

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

The *New* Core Curriculum in Texas: “Everyone’s Business!”

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The Texas Core Curriculum

- Core Curriculum -- the curriculum in the liberal arts, humanities, sciences, and political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduates of an institution of higher education in Texas are required to complete.

Why Does Texas Need a New Core?

- “Old” Core in place since 1990’s
- Now live in global marketplace
- Major technology changes since mid 90’s
- Assessment needs are different than in past

Before Changing, THECB Considered:

- Transferability of courses across Texas
- 42 SCH required by state. Legislative action to change = too difficult.
- Objectives should be shared by all areas of core.
- Clearer objectives and outcomes needed for assessment.
 - Settled on Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) "Liberal Education and America's Promise" (LEAP) essential learning outcomes and VALUE rubrics as starting point.

What Are New Core Objectives?

- Critical Thinking Skills*
- Communication Skills*
- Empirical & Quantitative Skills
- Teamwork (consider different viewpoints / work effectively with others)
- Personal Responsibility (connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making)
- Social Responsibility (intercultural competence, civic responsibility, engagement in regional, national, and global communities)

Component Area Comparison

Previous Area Names

- Communication (6 SCH)
- Mathematics (3 SCH)
- Natural Sciences (6 SCH)
- Humanities & Visual/Performing Arts (6 SCH)
- U.S. History (6 SCH)
- Political Science (6 SCH)
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (3 SCH)
- Component Area Option (6 SCH)

=42 SCH

New Area Names

- Communication (6 SCH)
- Mathematics (3 SCH)
- Life and Physical Sciences (6 SCH)
- Language, Philosophy, Culture (3 SCH)
- Creative Arts (3 SCH)
- American History (6 SCH)
- Government/Political Science (6 SCH)
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (3 SCH)
- Component Area Option (6 SCH)

=42 SCH

What Does This Mean for PVAMU?

- We must establish a set of core courses that meets the THECB's objectives.
- Must use new objectives to revise course content in component areas.

Core Objectives & Component Areas I

Component Area	Critical Thinking	Communication Skills	Empirical & Quantitative	Teamwork	Personal Responsibility	Social Responsibility
Communication	X	X	Optional	X	X	Optional
Mathematics	X	X	X	Optional	Optional	Optional
Life & Physical Sciences	X	X	X	X	Optional	Optional
Language, Philosophy, and Culture	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X

Core Objectives & Component Areas II

Component Area	Critical Thinking	Communication Skills	Empirical & Quantitative	Teamwork	Personal Responsibility	Social Responsibility
Creative Arts	X	X	Optional	X	Optional	X
American History	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X
Government / Political Science	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X
Social / Behavioral Science	X	X	X	Optional	Optional	X
Institutional Option	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional

Assessment of Core Curriculum

- Six core objectives must be assessed across core.
- Measures, methodology, and timeline must be in place.
- Results of assessment must be reported to CB, to include:
 - Level of attainment targeted and achieved for each objective.
 - Analysis of results and use of data to improve student learning.

What do we know about core skills of our students? Indirectly:

- 97% of faculty surveyed (FSSE) said they emphasized critical thinking very much/quite a bit. 69% of students (NSSE) agreed.
- 58% of faculty emphasized qualitative problem solving; 69% of students agreed.
- 71% of faculty emphasized working effectively with others; 67% of students agreed.

Direct measure of core skills (Gen. Ed. Synthesis)

Freshmen, N=115; Graduating Seniors, N=56

4=High Proficiency; 1=Not Proficient

- Formulate Thesis: F=1.12/4.0 ; S=2.74/4.0
- Sentence Structure:
 - Syntax/Mechanics: F=1.04; S=2.54
 - Punctuation: F=0.89; S=2.60
- Critical Thinking
 - Identify/explain issues: F=1.10 ; S=2.20
 - Evidence/synthesis: F=1.02; S=2.22
 - Reading comprehension: F=1.33; S=2.22

Data in Context and Conclusion:

- Current core practices must be re-evaluated.
- Context: Fall 2011:
 - 291 FTFTF in Developmental Writing
 - 617 in ENGL 1123.
- We have work to do.
- Details regarding core revisions to follow.

Review Process and Timeline:

- Review Process: Curriculum Mappings, Evidence of Previous Data Collection, Discussion, Revisions to Courses/Descriptions, etc.
 - May find a shift in departments offering core courses.
 - May find our course options reduced, given objectives required.
 - May find fewer options available to students with TSI holds (must plan).
 - May help us move away from working in silos.
 - May need to discuss a Writing Across the Curriculum approach to Critical Thinking and Communication Objectives required of all courses.
 - Must recognize the need for on-going assessment of core.
 - Review www.aacu.org website for outcomes and VALUE rubrics
- Proposed core goes to the CB in 2013 for approval.