Prerequisite Guidelines

Prerequisites are difficult to code in PeopleSoft and require a surprising amount of staff time and ongoing attention. This document is meant to serve as a guideline for those who are adding prereqs to a new or existing course, and want to know what is and is not possible for the Provosts' Office to code in our system. There are a variety of factors that can be accounted for by PeopleSoft; this guide will help to illustrate what kinds of requirements can be checked automatically via prereqs, versus what would need to be input just as text (which can signal information to students but is ***not*** *enforced through the system).*

System-enforced prerequisites *are ones that PeopleSoft can actually check against a student's record; if the student meets all of the system-enforced prerequisites, then they can register for the course.*

Text-only prerequisites *are ones that PeopleSoft can NOT check against a student's record, and are merely a signal or suggestion to students. These must be checked by the faculty offering the course, such as in the case of auditions or portfolios being required.*

There are some prerequisites that are not possible for various reasons, and those are highlighted below.

Examples of SYSTEM-ENFORCED prerequisites

Courses with the "AGRI" prefix are part of the fictional Agriculture program, and are used for illustrative purposes only

➔ Class standing ✅

- Class standings, such as Sophomore, Junior, & Senior standing ARE possible
- In context: AGRI 410 Prerequisite:
  - ***Senior standing.***

➔ A handful of courses ALL completed ✅

- If students need to have taken a handful of courses (up to five[1]) before taking a course, this IS possible
    - In other words, they must have taken ALL courses listed in the prerequisite before taking the relevant course. In the example below, students will have to have taken AND completed AGRI 100, 250, AND 275 before taking AGRI 350.
- Courses **must** be listed in alphabetical order by prefix, and then ordered by course number
- In context: AGRI 350 Prerequisite:
    - ***AGRI 100, 250, and 275.***

➔ ONE of a handful of courses completed ✅

- If students have to have taken at least ONE of a handful of courses (up to five) before taking a course, this IS possible
- Courses **must** be listed in alphabetical order by prefix, and then ordered by course number
- In context: AGRI 350 Prerequisite:
    - ***AGRI 100, 250, or 275.***
        - In this example, students will have to have taken at least one of the courses listed in order to take AGRI 350.

➔ ONE course completed ✅

- If students have to have taken at least ONE specific course before taking a course, this IS possible
- In context: AGRI 225 Prerequisite:
    - ***AGRI 100.***
        - In this example, students will have to have taken AGRI 100 in order to take AGRI 225.

[1] This limit reflects operational constraints for our office. Each course in a prerequisite list requires individual coding and ongoing maintenance, and when course prefixes or numbers change, each entry must be updated separately. These changes happen regularly enough that prerequisites with longer lists create unsustainable maintenance burdens for academic operations staff.

➔ Must have declared a particular major or minor ✅

- If students have to have declared a specific major or minor before taking a course, this IS possible
- In context: AGRI 499 Prerequisite:
  - ***Agriculture major or minor.***
    - In this example, students will have to have declared an Agriculture major OR minor in order to take AGRI 499.

➔ A course completed with a particular grade minimum earned ✅

- If students have to have completed a specific course (or courses) with a particular grade or higher, this IS possible
- In context: AGRI 315 Prerequisite:
  - ***AGRI 101 & AGRI 210 with a C- or higher.***
    - In this example, students will have to have completed both AGRI 101 & 210 with a final grade of C- or higher in **both** courses.

➔ Course redundancy ✅

- If two courses have similar content, it IS possible to bar students from receiving credit for both courses given the large overlap in content (this is called an "antirequisite")
- In context: AGRI 210 Prerequisite:
  - ***AGRI 101. Credit will not be granted to students who have completed AGRI 205.***
    - In this example, students will need to have completed AGRI 101 in order to take AGRI 210. However, if they have completed AGRI 205, they will not receive credit for taking AGRI 210.

➔ One course completed from a particular *range of numbers* under a certain prefix ✅

- In context: AGRI 498 Prerequisite:
  - ***One 400-level AGRI course.***
    - In this example, students will have to have taken (and completed) at least ONE course between AGRI 400-499 in order to take AGRI 498.

Class/Section Level Enforcement

➔ **Permission of instructor ✅**

- Please note the following about adding “Permission of instructor” to a course:
  - This is done at the individual *class/section* level, not the catalog level; instructor permission must be requested **each time** a section of this course is scheduled
  - It is only permissible for certain kinds of courses, such as thesis sections, study abroad, or internships

Examples of TEXT-ONLY prerequisites

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Text-only prerequisites (also known as Advisory Prerequisites) are listed on the course itself & are visible to students. However, these conditions are NOT enforced by our system, & are signals or suggestions to students who are considering enrolling in the course.

All required reviews (such as an audition or an assessment of a student’s skill level) must be completed by the course’s home department.

➔ **Audition required**

➔ **Portfolio review**

➔ **[Number] of years of [subject] in high school**

➔ **Skill level of an instrument, sport, or language**

Examples of prerequisites that are NOT POSSIBLE

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➔ Lists over five courses

- In context: AGRI 470 Prerequisite
  - ***AGRI 101, 120, 210, 340, 379, 410, & 455***
  - The list of required courses in this example are quite numerous, which makes this nearly impossible to program into the system

➔ Lists of courses that a student will have to have taken TWO or more of

- In context: AGRI 455 Prerequisite
  - ***Two of the required electives for the Agriculture major.***
    - ***Agriculture major required electives: AGRI 101, 140, 180, 210, 272, 275, 350, & 410.***
      - The list of required electives in this example are quite numerous, which makes this nearly impossible to program into the system
      - As elective lists are updated, the list this prerequisite is referring to will **not** be updated automatically, which can create many registration & record-keeping issues

➔ Only a particular topic counting as a prerequisite

- In context: AGRI 380 Prerequisite
  - ***AGRI 375 only when the topic is "Clothing Repair."***
    - Our system is not capable of tracking the topic that was assigned to the section the student completed

➔ Courses only when taught by a particular instructor

- In context: AGRI 204 Prerequisite
  - ***AGRI 201 only when taught by Dr. Farm.***
    - Our system is not capable of tracking the instructor that was assigned to the section the student completed

Examples

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The purpose of these examples is to illustrate prerequisites that have various kinds of conditions working together in tandem, such as conditions that *are* and *are not* hard coded.

Green text is prerequisites that ARE read by AND are enforced by our system;

Orange text is prerequisites that are NOT read by OR enforced by our system.

- ➔ Agriculture major; Senior standing; AGRI 350 or 375; AGRI 200; or permission of instructor.
    - ◆ Green text is prerequisites that ARE read by AND are enforced by our system; Orange text is prerequisites that are NOT read by OR enforced by our system
    - ◆ In order for a student to take this course, they must have declared an Agriculture major, have senior standing, have taken **AT LEAST ONE OF** AGRI 350 OR 375, and have taken AGRI 200.
        - If they have not met these conditions, they will be barred from registering for this course. However, as stated in the orange text, students may receive permission from the instructor to register for the course
- ➔ AGRI 350 with a grade of C- or greater; Credit will not be granted to students who have completed AGRI 310.
    - ◆ Green text is prerequisites that ARE read by AND are enforced by our system
    - ◆ In order for a student to take this course, they must have completed AGRI 350 with a grade of a C- or greater. They also will not receive credit for this course if they have completed AGRI 310

- If they have not met these conditions, they will be barred from registering for this course

➔ AGRI 101 or AGRI 110 with a grade of C- or greater; Three years of high school math; One 200-level AGRI course.

- Green text is prerequisites that ARE read by AND are enforced by our system; Orange text is prerequisites that are NOT read by OR enforced by our system
- In order for a student to take this course, they must have completed either AGRI 101 OR AGRI 110 with a grade of C- or greater, as well as any course with the AGRI prefix numbered 200-299
- Our system is unable to check if a student has taken three years of math in high school, and this serves as a suggestion to students looking to take this course

➔ AGRI 150, 210, and 240; Agriculture minor or major; One year of high school home economics.

- Green text is prerequisites that ARE read by AND are enforced by our system; Orange text is prerequisites that are NOT read by OR enforced by our system
- In order for a student to take this course, they must have completed AGRI 150, 210, AND 240, and must be declared as an Agriculture minor or major
- Our system is unable to check if a student has taken one year of home economics in high school, and this serves as a suggestion to students looking to take this course