

Report of Core Curriculum committee for AY 2004
R. Clay Reynolds, Chair

The General Education, Core Course requirements at the University of Texas at Dallas were revised several years ago in response to Senate Bill 148. In keeping with Senate Bill 148, courses included in UTD's Core Curriculum must demonstrate exemplary educational objectives and be executed with exemplary educational practices. The goal of each course in the Core should be to insure that students master fundamentally essential concepts and skills in a component area. For many students, a Core Course may be their only exposure to an entire academic domain. As such, Core Courses should not be narrow, particularistic or idiosyncratic. Rather, they should be introductory- or foundation-level treatments of at least a major portion of the domain encompassed by the component.

The Core Curriculum Committee, which consisted of the Associate Deans for Undergraduate Education, and (ex officio) the Dean for Undergraduate Education, and met as needed to review applications for alterations to the Core Curriculum for the academic year 2004-2005. Also present at most all meetings were the Director of Undergraduate Advising and the University Registrar. The recent restructuring of the committee's makeup to cause it to consist of the Associate Deans rather than rotating elected faculty made it useful to append meetings to the regularly scheduled meetings of the Committee for Undergraduate Education. Because initial business brought to the committee was sparse during the fall term, the first convocation of the committee did not take place until December 2003. Shortly after that meeting, the Student Government Association reminded the committee chair that undergraduate representation at all CCC meetings was stipulated by the University Senate's charge to the committee; thereafter, undergraduate representatives were invited to committee meetings, with the exception of two *ad hoc* meetings called to address small adjustments that were handled after only a few minutes of *pro forma* discussion. Several of these adjustments were required because of overall curriculum changes in specific schools.

In addition to consideration of courses to be confirmed, added, or deleted from the Core Curriculum Equivalency Master List, summarized below, the following actions were also approved by the CCC.

- The committee determined that a semester-by-semester publication of a Master List was both redundant and confusing for advisors and students. After the Fall 2004 Master List, therefore, the Master List of Core Equivalencies will be produced only once a year. A current list of core equivalencies for each semester will be posted on the university website, but the primary document will not be altered on a semester-by-semester basis. Moreover, all changes to the Master List will be collected throughout the academic year and applied to that single publication all at one time. Additionally, the Master List will be produced on a spread sheet format, and a history of Core Course Equivalencies will be provided for the previous four to six years. This spread sheet will be the absolute and definitive source for determining what courses were approved when for core course requirement and fulfillment.

- The committee evaluated the Master List as it presently exists, and confirmed or removed courses that had been added, approved, or changed where such alterations had not been properly recorded.
- The committee voted to ask Cynthia Jenkins, Director of Undergraduate Advising, and Karen Jarrell, University Registrar, to sit as permanent ex-officio members of the committee whenever it convened. Moreover, Cynthia Jenkins, Director of Undergraduate Advising, was designated to be the “official historian” of the committee and keeper of the definitive version of the Master List.
- The committee agreed, informally, that a full reevaluation of the Master List should be undertaken during the 2004-2005 term with an eye toward further reduction in core equivalencies by all schools.

Summary of Core Curriculum Committee Actions 9/03 – 5/04

New Core Courses Approved

(010)

- CJS 3300 Crime and Civil Liberties
- SOC 3306 Professional Writing for Sociology
- BIOL4v96 Senior Honors Thesis in Molecular and Cell Biology
- LIT 3308 Electronic Expression

Courses Confirmed as Having Been Previously Approved

(010)

- CS 4380 Senior Design Project
- CD 4399 Senior Honors in Computer Science
- ECS 3390 Professional and Technical Communication
- EE 4399 Senior Honors Thesis in Electrical Engineering
- ECO 4346 Technology, Economy, and Society (Approved 03F)
- ECO 4382 International Finance (Approved 03F)
- GEOG/PA/SOC/GOVT 3377 Urban Planning and Policy
- MATH4398 Senior Honors Thesis in Mathematical Sciences
- GEOS 3317 Water Resources of the Southwest

(030/031)

- BIOL2v00 Biotechnology Lab
- BIOL3351 Secrets of Cells
- BIOL3352 The Genetic Revolution
- GEOS1304/1104 History of Earth and Life
- GEOS2302 The Global Environment
- GEOS2304 Energy Resources
- GEOS2409 Rocks and Minerals/Lab

- GEOS3334 Remote Sensing
- GEOS4301 Geologic Environment of the Metroplex
- ISNS3368 Weather and Climate
- ISNS4375 Future Energy Resources
- ISNS4376 History of Modern Physics

(040)

- PHIL2316 History of Philosophy I (Approved 4/03)

UTD Core Curriculum: 42 hours

A. Communication (6 hours)

English Rhetoric and Composition (6 hours): At least one course that requires student to learn to communicate effectively in clear and correct prose and to master several modes of writing, including descriptive, expository, narrative and self-expressive. Other courses may require students to master more specific forms of writing tailored to the professional standards in their major field of study. All courses require that students write, received detailed feedback about, and revise at least 15 double-spaced pages.

B. Mathematics and Quantitative Methods (6 hours)

College Math (3 hours): Requires students to master the formal principles of algebra or calculus at a level higher than high school algebra II.

Quantitative Methods (3 hours): Requires students to master logical reasoning and inference; the application of mathematical concepts; statistical methods; or formal principles of algebra, calculus or advanced mathematics beyond the College Math requirement.

C. Natural Science (9 hours)

Science (9 hours): Introductory or foundations-level treatment of fields of inquiry in the natural sciences.

Laboratory Science: At least one course must have a substantial laboratory component.

D. Humanities and Fine Arts (6hours)

Visual and Performing Arts (3 hours): Introductory or foundations-level treatment of one or more of the visual or performing arts.

Humanities (3 hours): Introductory or foundations-level treatment of literature, philosophy, cultural studies, modern language or classic language.

E. Social and Behavioral Sciences (15 hours)

U.S. and Texas History (6 hours): Courses in United States and Texas history that satisfy state law.

U.S. and Texas Government and Politics (6 hours): Courses that satisfy state law requiring 6 semester hours or the equivalent in government or political science that include consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states, with special emphasis on the Texas Constitution.

Social and Behavioral Science (3 hours): Introductory- or foundation-level treatments of any one or combination of topic areas dealing with the scientific inquiry of human behavior and social systems at the level of individuals, groups, societies, political systems, economic systems, management systems or cultures. Approaches topics from a scientific perspective rather than a historical, philosophical, or applications perspective.