

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

Core Curriculum Academic Discipline: Social Sciences

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

Discipline Coordinator (Preparer of Report): Professor S.M. Duffy/Dr. Deborah Blackwell

List Other Academic Discipline Faculty:

Dr. Deborah Blackwell
Dr. Rex Ball
Dr. Stan Green

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:

SOCIAL 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.*

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.

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.

Students take a standardized objective pre-test/ post-test quiz of 30 questions within the first two weeks of the course and during the final week of the course (HIST 1301: US to 1877). The differences between the average total scores made by the students address outcome #6. The differences between the average scores made on the ten questions that form the “global” domain addresses outcome #7.

Indicate when assessment(s) will take place:

Within the first two weeks of each semester and during the final week of each semester.

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

There will be an improvement of 20% on the average score from pre-test to post-test for each outcome.

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.

Of the 253 students who took the HIST 1301 pretest in the spring and fall 2009 semesters, the average total grade was 48.9% correct. On the 10 global history questions (LO #3), the average score was 48.9% correct.

Of the 216 students who took the HIST 1301 posttest in the spring and fall 2009 semesters, the average total grade was 68.8% correct. On the 10 global history questions (LO #3), the average score was 70.2% correct.

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.

This pilot program in testing freshman history students is showing good results for student performance (19.9% increase in overall scores), just .1% short of the goal of a 20% improvement. For the global history domain, the improvement was 21.3% between pretest and post-tests. The results also confirm

anecdotal evidence of freshman students' lack of prior knowledge of American history and the quality of instruction in our program.

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 pretests and posttests will continue to be implemented in both HIST 1301 and 1302, with the addition of one instructor each year for the next two to three years. We will also begin experimenting with pre-test and post-test administration via Angel in the spring 2010 semester.

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):

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL: 1.7 : Establish and pursue student learning outcomes appropriate for each program with systematic assessment and use of results for continuous quality improvement.

History needs the ability to continue offering quality education to an increasing number of students. With initiatives like HB1 and ECHS adding to the increased number of regular freshmen, the history faculty resources are strained in offering the senior-level and graduate level coursework necessary for our growing number of majors and minors.