

DARS UG Audit: “Fun” Facts, Common Questions and Best Practices

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“Fun” Facts

- DARS:
 - Degree
 - Audit
 - Reporting
 - System



“Fun” Facts

What is DARS, anyway?

DARS is an automated process for tracking a student’s academic progress towards completing an academic program by indicating what requirements are fulfilled and what requirements are outstanding.

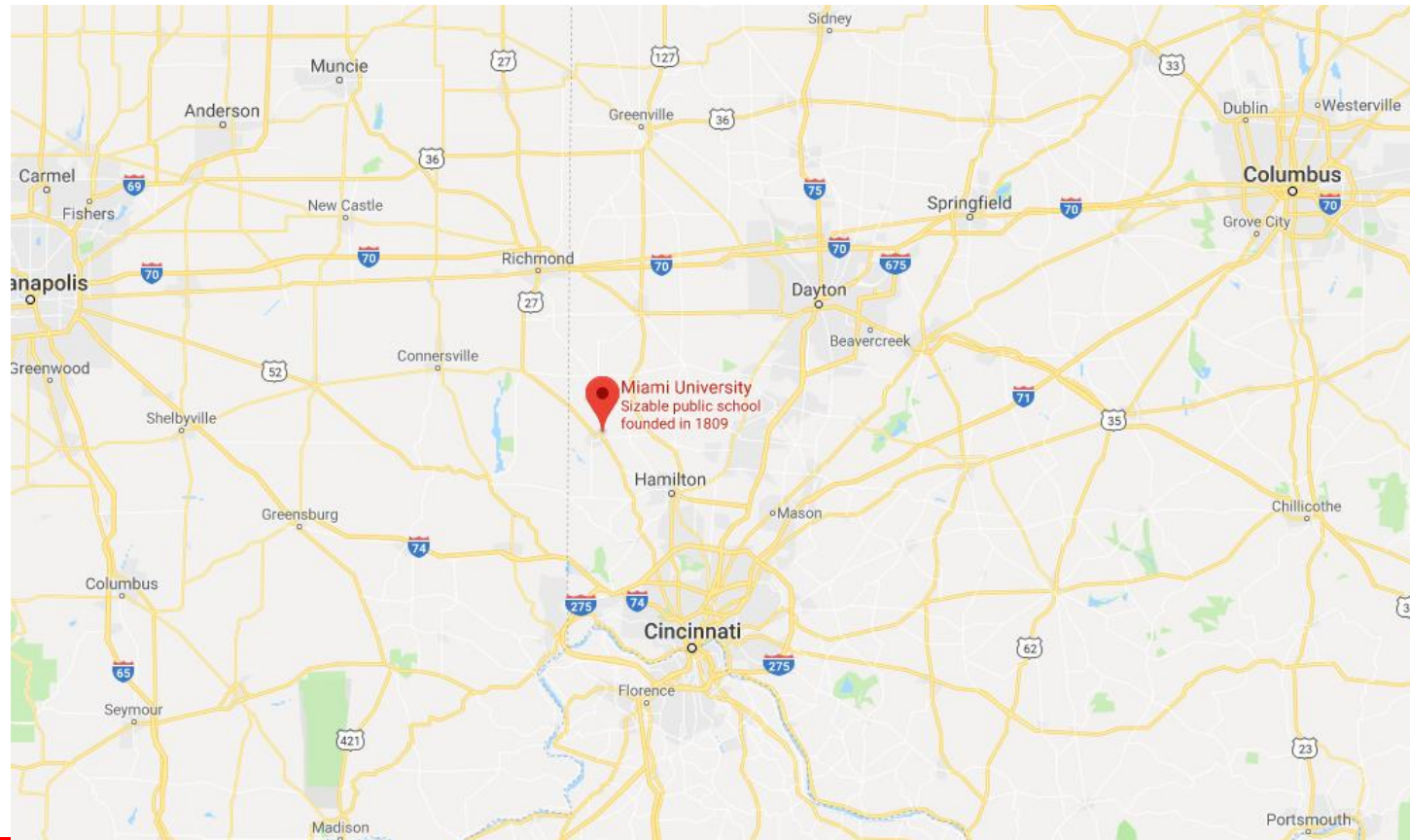
“Fun” Facts:

- Created in 1983 at Miami University



“Fun” Facts:

No, not that Miami. Miami University - Ohio

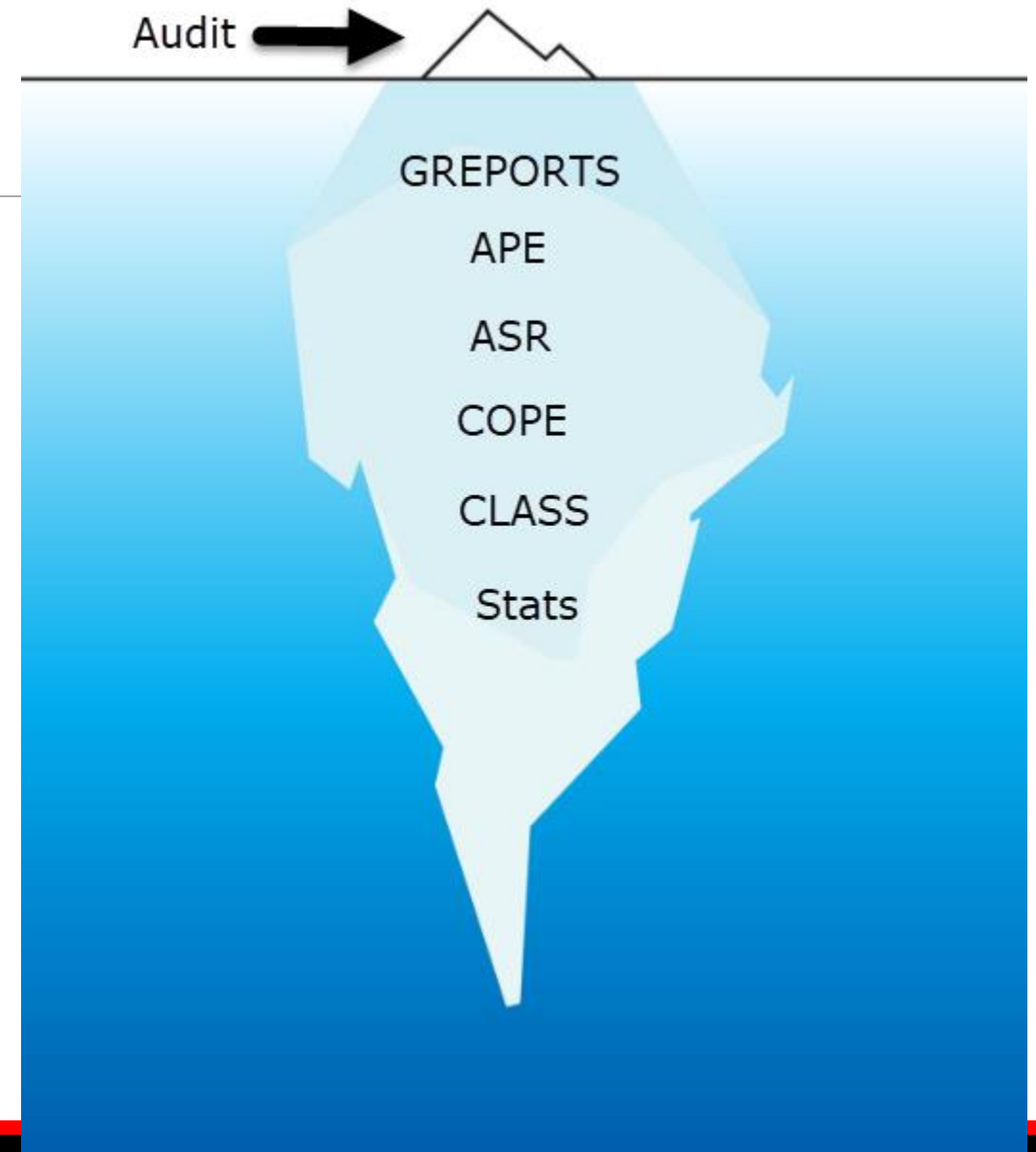


“Fun” Facts:

- Created in-house to assist their students and eventually licensed to other institutions
- Now owned by College Source who offer a suit of products and serve over 400 college and university campuses predominately in the US and Canada
- Also referred to as “u.achieve” audit

“Fun” Facts:

- The actual audit is only one part of what we use DARS for:
 - All GREPORTS that use CGPAs or credits in a program (i.e. ranking, graduation)
 - Academic Performance Evaluation (APE)
 - Academic Status Report (ASR)
 - Processes such as COPE and CLASS
 - Data extracts for statistical purposes



“Fun” Facts:

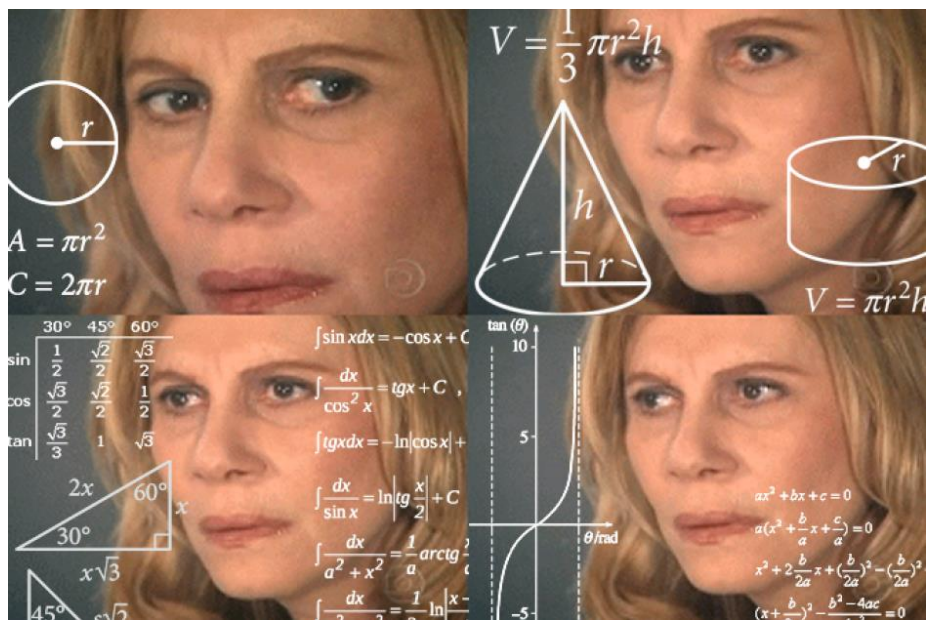
New rules implemented for 2021

- Best Grade policy: for students who have repeated courses that are considered equivalent or cross-listed, the attempt with the best grade will count and the lower grade is forfeited; if the courses preclude each other, the last attempt will count and the first is forfeited.
- Note that there is an exception to the best grade policy for students in an Engineering program. The Bachelor of Engineering program requires that the most recent attempt of a course be a passing grade in order to be eligible for graduation
- Removal of the 2.0 credit overlap rule on double counting between the major and minor

Common Questions

Why isn't my course sitting where it's supposed to go?

- Complicated question



Common Questions

Before we can answer that question, we need to understand the audit processing:

- The audit works from the top-down. It tries to place courses in the first available place that they can sit
- It does this while trying to respect all of the rules we have in place such as the maximum number of 1000-level courses and residency requirements
- It also has to respect the priorities of fulfilling the requirements and maximizing the CGPAs
- The audit has three tries to “match” a course before placing it
- When there are multiple places a course can sit and competing priorities the audit may not choose a placement we like

Common Questions

For example:

- Bachelor of Arts Combined Honours in Human Rights and Law
 - Courses needed in the Law Major sit in Human Rights instead of moving down to Law
 - Why?
 - The Human Rights and Law majors can both use the same LAWS courses
 - Courses generally sit in first available spot, so LAWS get “stuck” in Human Rights and don’t move down to where they’re required
 - Solution:
 - Exceptions to move the courses
 - Course are acceptable or not acceptable in a requirement. We can’t set a “if not needed for this requirement go here” type of logic
 - Avoid overlapping requirements when ever possible

Human Rights and Social Justice

B.A. Combined Honours (20.0 credits)

A. Credits Included in the Major CGPA (7.0 credits)

1. 1.0 credit from:

HUMR 1001 [1.0]	Introduction to Human Rights
FYSM 1104 [1.0]	Human Rights: Issues and Investigations
FYSM 1502 [1.0]	Selected Topics in Legal Studies (specifically the section on Global Governance and Human Rights)

or approved FYSM

2. 0.5 credit in:

HUMR 2001 [0.5]	Human Rights: Theories and Foundations
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3. 0.5 credit in:

HUMR 2202 [0.5]	Power Relations and Human Rights
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4. 0.5 credit from:

LAWS 2105 [0.5]	Social Justice and Human Rights
PHIL 2103 [0.5]	Philosophy of Human Rights
PSCI 3307 [0.5]	Politics of Human Rights

5. 2.5 credits, comprised of 0.5 credit from each of the five Thematic Groups (see list under Course Categories)

6. 1.0 credit at the 4000-level from Thematic Groups and/or Human Rights Electives (see lists under Course Categories)

7. 1.0 credit from Thematic Groups and/or Human Rights Electives (see lists under Course Categories)

B. Additional Credit Requirements (13.0 credits)

8. The requirements for the other discipline must be satisfied

9. Sufficient free electives to make 20.0 credits total for the program

Total Credits

Law

B.A. Combined Honours (20.0 credits)

A. Credits Included in the Law Major CGPA (6.5 credits)

1. 1.0 credit in:

LAWS 1001 [0.5]	Introduction to Legal Studies 1
LAWS 1002 [0.5]	Introduction to Legal Studies 2

2. 0.5 credit from:

LAWS 2201 [0.5]	Persons and Property
LAWS 2202 [0.5]	Obligations

3. 0.5 credit from:

LAWS 2301 [0.5]	Criminal Justice System
LAWS 2302 [0.5]	Criminal Law

4. 0.5 credit from:

LAWS 2105 [0.5]	Social Justice and Human Rights
LAWS 2501 [0.5]	Law, State and Constitution
LAWS 2502 [0.5]	Law, State and Citizen
LAWS 2601 [0.5]	Public International Law

5. 0.5 credit from Items 2-4 not already used to fulfil those items.

6. 1.0 credit in:

LAWS 2908 [0.5]	Approaches in Legal Studies I
LAWS 3908 [0.5]	Approaches in Legal Studies II

7. 0.5 credit in LAWS at the 3000 level or above

8. 2.0 credits in LAWS at the 4000 level or above

B. Additional Requirements (13.5 credits)

9. The requirements from the other discipline must be satisfied

10. Sufficient free electives to make up 20.0 credits total for the program.

Total Credits

Common Questions

Why isn't my course sitting where it's supposed to go?

- Overlapping requirements or competing priorities
 - Too many options decrease functionality
- Excess courses blocking
 - If the student has extra courses sitting aside, they can be blocking a course from coming in depending on the grades
- Too many 1000-levels courses
 - 7.0 credit maximum
- CURs, TRs, LOPs, SAT, EXCs being prioritized
 - These courses are viewed as "A++" on the audit and will be prioritized

Common Questions

- Double Counting (unlimited)
 - Programs are no longer restricted by the maximum of 2.0 credits of double counting
 - No limit when used to satisfy both the requirements for:
 - the Major (or Majors) and the Minor; or
 - a Minor, Concentration, or Specialization and any other Minor, Concentration, or Specialization
- Forfeited
 - If a course is sitting in forfeit it cannot be used towards the program
 - Generally a result of repeats or precluded courses
- Prohibited
 - A number of programs have additional rules that prohibit particular courses from being used, for example:
 - Architecture Studio courses cannot be used for credit in BA History and Theory of Architecture
 - Students admitted into BCOMM with advanced standing will not receive credit for any grade below a C-

Common Questions

I am requesting the same exception all of the time, is there anything that can be done about this?

- “Undercoding”
 - Automatically allows a course to count in a requirement
 - Done for all students within particular calendar year(s)
 - Most commonly used for a similar requirements (i.e. MATH 1007 for MATH 1009) or for transition planning (new courses to old curriculum, old courses to new curriculum)
- Curriculum change
 - Transparency - if the unit is always willing to accept a particular course add it to the calendar entry so it's clear to other staff and students
- Contact the DARS team to discuss potential options

Common Questions

I don't see the Combined Honours program I'm looking for in COPE/SZADARQ, is this combination allowed?

- Most likely, almost all combined options can be added together
 - Exceptions are when the majors have overlapping requirements. If this is the case a specialized Combined version addressing the program may have been created
 - Example: Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies + Linguistics = Linguistics and Discourse Studies
- We build audits/Banner entries only when we've received a COPE request from a student
- AE team oversees COPE processing and is the best point of contact

Common Questions

I'd like to review a large number of audits, is there an easier way than printing them individually?

- Batch audits
 - DARS team can print batches for particular student populations (i.e. all HBA-45 students with 4th year standing)
 - We can also produce audits for a list of students you if provide us with the following information:
 - Student numbers
 - Program Code (HBS-60, BPAPM-P2A)
 - Contact DARS team via email with requests



Common Questions

I have a special topics course that is repeatable, can the audit allow it to count more than once automatically?

- Yes, we can designate courses as automatically repeatable
- However, it is up to the department to monitor to ensure that students do not register in the same topic and receive credit twice
- Alternatively, repeated courses can be allowed to forfeit and handled via exception to avoid having to monitor registration

Common Questions

What's the “real” grade on a CLP, CEX, LOP or EXC?

- CLP=Current Letter of Permission and CEX=Current Exchange
 - These notations are the equivalent of “CUR”. If these notations appear on the audit it means the Registrar’s Office has not received a final transcript and finalized the credit
 - Some institutions (i.e. Athabasca) allow courses to be extended over a long period of time. It can be up to year before they are completed and the grade is received
- LOP= Successful Letter of Permission and EXC=Successful Exchange
 - These courses have received a passing grade and the credit has been transferred by the Registrar’s Office. As these are transferred on a pass/fail basis a grade cannot be displayed on the audit
 - The student should be able to provide a copy of their host transcript as required. If there is an issue and this isn’t possible contact the Academic Evaluation team.

Common Questions

Who do I ask about audit issues?

- Issues particular to a student – Academic Evaluations team
- Global issues such as issue discrepancy with all programs, undercoding, curriculum development, transition planning – DARS



Common Questions

Is audit training available?

- Yes, individual training is available
- Review audit basics and examples specific to the program you work with
- Customized depending on questions and needs of user
- Contact studentsystems@carleton.ca or Angel/Lisa/Valentina directly

Best Practices

KISS Principle

- **K**eep **I**t **S**imple and **S**traightforward
- Whenever possible keep curriculum as simple and straightforward as possible
- Avoid extra layers of complication unless truly necessary
 - If/When/But/Only if are statements that can lead to more complexity
 - Avoid having the same courses count for many areas
 - Be specific or give choice – try not to do both in the same requirement
 - Avoid variance from rules/regulations
- Better for audit function and student understanding
- Requirements not compatible with the system = exceptions



Best Practices

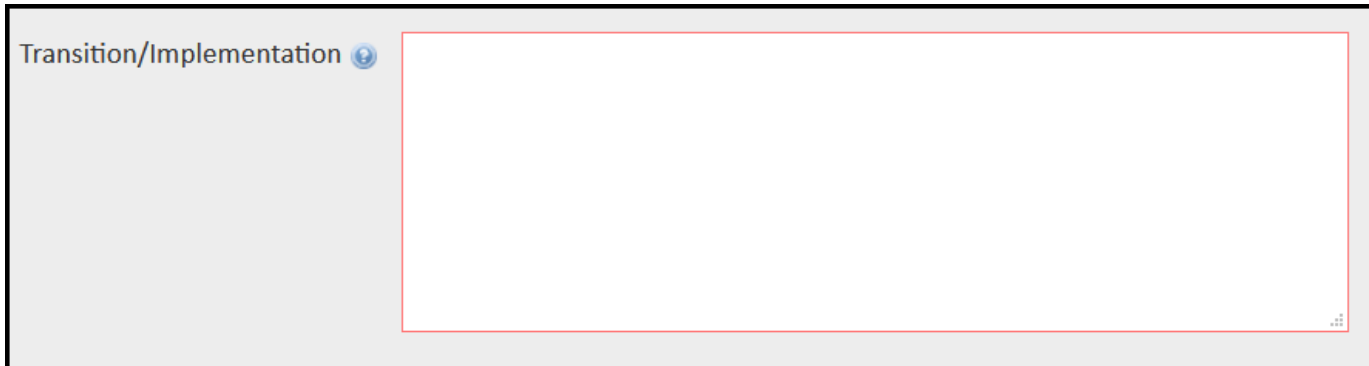
Transition Planning

- When curriculum changes are made the implications to both existing and new students need to be considered
- For existing students:
 - If courses have been deleted consider what will they take as a substitute? How will these substitutions be actioned? Will there be a communication plan?
 - Is there an advantage to the new curriculum? If so, will calendar year changes be recommended? What is the plan to manage this?
 - If an existing student enrolls in the “new” version of the program where will their courses fit? What exceptions or substitutions will be required?

Best Practices

Best practice for transition planning:

- Have a documented plan
- Work with the Registrar's Office and DARS team to determine what assistance we can provide
 - DARS team can provide documentation for getting started and operational consultation
- Have a communications plan for students and impacted staff (AAC)
- Transition plans can also be included when new or edited curriculum changes are submitted via CourseLeaf



Transition/Implementation ⓘ

A screenshot of a form field in the CourseLeaf system. The field is labeled "Transition/Implementation" with a small blue information icon to its right. The field itself is a large, empty white rectangle with a thin red border, set against a light gray background.

Best Practices

Undercoding/Substitution Tracking

- If you are requesting background changes to the audit, track your requests for easy reference
- Substitutions will stay in place until requested otherwise and will carry forward to future calendar years
- If there's been a lot of requests it can get confusing to figure out exactly what is being accepted and where

Coming in 2022...



**time to
UPGRADE**

Contact Us

Systems Support Team

- studentsystems@carleton.ca
- **Angel Wagner**
 - Angel.Wagner@Carleton.ca
- **Valentina Leon**
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 - Lisa.Chow@Carleton.ca

For more information on DARS, please visit:

<https://i.carleton.ca/registrar/progression/audit/>

Questions?

