

# **Texas Core Curriculum Points of Consideration for Course Submission and Review**

**April 2018**

## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



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### Agency Mission

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is to provide leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through 60x30TX, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

### Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

### Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The Coordinating Board's core values are:

**Accountability:** We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

**Efficiency:** We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

**Collaboration:** We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

**Excellence:** We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

# Texas Core Curriculum Points of Consideration for Course Submission and Review

The purpose of this document is to facilitate the preparation of supporting documentation for Texas Core Curriculum (TCC) courses. An institution may submit a course or courses to be included in their core curriculum on an annual basis. **Submission deadline is June 30 each academic year.** All requests for changes must be made through the [Core Curriculum Submission Portal](#).

The request should cover all proposed changes to the institution's list of core courses, including addition and deletion of courses, changes to course numbers, course titles, course Semester Credit Hours (SCH), re-assignment of a course from one Foundational Component Area (FCA) to another if appropriate, and other changes, such as placement of overflow hours from four SCH courses or changes to their core curriculum assessment plan.

In order to support timely submission of such changes, the Coordinating Board rolls over the [University Course Inventory](#) to the next inventory year on or near February 1 of each year.

Institutions should allow a review period for the approval process. In order to accommodate a timeline that allows for review and a reply by the institution:

1. On a date of its choosing the institution submits its change request.
2. Within one month the Coordinating Board staff will issue an information sheet listing approved and denied changes.
3. Within one month the institution may respond to the decision. To respond, contact Coordinating Board staff. The Core Curriculum Submission Portal will be re-opened for the submission of additional documentation.
4. Within two weeks the Coordinating Board staff will reach closure and will notify the institution with a new issue of the information sheet.

**Historically, more than one-third of institutions' core curriculum proposals had to be resubmitted with improved documentation.**

Documentation must be course specific and complete. The documentation must show that core courses are general education courses, aligned with their respective Foundational Component Area, and address the applicable Core Objectives.

## ➤ **Ensure Supporting Documentation is Complete**

*Core Curriculum courses are submitted with **course-specific documentation**. They are **reviewed course by course**, based on that documentation.*

1. Supporting documentation must include a course syllabus. Other kinds of documentation may be added, e.g., assessment rubrics, faculty evaluation forms, or core curriculum specific information and explanations that do not fit the purpose of the syllabus.
2. Supporting documentation must be for the core curriculum course, not for individual sections.
3. The course title, rubric, and number must be the same on the documentation as for the course requested in the Core Curriculum Submission Portal.

***Minimum elements of a syllabus** are defined in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter N, [Section 4.227 \(9\)](#).*

1. Brief description of each major course requirement, including each major assignment and examination.
2. The measurable learning outcomes for the course.
3. A general description of the subject matter of each lecture or discussion.
4. Lists of any required or recommended readings.

## ➤ **Provide Course Specific Documentation**

*Supporting documentation must contain course specific-information. Core Objectives must be incorporated and **addressed through the course topic and curriculum**.*

1. Documentation must show how all required Core Objectives are addressed. It must include descriptions of activities, how they are taught, and what is learned.
2. Activities addressing Core Objectives should have assessable, course-specific outcomes. Documentation must include weekly schedules of topics, readings, or artifacts studied. Include grading scales for assignments and examinations.
3. The Communication Foundational Component Areas (FCA) requires all four literacy skills: oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills. These elements must have a substantial impact.
4. Show how Core Objective Teamwork is executed and its outcome. Teamwork requires students to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal, and therefore teamwork must result in a tangible outcome. Class discussion is not teamwork.
5. The Core Objective Personal Responsibility requires course specific learning of ethical decision-making. Routine protocols of classroom decorum and completion of assignments are an integral part of every college course and are not specific to the TCC.

*Inclusion of **generic information**, copied from another source, **is not sufficient** to substantiate how a course incorporates core curriculum requirements.*

1. Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) course descriptions or learning outcomes do not show how Core Objectives are woven into the context of the course, how Core Objectives are addressed, and what students are learning.
2. TCC definitions of Core Objectives or Foundational Component Areas (FCA) do not show that a course incorporates or adheres to these. Show how the particular course relates to the specific requirements with its curriculum, learning outcomes, and assignments.
3. Universal assessment rubrics used by the institution to assess Core Objectives do not demonstrate that a course addresses the learning of the core objectives. Show how students are involved in learning that increases their attainment. Include descriptions of course-specific artifacts for assessment or defined direct measures.

### ➤ **Demonstrate That a Course Addresses Its FCA Definition**

*There is a two-part definition for each FCA. **Courses must be aligned with the focus of both parts of the FCA definition.** Three examples are given.*

1. Courses in the **Language, Philosophy & Culture FCA** must focus on (simplified):
  - (a) cultural expressions (ideas, values, beliefs) affecting human experience, and
  - (b) the exploration of ideas found in creative products, intellectual or aesthetic, within a cultural context. Creative products include, i.e., philosophical thought, literature, art, film, music, or drama.

The focus is not on application of methodologies, including the study of language or logic. The courses must include intellectual or aesthetic products.
2. Courses in the **Creative Arts FCA** must focus on (simplified):
  - (a) appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts, and
  - (b) interpretation and critical communication about existing works of art.

The focus is not on the production or reproduction of works of art. The courses must involve the exposure to significant authentic artifacts of human creativity across cultures and time.
3. Courses in the **Social and Behavioral Sciences FCA** must focus on (simplified):
  - (a) empirical and scientific methods that investigate “what makes us human,” and
  - (b) the behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions and events and their impact on the individual, society, and culture.

The courses must include their topics’ relevant theories. For example, the focus must be on economics and not on business practices or business environments.

## ➤ **Propose Only General Education Courses**

*A core curriculum course must be foundational and must not be too narrowly focused.*

1. Courses with a specialized topic or with a narrow focus are not suitable. A specialized topic does not lay a broad foundation across time, space, cultures, and forms.
2. Introductory courses specific to a single discipline or career have a focus that is too narrow.
3. A general education core curriculum course does not have a focus on the skill development of the individual. It has a focus on providing an academic foundation for all future learning.
4. Upper division courses that have corresponding lower division courses are not suitable, even if the institution itself does not have a lower division version of the course.

*A student must be able to take a core curriculum course for core credit. **Taking a core course must not imply excess hours.***

1. A course must not have a pre-requisite that completes the same FCA core requirement. In some cases student placement through assessment of competencies may substitute for entry level course pre-requisites.
2. A course must not have a co-requisite outside the core curriculum, which would restrict the course to students who apply the co-requisite as program requirement.



This document is available on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website:  
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us>

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