**WTAMU Core Curriculum Guidelines**

**Statement of Purpose**

Through the Texas Core Curriculum (TCC), students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. Each institution's TCC includes six core objectives and nine foundational component areas.

**Core Objectives**

Each core curriculum course must include three or four, out of six, core objectives. Definitions for the six core objectives for the TCC are as follows:

* **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
* **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
* **Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)** - manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
* **Teamwork (TW)** - ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
* **Social Responsibility (SR)** - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
* **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

**Foundational Component Areas (FCA)**

There are nine Foundational Component Areas (FCA), including one Component Area Option (CAO). Each FCA has a component description as definition, a set number of Semester Credit Hours (SCH) required for completion of a component, and specified core objectives requirements (see table below for required alignment of Foundational Component Areas and Core Objectives).

* **010 Communication (6 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.
* **020 Mathematics (3 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on quantitative literacy in logic, patterns, and relationships. Courses involve the understanding of key mathematical concepts and the application of appropriate quantitative tools to everyday experience.
* **030 Life and Physical Sciences (6 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on describing, explaining, and predicting natural phenomena using the scientific method. Courses involve the understanding of interactions among natural phenomena and the implications of scientific principles on the physical world and on human experiences.
* **040 Language, Philosophy and Culture (3 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.
* **050 Creative Arts (3 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on the appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of the human imagination. Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.
* **060 American History (6 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States, with the option of including Texas History for a portion of this component area. Courses involve the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.
* **070 Government/Political Science (6 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on consideration of the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the states, with special emphasis on that of Texas. Courses involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.
* **080 Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 SCH)**—Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human. Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.
* **090 The Component Area Option (6 SCH)**—The content of the CAO is defined:
* **Option A**: At least three SCH of the CAO must be aligned and associated with the definition and core objectives of one of the eight other FCA.
* **Option B**: Up to three SCH may be aligned and associated with at least one of the eight FCA definitions and may incorporate one or more core objectives of the institution’s choice besides the two core objectives communication skills and critical thinking skills, which are required.

Note: Overflow hours counted as part of the CAO decrease the number of SCH a student has to take, in addition to the overflow hour, in order to complete the CAO requirement. Institutions that count overflow hours in the CAO must make sure that students have one- or two-SCH course options to fulfill their core requirement.

**Two parts of the Foundational Component Area**

There are two parts that are separate requirements of each Foundational Component Area. Both parts are important but independent from each other. The FCA definition specifies the focus of the content of the course and topics to be addressed. The required Core Objectives (CO) address components with which the course content is to be delivered in order to facilitate learning. The alignment of FCAs and required COs is shown in the table below.

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| **Foundational Component Areas (FCA)** | **Core Objectives (CO)\*** | | | | | |
| **CT** | **COM** | **EQS** | **TW** | **SR** | **PR** |
| Communication (010) | ● | ● | 🞅 | ● | 🞅 | ● |
| Mathematics (020) | ● | ● | ● | 🞅 | 🞅 | 🞅 |
| Life & Physical Sciences (030) | ● | ● | ● | ● | 🞅 | 🞅 |
| Language, Philosophy & Culture (040) | ● | ● | 🞅 |  | ● | ● |
| Creative Arts (050) | ● | ● | 🞅 | ● | ● | 🞅 |
| American History (060) | ● | ● | 🞅 | 🞅 | ● | ● |
| Government/Political Science (070) | ● | ● | 🞅 | 🞅 | ● | ● |
| Social & Behavioral Sciences (080) | ● | ● | ● | 🞅 | ● | 🞅 |
| Component Area Option (090) | ● | ● | 🞅 | 🞅 | 🞅 | 🞅 |

**\*** ●=required core objective; 🞅=optional core objective

**Determining Suitability of Courses for the Core Curriculum**

* **General education courses**—TCC courses must meet the SACSCOC general education requirements. The TCC overwhelmingly consists of lower-division courses. If an upper-division course is included, it must not have prerequisites and cannot have a substantial overlap with a lower-division course. The course must not be restricted to a single major or groups of majors, and most importantly, the course must not have advanced and specialized content that is not appropriate for the TCC.
* **Adherence to the Academic Course Guide Manual**—The integrity of the Texas Common Course Numbering System and the purpose of content coverage consistent with the descriptions in the ACGM must be followed. An institution may add to the requirements of the ACGM but may not implement changes that would make the course deviate from the purposes outlined in the ACGM.
* **TCCNS equivalency**—Four-year institutions must be mindful that if a course is declared with a TCCNS equivalency that the course is indeed an equivalent course and adheres to the requirements by which two-year institutions offering the course must abide.
* **Pre-requisites and co-requisites**—Courses may have a prerequisite, with some exceptions. The course must meet SACSCOC general education requirements. No upper-division course will be approved if it is substantially comparable in content and depth of study to a lower-division course in the [Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual](http://board.thecb.state.tx.us/apps/WorkforceEd/acgm/acgm.htm) (ACGM). A course with a co-requisite that is not part of the core curriculum is not allowed for the TCC.
* **Skills development courses**—Certain courses in the ACGM are designated for skills development. The purpose of these courses is to increase a student’s skill in a particular activity. While the activities themselves are important, they do not fulfill the purpose of the TCC. These courses do not fit the TCC, even though they typically require high-level cognitive skills and their curriculum requires cognitive advancement by the student. Even though the courses are not suitable for the TCC, their curriculum design also may require in-depth critical thinking skills, communication skills, teamwork skills, or social and personal responsibility awareness. Some courses may contain both skills and appreciation or scientific understanding. For these courses to be suitable for the TCC, appreciation or scientific understanding must outweigh skills development.
* **Honors courses with variable topics**—Variable topic courses are generally not acceptable for the TCC. However, specifically designed courses such as an honors topics course or an honors “seminar” with a topic that may vary from year to year may be approved. If the supporting documentation (a) provides a general description of how the course addresses its FCA’s definition and core objective requirements, regardless of topic, and (b) provides an example description of how a special topic is integrated within the general structure of the course.
* **Sufficient breadth of general survey courses**—Certain courses suitable for the TCC are survey courses that introduce the student to a wider topic, which will allow the student to make connections between events and ideas. Such a course should not be too narrow, in effect giving the broader course title a specific sub-title. For example, the ACGM course MUSI 1310, “American Music” should not be narrowed to one or two single genre(s) of music.

**Core Curriculum Request**

* Each institution of higher education must adopt a core curriculum of no less than 42 SCH; core curriculum courses must adhere to the requirements of [TAC Rule §4.28](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=4&rl=28).
* Because institutions may submit core curriculum changes to the THECB only once per year, **core curriculum requests may be submitted only during the fall curriculum cycle**.
* Skills development courses are not suitable for the TCC.
* The Foundational Component Areas (FCA) specify the focus of the content; the required Core Objectives address components with content delivery to facilitate learning.
* The Component Area Option (CAO) must align with the definition and objectives of at least one FCA.
* Submit a detailed syllabus for each core curriculum request (existing and new courses) to the chair of the Core Curriculum Committee, which is the Dean of the Sybil B. Harrington College of Fine Arts and Humanities.