

**Project South Texas  
Academic Administration Working Groups  
FINAL Report**

February 18, 2014

<b>Working Group</b>	Core Curriculum
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION**

The Core Curriculum Working Group began with the Guiding Principles set forth by The University of Texas System as a philosophical framework. Focusing on the specific needs of the student population for the new university, the group sought to design a core curriculum to serve as the foundation of an excellent education.

Prior to the start of the working group, each university had already developed a core curriculum through similar, faculty driven processes that focused on student needs and the missions of each university. Working within the regulations prescribed by the state, the working group identified the intersections between the previously developed curricula. Fortunately, these intersections were substantial, and the two curricula aligned well.

The group endorsed innovations present within the new proposed core. In particular, the proposed new core includes up to six hours of explicitly integrative and experiential course work. This is in addition to high quality courses within the more traditional core areas that are taught with experiential components or from an interdisciplinary perspective. These integrative and experiential courses are designed to engage students in their first two years in the type of courses that will capture their interest, challenge them to connect ideas across disciplines and experiences, and motivate them to continue to more in depth study. The proposed core is also flexible enough to accommodate special curricular initiatives, such as interdisciplinary learning community strands led by faculty, and incorporates a balance of institutional and student choice.

The group also focused on student support initiatives within the core as a key means of promoting student success and innovative learning. The group endorsed the Academic Support Services Working Group's recommendations and the following design innovations are recommended:

- *Structured Learning (mandatory tutoring) for students enrolled in high DFW first-year core courses*
- *Student Success Collaborative predictive analytics and benchmarks*
- *Major Maps*
- *Clear Pathways for Success*

In addition to these support services, the group recommends three innovative characteristics across the undergraduate curriculum that build upon the new core curriculum:

- (1) a writing intensive course within the major that builds on the writing intensive sequence within the core (the first-year writing sequence),
- (2) a capstone course within the major to both pull together learning across the undergraduate career and assist with core and major assessment, and
- (3) a flag for courses that fulfill the guiding principle focused on creating a bilingual and bicultural university.

To achieve these innovations and implement the new core, the working group developed a submission process for approval of new core courses and a timeline for submissions. Additionally, an assessment plan is outlined that assesses students' experiences at four stages in their academic careers. This plan aligns with the Academic Assessment Working Group and draws heavily upon faculty input for the development of assessment at the core course level and at the capstone course level.

The final recommendations of the working group include the following:

- Complete the course submission process no later than March 15, 2014.
- Form an inter-institutional core curriculum committee appointed by the Faculty Senates.
- Create a core curriculum assessment structure rooted in the academic departments/units.
- Ensure the assessment plan measures student performance at the four significant stages in a student's experience.

## FINDINGS

### Implementation Plan for UTRGV's Core Curriculum

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The Guiding Principles set forth by The University of Texas System state that "The new University of Texas in the Rio Grande Valley will provide an outstanding education to the students of South Texas, Texas, the United States and the world. This education will be of the highest quality; it will be affordable, accessible and innovative. The new university will transform Texas and the nation by becoming a leader in student success, teaching, research and healthcare." An outstanding education at UTRGV must first begin with a core curriculum specifically designed to meet the needs of the student population this university will serve.

With this in mind, the Core Curriculum Working Group focused its efforts on recommending a core curriculum that complies with state rules, is designed by the faculty, is accompanied by a faculty-driven assessment plan, and has innovative characteristics designed specifically to support UTRGV students. To accomplish this, the working group focused its discussions on developing a recommendation for each of the following: (1) core design; (2) core course submission procedure; and (3) core assessment plan.

#### Background Information

The role of the Core Curriculum Working Group is somewhat prescribed in that the core curriculum is closely regulated by state rules, UTPA and UTB were already far advanced in planning for a new core curriculum, and a new core curriculum must be adopted by Fall 2015, both for the launch of the new university and for compliance with state rules.

Working group discussions have focused on identifying the intersections between the faculty-approved UTPA and UTB core curricula to arrive at a single UTRGV core curriculum. The working group also discussed innovations in terms of student

support initiatives embedded in the core to better support student success, each of which are discussed in more detail below.

### Core Design Process

#### *UTB*

The process was initiated in the spring of 2012 by the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. Initial meetings included a diverse group of both faculty and administrators representing all of the colleges and academic divisions. This group initiated faculty surveys through the Faculty Senate, examined the new University mission statement to align the goals of the core curriculum with the mission, and examined the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's guidelines for core curriculum. From these meetings, the group created the charge for a faculty committee to design the new core curriculum. The Provost assigned a faculty member to serve as a Provost Fellow to oversee the process.

The Faculty Senate formed the Core Curriculum Revision Committee. The membership consisted of faculty from every college and every department currently delivering core courses. The fall of 2012 was spent exploring options for the core. With so many diverse academic interests represented, the discussions were vigorous.

By the beginning of the spring 2013, the committee had developed two plans. The primary difference between the plans was the number of hours credited to science courses plus their labs. The two plans were presented to the University in a series of town hall meetings. The feedback from the faculty had no clear consensus for one plan over the other. The committee took this feedback into consideration and decided to endorse both plans as acceptable to the faculty. These plans are included in Appendix A.

#### *UTPA*

A process document constructed collaboratively by the Faculty Senate Chair and Chair-Elect, the University Curriculum Committee Chair and Chair-Elect, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education was created in Fall 2011 which established a Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) including its purpose, membership, and relationship to the University Curriculum Committee. The CCC was then established and began work in April 2012, led by faculty within the committee. The CCC established a mission statement for the core curriculum, a definition for each core objective, and a process for reviewing courses for inclusion in the core. They also reviewed innovative core curricula ideas from other institutions.

Review of possible core courses submitted by departments began in Fall 2012, including reviews of course descriptions, syllabi, and course assessment plans to determine if the course was consistent with the new THECB-established learning outcomes for each core area. Courses that were already included in the UTPA course inventory and established core curriculum were submitted, as well as new courses that were not yet included in the UTPA course inventory.

The committee recommended a core structure and the underlying courses in each core area to the full faculty. This structure was distributed electronically and in town hall meetings. A full faculty vote on the proposed core was completed at the end of Spring 2013, with strong endorsement of the new core as proposed. The endorsed plan is included in Appendix B.

The next steps in the core curriculum redesign process were to construct a new core assessment plan and formalize the addition of new courses to the course inventory that had been proposed to support the new core. These steps were suspended pending the plans for a UTRGV core curriculum.

### Design Innovations

UTRGV's proposed core curriculum was designed by the faculty of both UTB and UTPA to serve the needs of the students of the lower Rio Grande Valley while meeting the state requirements. UTRGV's core curriculum will be innovative both in structure and in its proposed support services with targeted interventions specifically designed for the needs of the student cohorts in their first two years of college.

The proposed core curriculum has several embedded innovative design features:

- *Integrative and experiential coursework.* The proposed new core includes up to six hours of explicitly integrative and experiential course work. This is in addition to high quality courses within the more traditional core areas that are taught with experiential components or from an interdisciplinary perspective. These integrative and experiential courses are designed to engage students in their first two years in the type of courses that will capture their interest, challenge them to connect ideas across disciplines and experiences, and motivate them to continue to more in depth study. As a new core area, coursework that applies to the requirement will grow and develop over time.
- *Balance of institutional and student choice.* The proposed core curriculum includes a healthy balance of student choice and institutional choice. Courses within areas of the core where particular learning outcomes are seen as crucial are dictated to all students with no other alternatives. The first-year writing sequence exemplifies this approach where all students are required to complete a full year of intensive writing to provide the foundation for further studies. Areas of the core in which limited choice is desirable are also included. The math core area exemplifies this approach where several entry-level math courses are available to students, but a single choice is strongly recommended depending on student major (e.g. College Algebra leading to Calculus for engineering majors, Statistics for social science majors, and Contemporary Mathematics for humanities majors). Finally significant student choice is built into selected areas of the core where no single course or set of courses is institutionally-identified as being critical to student learning. This gives students an opportunity to explore their interests, selecting courses that can keep them highly engaged in their coursework, such as in the core area of language, philosophy, and culture core area.
- *Flexibility for innovation.* Within the proposed core structure, innovations in course content or delivery can be easily integrated. The structure is flexible enough to accommodate special curricular initiatives. For example, a learning community linking three core classes across a content theme could be incorporated at any time without changes to the structure proposed.

UTRGV's core curriculum will also be innovative its proposed support services with targeted interventions specifically designed for the needs of the student cohorts in their first two years of college. Specifically, the Academic Support Services Working Group's recommendations are fully endorsed by the core curriculum working group. The specific recommendations designed to provide students enrolled in core curriculum coursework with timely support are as follows:

- *Structured Learning (mandatory tutoring) for students enrolled in high DFW first-year core courses.* The committee recommends implementing a full-scale structured learning model. UTB currently offers a model, entitled *Link2Success* (L2S), that could be easily scaled to UTRGV. L2S targets high failure-rate first year core courses. L2S is a student-centered structured learning assistance program that supplements course lecture with mandatory 2-3 hour per week study sessions that are built into the course schedule and facilitated by peer L2S leaders. The L2S leaders attend the course lectures along with the students, communicate with faculty on a weekly basis, and design lesson plans accordingly. The study sessions are designed with collaborative learning and students' active engagement in mind. The goal is to scaffold students toward becoming active, strategic, and independent learners. L2S leaders serve a multi-purpose role in that they are tutors, role models, and peer mentors that help incoming freshmen transition, both academically and socially, to college life. The results of the first year indicate significant increases in student pass and completion rates.
- *Student Success Collaborative predictive analytics and benchmarks.* The Student Success Collaborative, available through the Education Advisory Board, has been in use at UTB since 2013. The Student Success Collaborative provides powerful predictive analytics that consider historical student success patterns of students previously enrolled at the same institution. It is used to identify areas of concern and opportunity in an individual student's performance. The platform's algorithm also includes faculty input regarding critical courses, temporal parameters, and threshold grades. It is useful for both individual student advising and for programmatic decision-making. If the Student Success Collaborative is not adopted for UTRGV, a similarly powerful platform is strongly recommended.
- *Major maps.* Major maps are informational tools originally created at Georgia State University to help guide a student both through academic benchmarks throughout their undergraduate career and through other areas of important development, such as professional integration or career preparation. Major maps have been designed

for all undergraduate majors at UTB. UTPA had initiated major map design, but has put it on hold while planning for UTRGV with the intention to use the UTB major maps in the future.

- *Clear Pathways for Success.* Students benefit from clearly designed pathways. As a result, the committee strongly recommends clear funneling of students into successful career paths through the following academic structures and benchmarks: admission of first year students to meta-majors (or to an undecided major), guidance to a specific major in the first year in the Learning Framework course, course milestones in the second and third year with focused just-in-time advising, and an academic internship or other capstone experience at the fourth year level. These structures and benchmarks echo emerging best practices in student success across the country.

In addition to the innovative support services designed to directly support students' needs when and where they demonstrate that need, the UTRGV core will be accompanied by three innovative characteristics that build upon the new core curriculum and are designed specifically to address the needs of the student population and to "brand" students with a UTRGV experience:

- (1) a writing intensive course within the major that builds on the writing intensive sequence within the core (the first-year writing sequence),
- (2) a capstone course within the major to both pull together learning across the undergraduate career and assist with core and major assessment, and
- (3) a flag for courses that fulfill the guiding principle of a bilingual and bicultural university.

Nontraditional core compositions were also considered in the deliberations, such as blending content across courses while maintaining the THECB-required outcomes. However given the increasing importance of core course transferability, particularly in the Rio Grande Valley where early college high school programs are growing exponentially, maintaining traditional course and category divisions was prioritized.

#### Core Course Submission Process

UTPA has completed their course submission process for core courses. UTB has adopted UTPA's submission form and is in the process of submitting courses desired for offering that have not yet been submitted by UTPA. For example, if both campuses believe that Biology 1301/1401 should meet the Empirical and Quantitative Skills component area, then only one institution will submit the paperwork through its own internal processes to have the course approved for inclusion.

The course approval process must be completed prior to finalizing the course inventory for UTRGV. See the [proposed timeline](#) below for more detail.

#### Core Curriculum Assessment Plan

The working group discussed a broad framework of core assessment but realizes that only the faculty from both institutions can develop the detailed assessment plan following the guidance from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board ([THECB Assessment Guidelines](#)). The working group discussed several timeline options and discussed who should be involved in devising the plan. It is recommended that a cross-campus team be formed with representation from each department/unit responsible for coursework within the core. This faculty committee would devise the assessment plan and supervise its piloting and implementation. In addition, this committee, with support from the UTB and UTPA Offices of Academic Affairs, would submit the overall plan to the THECB. UTB has a core committee already constituted. UTPA would need to compose one through a Faculty Senate process. To augment this effort, discipline-specific sub-committees would be formed to develop discipline-specific assessment plans. These committees would devise a plan for piloting the core assessment on the two campuses in academic year 2014-2015 (see [proposed timeline](#) for more detail).

The broad framework discussed by the working group included assessment at four stages in a student's experience:

- (1) upon entry to the university
- (2) within the core curriculum courses
- (3) within the major capstone courses
- (4) upon graduation

Upon entry and graduation, the working group discussed using an externally informed benchmark, such as CLA, to test a random sample of entering and existing students. The CLA measures critical thinking, problem solving, scientific and quantitative reasoning, writing and the ability to critique and make arguments. If adopted by the faculty committee, a detailed plan and budget would accompany the recommendation. Within the core courses and the major capstone courses, the working group discussed a variety of direct and indirect measures embedded in the courses. Core courses could be assessed on a three-year cycle, such as:

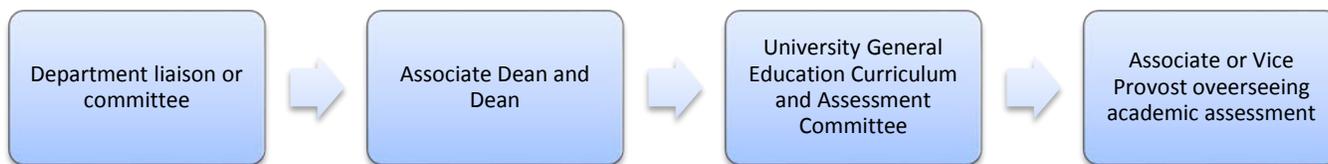
- Year 1: Communication; Mathematics; Physical Sciences
- Year 2: Language, Philosophy, and Culture; American History; Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Year 3: Creative Arts; Government/Political Science; Component Area

Lastly, the working group briefly discussed the assessment tools to adopt to use in the embedded assessments. UTB began the work of selecting and modifying possible rubrics for each component area; however, no final recommendations were made. Preliminary recommendations are as follows:

- Capstone courses to be assessed using a rubric or other measure developed by faculty of the major (drawing upon Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes)
- Core courses to be assessed using rubrics or other measures developed by faculty from the departments that offer the courses (drawing upon Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes)

The Core Curriculum Working Group considered the structure recommendations made by the Academic Assessment Working Group. These recommendations include a single assessment unit within Academic Affairs led by an associate or vice provost. This office would work directly with an assessment lead within each college. At the college level, the associate dean would be the assessment lead in most cases with responsibility for coordinating strategic planning, academic goal setting, student success initiatives, student learning outcomes, feedback on assessment plans, guidance on methodology, and reporting. The associate dean would work directly with an assessment lead or committee within each department or unit.

Based on these recommendations from the Academic Assessment working group, a core curriculum assessment structure might look like the following:



The University General Education Curriculum and Assessment Committee would be a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. This committee would be responsible for approving core courses and assessment plans. Members would participate in training on academic assessment and would have term limits consistent with other academic standing committees.

Proposed Timeline

Date	Activity	Rationale
March 2014	New inter-institutional core curriculum committee is formed to focus on formalizing and aligning the courses within the new core curriculum, creating the assessment process for the core, piloting the new assessment process in AY 2014-2015, and composing the core proposal to be submitted to the THECB. This committee will work throughout AY 2014-2015.	The Core Curriculum Working Group has finalized the core structure for UTRGV. The next steps in implementing the new core need to be conducted by an inter-institutional committee that is empowered to make formal core curriculum decisions for UTRGV.
September-October 2014	Courses new to the course inventory at UTPA that were proposed for addition to the core curriculum in Spring 2013 through the Core Curriculum	These courses have been constructed since Spring 2013 and are ready to be taught. In many cases, they are innovative and particularly strong

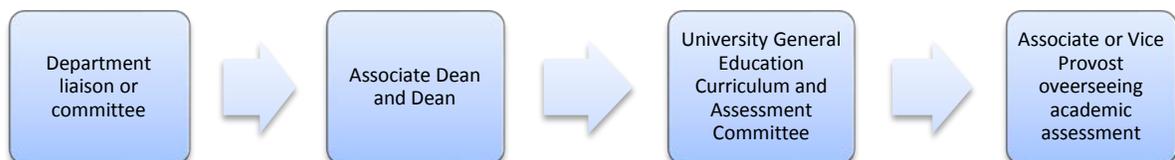
	Committee are submitted and approved through the UTPA University Curriculum Committee.	additions to our core. Faculty were asked to wait to submit them to the University Curriculum Committee, which finalizes their submission to the UTPA course inventory, until the construction of the UTRGV core was more complete. This is a small number of courses (5-10). UTB representatives on the Core Curriculum Working Group have indicated that this step is not necessary for them as they will not have courses new to the inventory to add until Fall 2015.
September 2014-May 2015	Core curriculum assessments that are a significant shift from previous institutional practices will be piloted at both UTB and UTPA.	
January 2015	The new core curriculum structure and assessment plan for UTRGV will be submitted to the THECB during Spring 2015.	

# SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

## Key Recommendations for the Final Report

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- Complete the course submission process no later than March 15, 2014.
- Form an inter-institutional core curriculum committee appointed by the Faculty Senates with responsibility for
  - formalizing and aligning courses within the new core curriculum
  - developing the assessment plan
  - piloting the assessment plan in academic year 2014-2015
  - preparing and submitting the necessary paperwork to the THECB for final approval
- Create a core curriculum assessment structure rooted in the academic departments/units



- Ensure the assessment plan measures student performance at the four significant stages in a student's experience:
  - upon entry to the university
  - within the core curriculum courses
  - within the major capstone courses
  - upon graduation
  - Integrate innovative characteristics into the curriculum to build upon the new core curriculum and designed specifically to "brand" students with a UTRGV experience, for example:
    - a writing intensive course within both the core curriculum (first-year writing sequence) and the major,
    - a capstone course within the major to both pull together learning across the undergraduate career and assist with core and major assessment,
    - a flag for courses that fulfill the guiding principle focused on creating a bilingual and bicultural university, and
    - experiential and integrative courses within the core curriculum.
- Adopt the Academic Support Services Working Group's recommendations. The specific recommendations designed to provide students enrolled in core curriculum coursework with timely support are as follows:
  - Structured Learning (mandatory tutoring) for students enrolled in high DFW first-year core courses
  - Student Success Collaborative predictive analytics and benchmarks
  - Major maps
  - Clear pathways for success

## Possible Consultations

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*Identify institutions or organizations that faculty, staff, and administrators who are engaged in further planning may wish to study or visit and/or leaders scholars that planners may wish to consult.*

- Dr. Steven Mintz, UT System Institute for Transformational Learning.
- *Bicultural Studies Working Group*. Specific focus on reflecting the bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate mission of the new university, including within the core curriculum.
- *Academic Support Services Working Group*. Specific focus on supports throughout the curriculum to better support student success in core level classes and beyond.
- *Academic Assessment Working Group*. Specific focus on creating an academic assessment structure.

## Appendices

Appendix A Core Curriculum Plans Endorsed by UTB Faculty, Spring 2013

Appendix B Core Curriculum Plan Endorsed by UTPA Faculty, Spring 2013

**Appendix A**  
**Core Curriculum Plan Endorsed by UTB Faculty, Spring 2013**

**Proposed General Education Core: Blue Plan**

**010 Communications** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 9 hours)

3 credit hour composition course with ENGL prefix  
3 credit hour composition course with ENGL prefix  
3 credit hour oral communication course with SPCH prefix  
[6 hours recommended in 3000/4000 designated as  
'Writing Intensive' in each degree plan]

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No graduation requirement</li><li>2. Sciences (030) reduced from 8 to 6 hours</li><li>3. Six hours returned to departments</li><li>4. Kinesiology not part of core</li><li>5. Additional modern language and literature courses now optional</li></ol> |
|---|

**020 Mathematics** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour Math course with MATH prefix

**030 Life and Physical Sciences** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 6 hours)

3 credit hour Science course with BIOL, CHEM, ENVR, GEOL or PHYS Prefix  
3 credit hour Science course with BIOL, CHEM, ENVR, GEOL or PHYS Prefix  
(2 lecture, 1 lab)

**040 Language, Philosophy and Culture** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 6 hours)

3 credit hour Modern Language course with SPAN, FREN, GERM, ARAB, CHIN, ITAL, JAPA, OR SGNL prefix  
3 credit hour in Modern Language (with language prefix) OR a course with a PHIL, ANTH, ENGL (Literature) prefix, OR other courses suggested by departments that fit the definition of this category

**050 Creative Arts** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour course on analysis of the arts with an ARTS, MUSI, KINE, or COMM prefix, OR other courses proposed by departments that fit definition of category

**060 American History** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 6 hours) [State mandate: cannot be changed]

3 credit hour course in American History with HIST prefix  
3 credit hour course in American History with HIST prefix

**070 Government** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 6 hours) [State mandate: cannot be changed]

3 credit hour course in US Government with GOVT prefix  
3 credit hour course in Texas Government with GOVT prefix

**080 Social and Behavioral Sciences** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour course in social sciences with ECON, SOCI, PSYC, CRIJ, GEOG prefix OR other courses proposed by departments that fit definition of category.

**Six hours returned to each department**

NOTE: There is an 090 Institutional Option category of 6 hours. The 6 hours must be allotted to coursework that fits the category definition of component areas 010, 020, 030, 040, 050, 060, 070, or 080. For this plan, 3 of the hours are allotted to the 040 component area and 3 hours and allotted to the 010 component area. This is why the assigned hours are higher than the minimum hours for these component areas.

## Proposed General Education Core: Orange Plan

### **010 Communications** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 9 hours)

3 credit hour composition course with ENGL prefix  
3 credit hour composition course with ENGL prefix  
3 credit hour oral communication course with SPCH prefix  
[6 hours recommended in 3000/4000 designated as 'Writing Intensive' in each degree plan]

### **020 Mathematics** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 4 hours)

4 credit hour Math course with MATH prefix

### **030 Life and Physical Sciences** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 8 hours)

4 credit hour Science course with BIOL, CHEM, ENVR, GEOL or PHYS Prefix (3 lecture, 1 lab)  
4 credit hour Science course with BIOL, CHEM, ENVR, GEOL or PHYS Prefix (3 lecture, 1 lab)

### **040 Language, Philosophy and Culture** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour course in modern language (with language prefix) OR a course with a PHIL, ANTH, ENGL (Literature) prefix, OR other courses suggested by departments that fit definition of this category

### **050 Creative Arts** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour course on analysis of the arts with an ARTS, MUSI, KINE, or COMM prefix, OR other courses proposed by departments that fit definition of category

### **060 American History** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 6 hours) [State mandate: cannot be changed]

3 credit hour course in American History with HIST prefix  
3 credit hour course in American History with HIST prefix

### **070 Government** (minimum: 6 hours; assigned: 6 hours) [State mandate: cannot be changed]

3 credit hour course in US Government with GOVT prefix  
3 credit hour course in Texas Government with GOVT prefix

### **080 Social and Behavioral Sciences** (minimum: 3 hours; assigned: 3 hours)

3 credit hour course in social sciences with ECON, SOCI, PSYC, CRIJ, GEOG prefix OR other courses proposed by department that fit definition of category.

**Graduation Requirement:** 3 credit hour first modern language course with SPAN, FREN, GERM, ARAB, CHIN, ITAL, JAPA, or SGNL prefix

### **Three hours returned to each department**

NOTE: There is an 090 Institutional Option category of 6 hours. The 6 hours must be allotted to coursework that fits the category definition of component areas 010, 020, 030, 040, 050, 060, 070, or 080. For this plan, 3 of the hours are allotted to the 010 component area, 1 hour is allotted to the 020 component area, and 2 hours are allotted to the 030 component area. This is why the assigned hours are higher than the minimum hours for these component areas.

1. Graduation requirement
2. Sciences (030) remain at 8 hours
3. Three hours returned to departments
4. Kinesiology not part of core
5. Additional modern language and literature courses are now optional

**Appendix B**  
**Core Curriculum Plan Endorsed by UTPA Faculty, Spring 2013**

<p><b>Core Curriculum Mission Statement</b>  <b>The Mission of the Core Curriculum at The University of Texas-Pan American, congruent with the University’s mission, is to provide students from diverse backgrounds with a solid academic foundation that will prepare them to succeed in their chosen disciplines and will encourage their development as mature, lifelong learners and engaged citizens. To this end, the Core Curriculum shall focus on preparing students to think critically and analytically, communicate effectively, apply empirical and quantitative skills, demonstrate effective teamwork skills, and engage in activities that promote personal and social responsibility, and civic engagement. The Core Curriculum will thus challenge students to develop the skills and habits of mind needed to transform themselves, South Texas, and the world beyond.</b></p>	
<p><b>Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rules</b>  <i>Area Title, Semester Credit Hours, Definition, and Required Core Objectives</i></p>	<p><b>UTPA</b>   <i>Courses Submitted by Faculty and Approved by the Core Curriculum Committee</i></p>
<p><b>Communication (6 SCH)</b>             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.             Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Complete both courses</b>             ENG 1301 Rhetoric &amp; Composition I or ENG 1387 (Honors)            ENG 1302 Rhetoric &amp; Composition II or ENG 1388 (Honors)</p>
<p><b>Mathematics (3 SCH)</b>             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.             Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, and Empirical and Quantitative Skills</p>	<p><b>Choose one of the following courses</b>             MATH 1340 College Algebra            MATH 1341 Business Algebra            MATH 1342 Business Calculus            MATH 1348 Contemporary Mathematics or MATH 1389 (Honors)            MATH 1440 College Algebra            MATH 1450 Precalculus with Trigonometry            MATH 1460 Calculus 1 or MATH 1487 (Honors)            MATH 1470 Calculus II or MATH 1488 (Honors)            MATH/STAT 2330 Elementary Statistics &amp; Probability or MATH 2387 (Honors)            MATH/STAT 2335 Intro to Biostatistics or MATH 2388 (Honors)</p>
<p><b>Life and Physical Sciences (6 SCH)</b>             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             Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, and Teamwork</p>	<p><b>Choose two of the following courses</b>             ASTR 1401 Introductory Astronomy I three-hour lecture            ASTR 1402 Introductory Astronomy II three-hour lecture            BIOL 1401 General Biology I three-hour lecture or BIOL 1487 (Honors)            BIOL 1402 General Biology II three-hour lecture or BIOL 1488 (Honors)            BIOL 2403 Anatomy and Physiology I three-hour lecture            BIOL 2404 Anatomy and Physiology II three-hour lecture            CHEM 1301 General Chemistry I or CHEM 1307            CHEM 1302 General Chemistry II            GEOL 1401 Physical Geology three-hour lecture            GEOL 1402 Historical Geology three-hour lecture            PSCI 1421 Physical Science I three-hour lecture            PSCI 1422 Physical Science II three-hour lecture            PHYS 1401 General Physics I three-hour lecture</p>

	PHYS 1402 General Physics II three-hour lecture PHYS 2401 Physics for Scientists & Engineers I three-hour lecture PHYS 2402 Physics for Scientists & Engineers II three-hour
<p><b>Language, Philosophy, and Culture (3 SCH)</b></p> <p>Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience.</p> <p>Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.</p> <p>Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Choose one of the following courses</b></p> <p>ANTH 1354 Anthropology of Expressive Culture          COMM 1302 Introduction to Communication          ENG 2300 Introduction to Literature          ENG 2303 Introduction to American Literature          ENG 2305 Introduction to British Literature          ENG 2307 Introduction to World Literature          ENG 2308 Readings in Special Topics          ENG 2313 Readings in Dramatic Literature          ENG 2387 Readings in World Literature (Honors)          ENG 2388 Readings in World Literature (Honors)          MAS 2301 Intro to Mexican-American Studies          MCLL 2301 Topics in Classical Literature          PHIL 1305 Critical Thinking or PHIL 1388 (Honors)          PHIL 1310 Introduction to Philosophy or PHIL 1387 (Honors)          PHIL 1321 Formal Logic          PHIL 2330 Introduction to Ethics          PHIL 2350 Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy          PHIL 2370 Introduction to Asian Philosophy          PHIL 2375 Religious Diversity in the Global Community          PHIL 2380 Introduction to Latin American Philosophy          PHIL2390 Professional Ethics          PHIL 2391 Professional Ethics: Biomedical          PHIL 2392 Professional Ethics: Business          PHIL 2393 Professional Ethics: Engineering          PHIL 2395 Environmental Ethics          PHIL 2396 Ethics and Leadership</p>
<p><b>Creative Arts (3 SCH)</b></p> <p>Courses in this category focus on the appreciation and analysis of creative artifacts and works of the human imagination.</p> <p>Courses involve the synthesis and interpretation of artistic expression and enable critical, creative, and innovative communication about works of art.</p> <p>Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Teamwork, and Social Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Choose one of the following courses</b></p> <p>ART 1301 Art Appreciation          COMM 1301 Cinema Appreciation          COMM 2312 Theatre Appreciation          DANC 2323 Dance Appreciation          ENG 2314 Appreciation and Analysis of Literature          LAMS 2301 Inter-American Studies          MUS 1307 Music Appreciation          MUS 1308 Mexican Folk Music          MUS 1309 World Music</p>
<p><b>American History (6 SCH)</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills,</p>	<p><b>Complete both courses</b></p> <p>HIST 2313 American Heritage I or HIST 2387 (Honors)          HIST 2314 American Heritage II or HIST 2388 (Honors)</p>

<p>Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility</p> <p><b>Government/Political Science (6 SCH)</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Courses involve the analysis of governmental institutions, political behavior, civic engagement, and their political and philosophical foundations.</p> <p>Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Social Responsibility, and Personal Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Complete both courses</b></p> <p>POLS 2313 US &amp; Texas Government &amp; Politics or POLS 2387 (Honors)  POLS 2314 US &amp; Texas Government &amp; Politics or POLS 2388 (Honors)</p>
<p><b>Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 SCH)</b></p> <p>Courses in this category focus on the application of empirical and scientific methods that contribute to the understanding of what makes us human.</p> <p>Courses involve the exploration of behavior and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, and events, examining their impact on the individual, society, and culture.</p> <p>Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, and Social Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Choose one of the following courses</b></p> <p>ANTH 1323 Intro to Cultural Anthropology  ANTH 1324 Human Evolution  ANTH 1342 Intro to Archaeology  ANTH 1353 Intro to Folklore  ECON 1301 Intro to Economics  ECON 2301 Principles of Macroeconomics  ENG 2321 Humans &amp; Language  PSY 1310 Intro to Psychology  SOC 1313 Principles of Sociology</p>
<p><b>Component Area Option (6 SCH)</b></p> <p>a. A minimum of 3 SCH must meet the definition and corresponding Core Objectives specified in one of the foundational component areas.</p> <p>b. As an option for up to 3 semester credit hours of the Component Area Option, an institution may select course(s) that:</p> <p>(i) Meet(s) the definition specified for one or more of the foundational component areas; and</p> <p>(ii) Include(s) a minimum of three Core Objectives, including Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, and one of the remaining Core Objectives of the institution's choice.</p>	<p>In the Component Area Option, students may choose from the courses below to meet the required 6 hours.</p> <p><b>1. Integrative and Experiential Learning</b>  Courses in this category involve interdisciplinary topics or approaches and/or learning through direct experience.</p> <p><b>Science Labs (maximum 3 hours; offered in conjunction with science courses listed in foundational component area)</b>  ASTR 1401 Introductory Astronomy I one-hour lab  ASTR 1402 Introductory Astronomy II one-hour lab  BIOL 1401 General Biology I one-hour lab or BIOL 1487 (Honors)  BIOL 1402 General Biology II one-hour lab or BIOL 1488( Honors)  BIOL 2403 Anatomy and Physiology I one-hour lab  BIOL 2404 Anatomy and Physiology II one-hour lab  CHEM 1101 General Chemistry Lab I or CHEM 1107  CHEM 1102 General Chemistry Lab II  GEOL 1401 Physical Geology one-hour lab  GEOL 1402 Historical Geology one-hour lab  PSCI 1421 Physical Science I one-hour lab  PSCI 1422 Physical Science II one-hour lab  PHYS 1401 General Physics I one-hour lab  PHYS 1402 General Physics II one-hour lab  PHYS 2401 Physics for Scientists &amp; Engineers one-hour lab  PHYS 2402 Physics for Scientists &amp; Engineers one-hour lab</p> <p><b>Computer Applications (maximum 3 hours)</b>  CIS 2398 Information Technology for Student's University Success &amp; Career Development  CSCI/CMPE 1370 Engineering Computer Science I or CSCI 1378 (Honors)  CSCI 1380 Computer Science I</p>

**Wellness (maximum 3 hours)**

KIN 1301 Wellness  
NURS 2301 Wellness

**Interdisciplinary (maximum 6 hours)**

CSCI 1100 Digital Technology  
DIET 23xx Nutrition and Foods  
FINA 1335 Intro to Personal Finance Literacy  
MANE 2333 Engineering, Economics, & American Society  
QUMT 2398 Decision Analytics

**2. Humanities**

Students may select a 3-hour course in the Language, Philosophy, and Culture area to complete the 6 required hours in the Component Area Option. The selected course must be from a different prefix than the course selected in the Language, Philosophy, and Culture area.

**Definitions for Required Core Objectives Adopted by the Core Curriculum Committee**

*CRITICAL THINKING (CT)* is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

*COMMUNICATION SKILLS (COM)* include the development, expression, and revision of ideas through the effective use of language (writing, reading, speaking, and listening) across a variety of forums. Communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles while using different technologies, can result in mixing texts, data, and/or images, and develops through diverse experiences across the curriculum.

*EMPIRICAL AND QUANTITATIVE SKILLS (EQS)*, which involve numeracy or quantitative reasoning, include competency in working with numerical data and mathematical reasoning. Individuals with strong mathematical skills possess the ability to reason and solve quantitative problems from a wide array of authentic contexts and everyday life situations. They interpret data and results and can create conjectures and arguments supported by quantitative evidence and/or mathematical reasoning, which they can clearly communicate in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, and/or equations as appropriate).

*TEAMWORK (TW)* is the engagement of two or more people in contributing to a group activity that may involve individual and group tasks, and includes developing skills for productive interactions among diverse disciplines, cultures, and identities to accomplish shared goals.

*PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY (PR)* is a habit of mind characterized by an individual's understanding and investment in learning as a lifelong process that involves solving problems, making decisions, and considering the consequences of alternative actions in a variety of complex social contexts.

*SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (SR)* is a habit of mind characterized by an ethical relationship between a person and a larger society that involves intercultural competency, civic knowledge, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. Such engagement includes individual participation in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to related communities.