 credits per term and are subject to each home university’s registration requirements.
GRADING

A. USAC grades will be reported to students and universities in the following way:

(A) Excellent Performance
(B) Good
(C) Average
(D) Poor
(F) Failure

Range between the letters is represented by plus or minus signs:

A-, B+, B-, C+, C-, D+, D-

B. Pass/Fail

Students may request to take graded courses on a Pass/Fail basis. Enrollment on an P/F or S/U basis must be requested and approved before the end of the add/drop/change period and is limited to three credits per term.

Each home university has its own policy addressing the number of S/U credits which can be taken each term and whether courses taken on an S/U basis can be counted toward a major, minor, or other degree requirement. It is the student's responsibility to consult with his or her home university to determine the appropriateness of S/U courses.

USAC will report a letter grade to the home institution and the home institution will determine whether to record a letter grade, an S/U or P/F on the student's official record.

C. Audits (AD):

Students are permitted to audit a course (excluding Field Studies courses) if requested and approved prior to the end of the add/drop/change period.

Classes may be audited only if the fulltime class requirement is met.

No credit is earned or grade received and an audited course does not contribute to fulltime status or financial aid eligibility.

Students auditing a USAC course must follow the course attendance policy and must complete all assignments, but are exempt from the midterm and final examinations.

Students who audit a course and do not attend class or complete assignments will be withdrawn and, at the recommendation of the instructor and the RD, will receive a grade of "W" on the USAC grade report.

Courses for audit will appear on the USAC Student Gateway Account registration, but may or may not appear on the official university transcript depending on the policy of the university of record or unless otherwise requested.

D. Incompletes (I):

Requests for incomplete grades are granted only in truly exceptional circumstances when the student is unable to complete the coursework for reasons beyond the student's control. The student should be performing passing work when the Incomplete is requested. Non-attendance, poor performance or a plan to repeat the course are not acceptable reasons for issuing an "I".
For cases in which an incomplete is unavoidable, the student and the Resident Director must sign a contract for the "I" grade that stipulates how much work has already been completed (including % of work completed and grade level attained at the time the contract is signed), how much work is needed for completion, and a deadline date for the completion of assignments. which deadline cannot exceed the end of the next regular semester. The contract must be signed before the end of the term in which the student is enrolled, and it must be attached to the final grade report for the term affected. The "I" grade cannot be entered without this signed contract.

If the incomplete has not been replaced with a letter grade by the deadline shown on the contract, the incomplete (I) will be changed to a failing (F) grade.

E. Host university classes.

Subject to permission of the Resident Director and the professor, it is sometimes possible for students to sit in on courses at the Host University. These courses will not be recorded on the grade report unless specific arrangements are made with the Resident Director and the home institution.

TRANSCRIPTS

USAC Specialty Program grades are delivered to students' home universities in one of the following ways according to agreements between USAC and the various home universities:

1. One of the USAC universities of record (University of Nevada Reno, University of Las Vegas, University of Idaho, Wright University) will issue an official transcript.

2. USAC will send a USAC Grade Report to the home university of students who have not registered through one of the four USAC universities.

3. The transcripts of students with outstanding financial obligations will be withheld.

GRADE APPEALS

USAC students who wish to appeal a final grade may initiate a grade appeal process. (see USAC Grade Appeal Policy.)