

A Core Curriculum for the 21st Century

Learning for Life



Designing Texas Undergraduate Education for the 21st Century

- ▶ UEAC Report to the Coordinating Board, January 2009
- ▶ Recommendation 2A: Reconsider the Texas Core Curriculum to ensure that it reflects current and future demands on student knowledge and skills
- ▶ WHY change things now?

because . . .

**... the world is demanding
students to shift from
accumulating course credits to**



**building real world
capabilities**

Transformative Change

Abandon thinking of the Core as a dissociated list of courses to complete.

These are not simply “the Basics” any more, but a coherent approach to the essential college-level skills and knowledge that will prepare students for the rest of their educational experiences and their work lives;



Begin thinking of the Core as set of skills to master in a variety of disciplinary settings.



What Should Students Leaving College and Entering the Workplace Know and Be Able to Do?

- ▶ Academic responses from institutions surveyed by American Association of Colleges & Universities: *College Learning for the New Global Century* (2007)
- ▶ Employer/workplace responses surveyed by The Conference Board: *Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants into the 21st Century U.S. Workforce* (2007)

- ▶ The lists of high-priority knowledge, including intellectual, practical, and applied skills, valued by each group aligned closely.
 - ▶ Perceptions of what students need to know and be able to do were very similar, from the higher education perspective and from the workplace perspective.
 - ▶ UEAC's recommendations about how to change the core curriculum were influenced by these two reports, and by recent actions by SACSCOC and the Texas Legislature.
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“Current” Core Curriculum

- ▶ Implemented statewide in 1999
- ▶ 6 Basic Intellectual Competencies
- ▶ 8 Perspectives
- ▶ 37 Exemplary Educational Objectives (EEOs)
- ▶ Institutionally Designated Option (with its own institutionally-developed EEOs)
- ▶ Adds up to more than 51 different items, each to be assessed and evaluated

THAT’S a LOT!

Rationale for changes

- Focus on coherent general education knowledge and skills needed by all;
 - Make assessment and evaluation more relevant to the skills and knowledge needed by students;
 - Reduce the number of “things” to be assessed and evaluated; and
 - Ensure that Core Curriculum assessment would meet SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1.
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The “New” Core Curriculum

Beginning in Fall 2014 – Focuses on

A curriculum-level statement of purpose

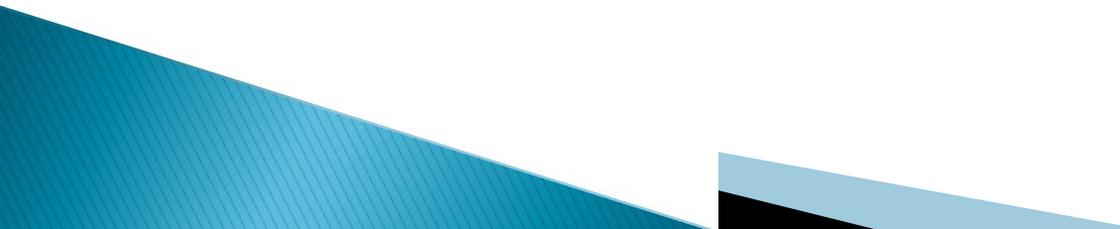
A curriculum-level set of objectives

Purpose of the Core

Through the core curriculum, students will gain a **foundation of knowledge** of human cultures and the physical and natural world; develop **principles** of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world; and advance **intellectual and practical skills** that are essential for all learning.

- Adopted by UEAC 11/13/09
- Approved by THECB 10/27/11

Six Core Objectives

- ▶ **Critical thinking** skills – to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
 - ▶ **Communication** skills – to include effective written, oral, and visual communication
 - ▶ **Empirical and Quantitative** skills – to include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
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Six Core Objectives, continued

- ▶ **Teamwork** – to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
 - ▶ **Social Responsibility** – to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
 - ▶ **Personal Responsibility** – to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
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Foundational Component Areas

- ▶ Communication (010)
 - ▶ Mathematics (020)
 - ▶ Life and Physical Sciences (030)
 - ▶ Language, Philosophy, & Culture (040)
 - ▶ Creative Arts (050)
 - ▶ American History (060)
 - ▶ Government/Political Science (070)
 - ▶ Social/ Behavioral Science (080)
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Communication

- ▶ **Communication** focuses on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively.
- ▶ Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.
- ▶ The core objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, teamwork, and personal responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.

Mathematics

- ▶ **Mathematics** focuses on quantitative literacy in logic, patterns, and relationships.
 - ▶ Courses involve the understanding of key mathematical concepts and the application of appropriate mathematical tools to the everyday experience.
 - ▶ The core objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, and empirical and quantitative skills are addressed by each course in this component area.
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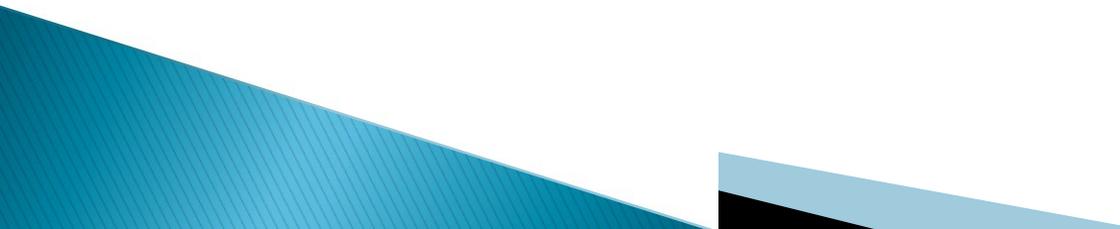
Life and Physical Sciences

- ▶ **Life and Physical Sciences** focus on describing, explaining, and predicting natural phenomena using the scientific method.
 - ▶ Courses involve the understanding of interactions among natural phenomena and the implications of scientific principles on human experiences.
 - ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, empirical and quantitative analysis, and teamwork are addressed by each course in this component area.
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Language, Philosophy, and Culture

- ▶ **Language, Philosophy, and Culture** focuses on how ideas, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience.
- ▶ Course involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.
- ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking , communication skills, personal responsibility, and social responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.

Creative Arts

- ▶ **Creative Arts** focus on the appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of the human imagination.
 - ▶ Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.
 - ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, teamwork, and social responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.
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American History

- ▶ **American History** focuses on the consideration of past events relative to the United States, with the option of including Texas history for a portion of this component area.
- ▶ Courses involve the interaction among individuals , communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.
- ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, social responsibility, and personal responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.

Government/Political Science

- ▶ **Government/Political Science** focuses on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states with special emphasis on that of Texas.
- ▶ Courses involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.
- ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, social responsibility, and personal responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.

Social/Behavioral Science

- ▶ **Social/Behavioral Science** focuses on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human.
- ▶ Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on society and culture.
- ▶ The Core Objectives of critical thinking, communication skills, empirical and quantitative analysis, and social responsibility are addressed by each course in this component area.

Core Objectives Mapped to Foundational Component Areas

Component Area	Critical Thinking	Communication Skills	Empirical & Quantitative	Teamwork	Social Responsibility	Personal Responsibility
Communication	X	X	Optional	X	Optional	X
Mathematics	X	X	X	Optional	Optional	Optional
Life and Physical Sciences	X	X	X	X	Optional	Optional
Language, Philosophy, and Culture	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X
Creative Arts	X	X	Optional	X	X	Optional
American History	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X
Government/ Political Science	X	X	Optional	Optional	X	X
Social/ Behavioral Science	X	X	X	Optional	X	Optional

Foundational Component Area Semester Credit Hour Distribution

- Foundational Component Areas:
 - Communication (010) – 6 SCH
 - Mathematics (020) – 3 SCH
 - Life and Physical Sciences (030) – 6 SCH
 - Language, Philosophy, and Culture (040) – 3 SCH
 - Creative Arts (050) – 3 SCH
 - American History (060) – 6 SCH
 - Government/Political Science (070) – 6 SCH
 - Social/ Behavioral Science (080) – 3 SCH
 - **Total = 36 SCH**

Component Area Option (090)

Semester Credit Hours

- ▶ Component Area Option – 6 SCH
- ▶ Links the CAO closely to the eight FCAs
- ▶ Replaces the institutionally designated option
- ▶ Still “in flux” – changes will be considered at the April 25th Board Meeting

Summary of New Core Curriculum SCH

Foundational Component Areas	SCH Minimum Requirement
Communication	6
Mathematics	3
Life and Physical Sciences	6
Language, Philosophy & Culture	3
Creative Arts	3
American History	6 (required by TEC 51.302)
Government/Political Science	6 (required by TEC 51.301)
Social/Behavioral Science	3
Component Area Option	6
TOTAL	42

Proposed Rule Change (for April 2012 Board agenda)

§4.28 (b)(4)(A) and (B): Courses in the CAO must meet one Foundational Component Area definition and the applicable Core Objectives; *except that an institution may certify that, for up to 3 SCH of the CAO, the course/s meet(s) the definition specified for one or more of the foundational component areas, and include(s) a minimum of three Core Objectives, including Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, and one of the remaining Core Objectives of the institution's choice.*

Proposed Rule Change (on April 2012 Board agenda)

(new section) §4.28(b)(4)(C): For the purposes of gaining approval for or reporting a Component Area Option course under the exception outlined above, an institution is not required to notify the Board of the specific foundational component area(s) and Core Objectives associated with the course(s).

Proposed Rule Change (on April 2012 Board agenda)

§4.28(g) would provide that any semester credit hours (SCH) for a course approved to meet a Foundational Component Area (FCA) requirement, but that exceed the number of SCH required to fulfill the FCA, must either be applied to the Component Area Option *or must be required by the specific degree program such that the number of SCH required to complete the program would not increase.* (The FCA SCH must be expended prior to applying the additional SCH to the degree plan.)

Other Changes for 2014

- ▶ Unique need courses will no longer be allowed to be used for the core curriculum by comm. coll.
- ▶ All institutions will have a 42 SCH core - no exceptions
- ▶ A student can still be excused from completing the core curriculum when earning AA and AS degrees for which there is an approved field of study curriculum, voluntary statewide transfer compact, and other statewide transfer articulation agreements (as they are developed), and the AAT.
- ▶ Students who transfer with such an academic associate degree would become responsible for completing their remaining core requirements at the receiving institution.

Timeline

November 30, 2013 – Proposed institutional core curricula due to Coordinating Board

February 1, 2014 – THECB staff approvals should be completed

Fall 2014 – Statewide implementation

Instructions, forms, procedures for submission and review of proposed core curricula are in the works

Sample Institutional Timeline

Spring 2012 – Develop process for developing the new Core

Fall 2012 – Course Submission, Review, and Revision

Spring 2013 – Final Course Submissions

Summer/Fall 2013 – Submission to CB

Questions?

Core Curriculum

www.thecb.state.tx.us/corecurriculum2014

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