

TAMU Core Curriculum Committee
New Core Course Guidelines
Approved March 5, 2018

Background:

The Texas Core Curriculum provides a transferable block of courses that reflect what are often referred to as general education requirements. Core Curriculum or General Education, requirements provide a broad, introductory knowledge base to ensure students are well rounded and equipped with the skills needed to succeed in their college and career endeavors, and to become productive citizens. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board always conceived of the Core as meeting the requirements of the Texas Legislature as well as the University's accrediting agency's general education requirements.

In order to meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) expectations for general education, proposed Core Curriculum courses will be evaluated with respect to the following criteria:

1. Core courses, with rare exceptions, are intended to be lower division courses. Based on the guidelines set forth by the THECB, 100 and 200 level courses are best suited to meet introductory general education requirements. If a proposed course is not at the 100 or 200 level the applicant must be prepared to respond to the following:
 - a. Does this course need to be an upper level course? Could it be revised to become a 100-200 level course consistent with 100-200 level criteria? If the course cannot be taught at the 100 or 200 level the applicant must present a compelling argument that the material is foundational and part of what should be the common educational background of students.
 - b. Is the material covered in the proposed course available in existing core courses, perhaps at a lower level? Often the general education aspect of a course is covered in lower level, introductory courses, meaning that a student would likely have already satisfied the general educational requirement in this area.
2. Is the content of this course considered general knowledge within the foundational component area? If it is specific to a field of study, it does not meet the purpose of general education.
3. Is the course a "skills" course? This is an issue frequently encountered with Creative Arts courses. Courses considered to be "skills" courses include those that focus on the attainment of defined skills such as competence in foreign languages or in musical or artistic performance. Skills courses, despite their high educational value, are not

considered to be aligned with Core Curriculum requirements and will not be approved. Please note, if such “skills” are assessed in a course, the likelihood of approval by THECB decreases significantly, even if the “skills” component represents a small fraction of the course material.

4. Is the course dependent upon a particular faculty member? In general courses that can be effectively taught only by one or a few faculty are not considered foundational and appropriate as Core Courses. To be approved the department must be committed to maintaining the course through faculty turnover.
5. Does the course have prerequisites other than classification? Courses with prerequisite requirements (other than sequenced math and science courses) do not meet the general education criteria.
6. The state of Texas looks favorably on courses that are transferable between institutions. Transferable courses carry a Texas Common Course Number (TCCN). Consider adapting the course to fit an existing course with a TCCN.

Proposed Core courses that satisfy the above criteria must then demonstrate they fit within one of [the Foundational Component areas and meet core objectives for that Foundational Component area](#)

Part of demonstrating the suitability for a core course goes beyond simply enumerating the requirements for a Foundational Component Area but describes why this course should be a general education requirement of Texas A&M students.