

Minutes for Core Curriculum Committee Meeting  
WHTC 125  
October 8, 2012

**Members Present:** R. Bachnak, F. Bernat, M. Broncano, C. Bruni, P. Camacho, C. Ferguson, R. Goonatilake, C. Hickey, M. Kidd, B. Leyendecker, K. Lindberg, J. Lira, J. C. Lozano, P. Madlock, W. Manger, V. Martinez, M. Menaldo, T. Mitchell, P. Niemeyer, J. Reed, P. Roberson, B. Sanchez, D. Scaggs, M. Trevino,

**Members Absent:** D. Mott, C. Waters, R. Wright

1. **Approval of minutes.** Dr. Lira requested that the committee review the minutes and asked for a motion to approve. P. Niemeyer moved and J. Reed seconded a motion to approve the minutes with the following corrections: Addition of the following courses to their foundational component areas:

- **Natural Science:** BIOL 1311 Principles of Biology II, GEOL 1305 Environmental Geology
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences:** GEOG 1303 General World Geography.

2. **Discussion of the Core Curriculum**

**Component Area Option (CAO):** Dr. Mitchell proposed two options which he listed for the committee's consideration, although his preference is option A.

**Option A.**

3 SCHs from COMM 1315, COMM 1311, or ENGL 2311

2 SCHs two Science Lab

1 SCH UNIV 1101

Wellness and UNIV 1102 required for all BA degrees. Other degrees to be determined

**Option B.**

3 SCHs from COMM 1315, COMM 1311, or ENGL 2311

1 SCH one Science Lab

1 SCH UNIV 1101

1 SCH option from UNIV 1102, Science Lab, or Wellness

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the proposal by Dr. Bachnak that MATH 2371 Communication in Mathematics be included in the CAO for math majors. This discussion was framed by two major considerations: Should the courses in the CAO serve all students as foundational courses, or should they be tailored to fit different majors?

Dr. Mitchell stated that in his judgment the 3 SCH course included in the CAO should have a strong oral component, since that is the one communication skill that is not emphasized sufficiently in any other course in the core and which TAMU students need to develop. He also mentioned that he did not think the CAO options should be degree oriented necessarily. For example, if departments would like to offer writing for their degrees, they should look for opportunities in degree programs to include writing.

Dr. Broncano agreed with Dr. Mitchell stating that core courses should provide a common foundation for all students and that courses that are degree oriented should not be included in the core. He expressed concern about the lack of language skills of our students and the need to provide them more opportunities to communicate.

Dr. Lindberg reminded the committee that the transference of core courses was also a consideration and recommended that we keep more general courses as options.

Nonetheless, some pragmatic concerns were raised. Dr. Ferguson expressed concern about the lack of faculty to teach all sections of COMM 1315 Public Speaking. Presently, he has only enough faculty to deliver about one third of the courses that would be required if COMM 1315 were the only option.

Dr. Lira reminded the committee that although financial or other constraints exist, whatever is proposed for the core will have to meet the assessments required for the components

Ms. Reed indicated that COMM 1315 does focus on the arts in particular, but not on a specific course in the arts.

Dr. Bachnak stated that he thought the core needed to be flexible and that we should use the CAO to do this. He also indicated that ENGL 2311 Technical Writing requires oral presentations.

Dr. Goonatilake reminded the committee that MATH 2371 had been developed for a specific purpose and has been taught for 2 years or more in the core with no concerns about its inclusion.

Dr. Lira redirected the conversation to the role of the core and that is to lay a foundation, not to provide specialization. He posed the following questions: When the core is completed, what do we want the student to look like? At the same time, we should ask ourselves, if students don't take MATH 2371 and if I am a math professor, what is it I am going to do to develop communication skills? We have a great opportunity to develop a solid foundation but it should not be done in a vacuum. It should be part of the degree. How does a core course complement what follows next?

Dr. Lozano stated that all courses should be useful for any of the majors in the university fulfilled by the skills taught in COMM or in Technical writing.

Dr. Lira also asked the committee to consider what other courses, besides those under consideration, could other departments offer.

Dr. Broncano reiterated that TAMIU students need the basics and they don't have them. If we opt for many courses, we won't have a core.

Dr. Lira reminded the committee that the students can spread out the core and staffing should not be an insurmountable task. The most important question is what do we want for our students? He also reminded the committee that the CAO had to assess communication and critical thinking, as well as one additional objective.

The question was raised regarding how the committee should reach consensus on this topic. Should the committee approve the core by component or wait until the end?

Dr. Scaggs moved that 1301 and 1302 be the 6 SCHs of communication. Dr. Bachnak seconded. The motion passed with one abstention.

Further discussion followed. Dr. Roberson asked whether GEOG was included in the core for education majors and Dr. Bernat responded that it was included to help all students become knowledgeable and well-rounded individuals.

Dr. Madlock requested the addition of LEDR 2301 Foundations of Leadership into the Social and Behavioral Sciences foundational component area and B. Leyendecker requested that two THAR courses and two MUAP courses be deleted.

In the interest of time, Dr. Bernat recommended that we leave the more challenging question of the CAO for the next meeting to give committee members a chance to review their degree programs, consult with the Deans, and review the UNIV 1101 and 1102 information that would be provided by Dr. Hickey. Consequently, Dr. Bernat moved that we approve all the proposed courses in the draft table of the core curriculum with the exception of the CAO block. J. Reed seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Members asked for the minutes and other pertinent information as soon as possible for purposes of discussion with their colleagues and to inform their recommendations.

Dr. Hickey moved to adjourn and Dr. Bachnak seconded. The motion passed.