

Guidelines for Approvals of Ad-Hoc Elective Courses to Count Towards the Biophysics Advanced Electives Requirement

- I. The course must have significant graduate-level content, i.e., being **500-level (or higher)**. Students filing the petition must independently discuss with the professor that graduate-level content applies. Provide evidence that the graduate-level instruction applies to biophysics graduate students.
***Rationale:** lower than 500-level courses are more appropriate for undergraduate students, than for graduate-level learning*
- II. The course must include a **significant level of formal instruction**, as opposed to being primarily survey- or seminar-based. A course including a laboratory component is acceptable as long as there is also a formal instruction component providing the bases for the laboratory applications. Typically, this criterion is fulfilled by a course that is 2 credits or more.
***Rationale:** courses need to provide biophysics graduate students with an adequate level of know-how so that the students acquire the ability to quantitatively solve complex biological problems. Courses that are only 1 credit typically do not have a sufficiently high instructional content and are often seminar courses, rather than providing formal instruction.*
- III. The course must be **related to the field of biophysics** in the sense that (a) it teaches **methods that can be readily applied** to solve problems in biophysics even if the content is not directly biophysical per se, or (b) the **content of the course is biophysical in nature**, in the sense that it includes the direct quantitative analysis of biological systems.
***Rationale:** courses need to help graduate students achieve a high level of research scholarship in biophysics by either teaching them methods or helping them understand relevant applications and design new experiments or computations.*
- IV. Even if an ad-hoc request to have a course count towards the biophysics electives were to be denied (because of clashes with the above criteria), the petitioning student is welcome to take the graduate course anyways, in agreement with his/her research advisor.
***Rationale:** courses that do not fulfil the above criteria listed in this rubric may still be useful to the student scholarship, even if they do not count towards the required credits for a PhD in Biophysics.*