

**Texas A&M International University
Core Curriculum Institutional Effectiveness Review (CCIER)**

Core Curriculum Academic Discipline: Behavioral Sciences

Assessment Period Covered: Sept. 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010

Discipline Coordinator (Preparer of Report) Claudia San Miguel

List Other Academic Discipline Faculty:

John Kilburn
Amy Poland
Shudong Zhang
Michael Harrington
Dae-Hoon Kwak

The Core Curriculum Institutional Effectiveness Review is directed at Goal 1: Academics of the Texas A&M International University 2006-2010 Strategic Plan:

Develop, maintain, assess, and improve academic programs, administrative/educational support services and student services, to admit, retain, and graduate students who achieve established learning outcomes designed to prepare them for success in their chosen careers.

Institutional Mission

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

Core Curriculum Mission

At Texas A&M International University, the Core curriculum introduces students to academic disciplines which form the foundation of human thought: mathematics, science, history, language, literature, the arts, and social and behavioral sciences. Our Core is conceived to open new areas of learning for our students and to foster skills necessary for success in higher education.

As they move through this course of study, students are encouraged, as their knowledge increases, to develop the capacity to articulate and support a thesis, to think critically, to synthesize their observations and to perceive analogies and relationships between seemingly diverse ideas and intellectual pursuits.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Exemplary Educational Objectives for the following academic discipline:

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

1. To employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.
2. To examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures.
3. To use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
4. To develop and communicate explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.
5. To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural and global forces on the area under study.
6. To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
7. To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.
8. To differentiate and analyze historical evidence (documentary and statistical) and differing points of view.
9. To recognize and apply reasonable criteria for the acceptability of historical evidence and social research.
10. To analyze critically, assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
11. To recognize and assume one's responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.
12. To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Outcome(s)

From the list above, identify the outcome(s) that will be focused upon this year. (It is recommended that academic disciplines rotate through their entire set of Exemplary Educational Objectives over a multi-year period. Thus, disciplines are encouraged to focus only on a few outcomes each year.) To facilitate the completion of this report, please refer to the Core Curriculum Matrix completed for each academic discipline.

To recognize and apply reasonable criteria for the acceptability of historical evidence and social research. (9)

X Please indicate if the outcome(s) is (are) related to writing (Write On, TAMIU!).

Methods of assessment to be used:

The explanation should identify and describe the type of assessment(s) that will be used (e.g., survey, questionnaire, observation instrument, test, rubric to evaluate performance, standardized

examination, action research, interviews, etc.), who will provide the information, and how the data will be obtained.

Quality of Sources

____ 4 Points - Uses at least 4 different sources with solid credibility and are clearly referenced in the text. Each fact or bold statement is clearly backed up with research. References are listed at the end of this paper.

____ 3 Points – Uses at least 3 different sources with solid credibility and are clearly referenced in the text. Each fact or bold statement is clearly backed up with research. References are listed at the end of this paper.

____ 2 Points – Uses at least 3 different reference sources. One or more sources is of questionable credibility or one or two statements in the paper are not clearly cited.

____ 1 Point – Uses at least 2 different reference sources. One or more sources is of questionable credibility or one or two statements in the paper are not clearly cited.

____ 0 Points – Uses no credible reference sources. Several statements are not cited correctly.

Interesting Story

____ 4 Points – This paper clearly demonstrates an understanding of the resources and data. In addition to this, there is some original thought that builds on the ideas presented.

____ 3 Points – This paper clearly demonstrates an understanding of the resources and data. However, there is little original thought that builds on the ideas presented.

____ 2 Points – This paper uses resources and data but only reports what is somewhat obvious with regards to the statistics presented.

____ 1 Point – This paper tells us something that we already know. While accurate, there is nothing interesting, new, or unique about this work.

____ 0 Points – This paper has no story or main point. The reader is confused about what the author is attempting to say.

Well-Written

____ 4 Points – This paper has no grammatical flaws. The sections of the paper are clearly labeled and it expresses the main points in a clear manner.

____ 3 Points – This paper has few grammatical flaws. The sections of the paper are clearly labeled and it expresses the main points in a clear manner.

____ 2 Points – This paper has few grammatical flaws. The sections of the paper are labeled but the writing does not express the main points in a clear manner.

____ 1 Point – This paper has not been clearly developed and has some grammatical flaws.

____ 0 Points – This paper has many errors and does not express a main point.

Addressing the Questions

___ 8 Points – This paper clearly answers every question with a) solid use of reference sources, b) facts that are appropriate to addressing the questions, and c) original thought.

___ 6 Points – This paper clearly answers every question with a) solid use of reference sources, b) facts that are appropriate to addressing the questions, and c) original thought.

___ 4 Points – This paper may have neglected to address one of the key questions about the urban environment. However, there is still clear use of a) solid use of reference sources, b) facts that are appropriate to addressing the questions, and c) original thought.

___ 2 Points – This paper may have neglected to address one or more of the key questions about the urban environment. While it uses sources, these sources do not fit the questions related to the topic.

___ 0 Points – This paper offers little in answering the questions about the urban environment.

Oral Report

___ 5 Points – Interesting – tells us something we do not know and clearly presented in an interesting manner.

___ 4 Points – Interesting – We already know most of the material or we could have looked it up on the internet.

___ 3 Points – Good – While clearly presented – we could learn the same amount of information from Wikipedia.

___ 2 Points – OK – You made a presentation and it was factually accurate, but left us with little to think about.

___ 1 Point – Minimal Work – You made a presentation but it was clearly not organized and left some folks confused about what you were trying to say.

___ 0 Points – No presentation.

Indicate when assessment(s) will take place:

December 2009

Criteria/Benchmark(s) for assessing students' progress in meeting the exemplary objective(s) selected:

80% of the students would score at least a 3 on the Quality of Sources.

Section II: Analysis of Results

What were the results attained?

Describe the primary results or findings from your analysis of the information collected. This section should include an explanation of any strength(s) or weakness(es) suggested by the results.

We evaluated 91 papers from the Fall 2009 CRIJ 1301 course. A total of 69 (76%) received a score of 3 or higher on the Quality of Sources section of the paper. While many of the students clearly understand the proper uses of academic resources, about one-fourth failed to demonstrate the proper use of these sources to support their paper. The strengths noted were that 27 papers (30%) of the papers were excellent so we can state that some of the students demonstrate very good understanding of using quality sources for their research. Of course, that means that the weakness is that 24% of the students have not demonstrated mastery of using quality sources.

What were the conclusions reached?

Include a brief description of the procedure used for reaching the conclusion(s) based on the evidence collected and describe the process used to disseminate the information. Use the Meeting Minutes template found at: <http://www.tamtu.edu/adminis/iep/resources.shtml>. Once completed, submit the minutes to integrate@tamtu.edu.

The Introduction to Criminal Justice paper will remain as a course requirement. We need to provide more feedback to students in developing the paper and understanding the use of quality sources. While some of this may be addressed in the classroom setting, more individual feedback may be necessary in order to improve our students' performance.

Describe the action plan formulated.

Based on the conclusion(s), describe the action plan to be implemented to improve or maintain student learning in the core academic discipline, including a timeline for implementation.

The research paper assignment will continue. Because the course enrollment is large, the paper will be short. We will work with the TAMTU Writing Center to request more support on the paper. While they have been helpful in the past, we could have done a better job at giving them a detailed template of expectations. However, if we want to maximize student learning in the large enrollment course, we should have a graduate assistant serving as a resource for student writing. During the Summer of 2010, the Criminal Justice faculty will discuss the goals of the paper and re-evaluate the expectations for the paper. We plan to request a graduate student in the Fall of 2010.

Section III: Resources

Resource(s) to implement action plan:

Describe the resources that will be needed to implement the action plan. Also indicate if the resources are currently available, or if additional funds will be needed to obtain these resources.

Funding

- New Resources Required
- Reallocation of current funds

Physical

- New or reallocated space

Other

- Primarily faculty/staff time
- University/rule procedure change only

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan)

If we plan to expand the scope of the Introductory Paper, we would request a graduate assistant for assisting students with the development of the paper and grading. The graduate assistant will be carefully trained to address the paper requirements.