August 26, 2013

Dear Speaker Daugherty and Executive Committee:

The Academic Affairs Committee met on Monday, Aug. 19th, and reviewed the new UCC/GC Course Submission Checklist (see attached). This was done at the request of Dr. Tim Scott, Dr. Sarah Bednarz, and Dr. Pam Matthews, particularly in reference to the Minimum Syllabus Requirements. There was discussion regarding the use of terminology of “Learning Objectives”, “Learning Outcomes”, and “Course Objectives, and which was appropriate/correct. In an effort to a) use current educational vernacular, b) better define what information was actually desired on a syllabus, c) meet SACS accreditation guidelines, and d) most importantly, to align with language in Texas State Law, it was agreed upon to use the terminology of “Learning Outcomes” (This is relevant to undergraduate courses only.) These outcomes must be measureable and observable. The committee (and our guests) were adamant that the actual specific language to be used for learning outcomes should not be mandated, but rather should be left up to each entity to best reflect its genre (ex.: Engineering learning outcomes vs. English outcomes, v. Biology outcomes, etc.) The TAMU Office of Institutional Assessment and the Center for Teaching Excellence could both provide valuable guidance for those needing assistance in developing/writing Learning Outcomes. As such, AAC voted to accept and endorse the attached UCC/GC Course Submission Checklist and Minimum Syllabus Requirements. It is our request that this item be placed on the Sept. Faculty Senate for Senate approval. Please let me know if you need any further information. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Melinda Grant, Chair
Academic Affairs Committee
TAMU Faculty Senate
NEW /CHANGE COURSE FORM

- Department name
- Course prefix, number and title
- Course description (for catalog)
  - No sentences; use phrases/fragments separated by semi-colons, and commas to separate a series.
  - Do not use the word “introduction” in the title or beginning of the course description for 300 and 400 level courses.

Prerequisites
- Prerequisites on course form must match syllabus and catalog.
- For 300 and 400 level courses, prerequisites must contain either a course prerequisite implying course is designated for upper division students or if no prerequisites, then junior or senior classification. Reference FS.16.166.

Cross-listed Course (more than one department but at same level)
- Cross-listed courses must be exactly alike (except prefix and sometimes course number).
- Both departments must sign the course form.

Stacked Course (undergraduate and graduate)
- Include reference to graduate information if course will be stacked.

Variable Credit

Required or Elective

Letters of Support
- Include if course appears to duplicate another department’s course offering, or if adding/dropping another department’s course in prerequisites.

Course Inventory Information (shortened title, hours, codes, etc.).

Signatures

Brief Supporting Statement
- Include for changes in prerequisites, course withdrawals, cross-listings, course titles and/or descriptions.

Completed Course Form Examples at http://curricularservices.tamu.edu/forms/

MINIMUM SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS

- Course title, number, and term (e.g., Spring 20IX), meeting times and location
- Course description and prerequisites
  - Prerequisites must match course form and catalog.

Learning Outcomes (required for undergraduate courses only)
- A learning outcome is defined as a statement of what the student will know or be able to do upon successfully completing the course. It must be both observable and measurable.

Instructor information

Textbook and / or resource materials

Grading policies
- Must include a grading scale (A=90-100, B=80-89, etc.).
- Include weights as applicable to exams, laboratory assignments, field student work, projects, papers, homework, class attendance and participation, and other graded activities in the calculation of the course grade.
- If more than 10% of grade is based on participation, syllabus should explicitly define and outline how grade is determined.
- Stacked courses – syllabus must clearly indicate additional work required for graduate students.

Attendance and make-up policies
- Include website link to student rule 7 http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07
- Must include attendance and make-up policy, especially if attendance/class participation will count as a grade.
- Policies should detail excused absences, unexcused absences, and make-up policies.
- Attendance and make-up policies should not contradict student rules.
- See attached example.

Course topics, calendar of activities, major assignments, test dates
- 14 weeks (15th week is first week of finals).
- Include lab hours.
- Must include dates on which major exams will be given and assignments will be due.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement
- Use current ADA statement with Cain Hall location and Disability Services (does not show Koldus or Department of Student Life).
- Do not change statement; add separate paragraph if additional information is needed.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy
- Include Aggie Honor Code statement and website link http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu

Minimum Syllabus Requirements http://curricularservices.tamu.edu/minimum-syllabus-requirements/
EXAMPLE

Attendance Policies:

[Insert instructor policy here on penalties for unexcused absences or rewards/requirements for attendance. If you have no attendance requirement, say so.]

Click here to enter text.

Make-up Policy:
If an absence is excused, the instructor will either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam or other work that contributes to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. If the instructor has a regularly scheduled make up exam, students are expected to attend unless they have a university approved excuse. The make-up work must be completed in a timeframe not to exceed 30 calendar days from the last day of the initial absence. The reasons absences are considered excused by the university are listed below. See Student Rule 7 for details (http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07). The fact that these are university-excused absences does not relieve the student of responsibility for prior notification and documentation. Failure to notify and/or document properly may result in an unexcused absence. Falsification of documentation is a violation of the Honor Code.

1) Participation in an activity that is required for a class and appears on the university authorized activity list at https://studentactivities.tamu.edu/app/sponsauth/index
2) Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
3) Illness of a dependent family member.
4) Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
5) Religious holy day. NOTE: Prior notification is NOT required.
6) Injury or illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
   a) Injury or illness of three or more class days:
      Student will provide a medical confirmation note from his or her medical provider within one week of the last date of the absence (see Student Rules 7.1.6.1)
   b) Injury or illness of less than three class days:
      Student will provide one or both of these (at instructor's discretion), within one week of the last date of the absence:
      (i.) Texas A&M University Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class form available at http://attendance.tamu.edu or (ii.) Confirmation of visit to a health care professional affirming date and time of visit.
7) Required participation in military duties.
8) Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school that cannot be rescheduled.

Other absences may be excused at the discretion of the instructor with prior notification and proper documentation. In cases where prior notification is not feasible (e.g., accident or emergency) the student must provide notification by the end of the second working day after the absence, including an explanation of why notice could not be sent prior to the class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component Area Option</th>
<th>Required Core Objectives</th>
<th>Optional Core Objectives</th>
</tr>
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<td>PR</td>
<td>SR</td>
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**Institutional Choice:**

- At least one of the following three courses must be included:
  - Communication Skills
  - Critical Thinking Skills
  - Film

**Social and Behavioral Sciences:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Government/Political Science:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**American History:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Creative Arts:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Education:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Life and Physical Sciences:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Mathematics:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Science:**

- At least one course from the following areas must be included:
  - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Physics
  - Statistics

**Technology:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Visual Arts:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**First Language:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Second Language:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Humanities:**

- At least one course from this area must be included.

**Mathematics:**

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Elements of the Core Curriculum

The current Core Curriculum policies and procedures will remain in effect until Fall 2014.

Given the rapid evolution of necessary knowledge and skills and the need to take into account global, national, state, and local cultures, the core curriculum must ensure that students will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life. Therefore, with the assistance of the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee, the Coordinating Board approved a 42 semester credit hour core curriculum for all undergraduate students in Texas, including a statement of purpose, six core objectives, and common component areas, to be implemented in Fall 2014.

Statement of Purpose

Through the Texas Core Curriculum, 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.

Core Objectives

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

Foundational Component Areas

(Click the link above for component descriptions, semester credit hours, and core objectives requirements.)

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Life and Physical Sciences
- Language, Philosophy and Culture
- Creative Arts
- American History
- Government/Political Science
- Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Component Area Option
at least the second anniversary of the date on which the institution initially posted the information.

(d) The institution shall update the information required by Subsection (a) as soon as practicable after the information changes.

(e) The governing body of the institution shall designate an administrator to be responsible for ensuring implementation of this section. The administrator may assign duties under this section to one or more administrative employees.

(f) Not later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year, each institution of higher education shall submit a written report regarding the institution's compliance with this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officer of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction over higher education.

(g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board may adopt rules necessary to administer this section.

(h) Institutions of higher education included in this section shall conduct end-of-course student evaluations of faculty and develop a plan to make evaluations available on the institution's website.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 681, Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.
Sec. 51.974. INTERNET ACCESS TO COURSE INFORMATION. (a) Each institution of higher education, other than a medical and dental unit, as defined by Section 61.003, shall make available to the public on the institution's Internet website the following information for each undergraduate classroom course offered for credit by the institution:

(1) a syllabus that:
   (A) satisfies any standards adopted by the institution;
   (B) provides a brief description of each major course requirement, including each major assignment and examination;
   (C) lists any required or recommended reading; and
   (D) provides a general description of the subject matter of each lecture or discussion;

(2) a curriculum vitae of each regular instructor that lists the instructor's:
   (A) postsecondary education;
   (B) teaching experience; and
   (C) significant professional publications; and

(3) if available, a departmental budget report of the department under which the course is offered, from the most recent semester or other academic term during which the institution offered the course.

(a-1) A curriculum vitae made available on the institution's Internet website under Subsection (a) may not include any personal information, including the instructor's home address or home telephone number.

(b) The information required by Subsection (a) must be:

(1) accessible from the institution's Internet website home page by use of not more than three links;
(2) searchable by keywords and phrases; and
(3) accessible to the public without requiring registration or use of a user name, a password, or another user identification.

(c) The institution shall make the information required by Subsection (a) available not later than the seventh day after the first day of classes for the semester or other academic term during which the course is offered. The institution shall continue to make the information available on the institution's Internet website until
TEC 51.96851: Learning Outcomes for Undergraduate Courses.

From: Matthews Pamela R  
Sent: Monday, September 24, 2012 11:17 AM  
To: 'Stalone, John'; Timothy Scott  
Subject: Learning Outcomes on Syllabi RE: Fall 2012 Message for Faculty

For everyone's reference, below is the relevant section of the Texas Education Code. This was originally passed as Senate Bill (SB) 1726 during the 82nd regular legislative session. The CB interpretation was that if an institution was in compliance with House Bill (HB) 2504, which required posting of undergraduate syllabi that included learning objectives, then that institution was in compliance with SB 1726. Note that this is undergraduate only.

Sec. 51.96851. LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES. (a) In this section, "institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) To foster a transparent student learning environment at institutions of higher education and to facilitate the universal articulation of undergraduate courses that are transferable for credit among all institutions of higher education, each institution of higher education shall identify, adopt, and make available for public inspection measurable learning outcomes for each undergraduate course offered by the institution other than:

(1) a course with a highly variable subject content that is tailored specifically to an individual student, such as an independent study or directed reading course; or

(2) a laboratory, practicum, or discussion section that is an intrinsic and required component of a lecture course.

(c) An institution of higher education may adopt learning outcomes for a course under this section that are the same as or based on those identified for that course by the institution's recognized accrediting agency.

(d) In consultation with institutions of higher education, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall adopt any rules the coordinating board considers appropriate for the administration of this section.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1109, Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.
Student Learning Outcomes on Individual Course Syllabi
Texas A&M University

Grad: Not Required

UG All Other:
Required; can be outcomes / objectives / goals specific to course and instructor

UG Lab / Specialized:
Not Required

UG Core Curriculum:
Required; outcomes specified by THECB

which outcomes go w/ what course

Notes:

- Texas Education Code 51.974 (enacted following HB 2504) specifies course information that must be available publicly. TEC 51.96851 (enacted following SB 1726) concerns student learning outcomes: http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.51.htm.
- Both TEC 51.974 and TEC 51.96851 apply only to undergraduate courses. Graduate course syllabi need not be publicly available and do not require learning outcomes.
- The state does not mandate specific learning outcomes for undergraduate courses (except for Core Curriculum; see next item). It only says there must be course-level “learning outcomes.”
- Beginning fall 2014, state Core Curriculum courses are required by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to include specific learning outcomes: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=6F049CAE-F54E-26E4-ED9F0DAG62FABF7D. These are the only courses with specific course-level requirements. Note that we are not told how we must assess these outcomes at the course level, only that we must do so.
- TAMU’s undergraduate and graduate student learning outcomes are listed on the online catalog page: http://catalog.tamu.edu/. There is no requirement that individual courses' outcomes align with these university outcomes, although programs, departments, and colleges may choose to align some or all program level outcomes with these institutional outcomes.

Office of the Provost, 8/2013