

Core Curriculum Committee Minutes
September 10, 2012
Time: 12:30 p.m.
WHTC 126

Members Present: Deborah Scaggs, Mark Menaldo, Kevin Lindberg, Juan Lira, Conchita Hickey, Mary Treviño, Jose Lozano, Richard Wright, Bede Leyendecker, Chris Ferguson, Carol Walters, Frances Bernat, Rohitha Goonatilake, Veronica Martinez, William Manger, Michael Kidd, Pablo Camacho, Ray Bachnak, Paul Niemeyer, Manuel Broncano, Tom Mitchell

Absent: Carmen Bruni, Dan Mott, Joquina Reed, Philip Roberson, Bernice Sanchez

Review of 2014 Core Curriculum Objectives

Dr. Juan Lira gave a general overview of the 2014 Core Foundational Component Areas and the six Core Curriculum Objectives identified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Committee members were given a folder/binder that contained all relevant materials, one of which was a map that contained possible TAMU courses that might meet core curriculum requirements.

Dr. Lira then outlined the work that the committee needs to do to prepare the 2014 Core Curriculum and reviewed the homework/calendar that the committee needs to follow to complete the internal review process by the end of the fall 2012 semester.

Purpose and Values: Dr. Lira discussed the purpose and values of the 2014 core curriculum. He also mentioned that the assessment of the core curriculum needs to include at least one direct measure, and that use of externally informed benchmarks is encouraged.

6 Core Curriculum Objectives: Dr. Lira next reviewed the six core curriculum objectives carefully, explaining the meaning and the implications for assessment. Some discussion followed.

In response to Dr. Lindberg's question about whether the "and" in the Communication Objective meant that each course had to include written, visual and oral communication skills, Dr. Lira stated that all three need to be addressed; however, but not every course has to address all three to the same degree.

Foundational Component Areas: Dr. Lira then reported on the foundational component areas, using the component map handout to guide the committee members through the discussion.

Questions and discussion followed:

In response to an inquiry from Dr. Bachnak as to whether the courses that are presently being used for core should be reduced in number, Dr. Lira replied that this could happen. He referenced the evaluation form used by University of Houston to help explore whether a course will work well for the component areas. Dr. Lira mentioned that it might be helpful to use this form or a similar one to help faculty determine which courses meet the Core Curriculum standards. He also noted that the courses at the University of Houston have to be taught every two years. We can do the same or choose another course sequence, but it should probably be no more than a three-year sequence in order to help students complete the core. In the end, faculty judgment will play an important role in identifying which courses are appropriate for each component area.

Dr. Tom Mitchell inquired as to how the assessment process would run and what it would consist of. Drs. Lira and Hickey replied that this would have to be a collaborative decision involving input from the various stakeholders. They mentioned that the assessment process could involve random sampling of uploaded products on Angel that faculty could examine for evidence of students' mastery of the core curriculum objectives. They also stressed that core curriculum classes would have to produce the artifacts.

Dr. Bachnak asked what could be done about students who transfer core curriculum courses. Ms. Mary Treviño replied that we do not need to worry about these transfer issues, since the assessment of the core would occur at the institution where the students took the courses. However, if transfer students have not completed their core when they enroll at TAMIU, then they would be responsible for completing the core requirements at TAMIU.

Dr. Bernat asked if a class that does not stress visual communication skills, but does require students to clearly demonstrate oral and written communication, was appropriate. Dr. Lira responded by highlighting the use of TAMIU's familiar IERA matrix which indicates that concepts may be *Introduced, Emphasized, Reinforced, and Applied* in different courses. He recommended that we not try to use percentages to determine the degree of emphasis in different courses, since these are difficult to measure. Instead, he recommended using the IERA matrix to identify how competencies are addressed, since we use it already for program review. The desired overall effect is that students have multiple opportunities to develop the various skills comprising the various core curriculum objectives.

Dr. Carol Waters mentioned that the development of the core curriculum will require more coordination and synthesis among classes in the core.

Dr. Richard Wright stated that he was not clear about whether we will be assessing each core curriculum class each semester, since introductory classes have to be taught all the time. He also mentioned that an important question has to be whether we are going to use the same courses we have now or reduce the number of them.

Dr. Wright also asked whether the assessment of the core curriculum objectives will be rotated or will all of them have to be assessed yearly. Dr. Lira responded that THECB has not provided that information yet. He will share any news regarding that question as soon as it is available.

Dr. Manuel Broncano expressed a desire to know if there has been any discussion about whether communication should be the exclusive purview of the English language. Dr. Lira replied that he was not aware of any such requirement.

Dr. Lira reviewed the draft of the 2014 TAMIU core curriculum proposed in late spring 2012. Given the additional information we now have, he indicated that each department represented in the core needed to review relevant course offerings and report the results of these deliberations at the next Core Curriculum meeting on Sept. 24th.

All present agreed to consider the minutes for May 2012 and this meeting for approval at the next meeting on Sept 24th.

Dr. Hickey reminded committee members that she and the other members of the Core Curriculum Leadership Team would be happy to provide any assistance necessary, if they had any questions.

Ms. Treviño moved and Dr. Hickey seconded a motion to adjourn at 1:48 p.m. The motion passed.