May 9, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans and Associate Deans

FROM: Paul Woodruff

RE: CORE CURRICULUM AND SIGNATURE COURSE POLICIES AND INFORMATION FOR THE 2008-2010 ACADEMIC YEARS

I write to share with you important core curriculum policies and information for the 2008-2010 academic years. Please pass this information on to your advising and student affairs staff and, as always, let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Core Curriculum. The following colleges and schools have implemented the new core curriculum requirements and course lists by directly referencing the Undergraduate Studies section (Chapter 2) of the Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010 in each of their degree programs: School of Architecture, McCombs School of Business, College of Communication, School of Education, Jackson School of Geosciences, College of Liberal Arts, and College of Natural Sciences BA degree (sans Signature Course).

By “core curriculum” we refer to the 42-hour state-mandated core. Attached to this document is a final listing of the core curriculum requirements and course lists that will appear in the Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010 and will apply to the colleges and schools listed above.

All core curriculum rules and approved course lists will be coded in the Degree Audit system at the university level. Colleges and schools that have not implemented the 2008-2010 core curriculum requirements and course lists (Engineering, Fine Arts, Natural Sciences – BS degrees, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work) will overwrite the university-wide core curriculum Degree Audit rules with college-level rules as necessary to maintain a set of rules consistent with their existing degree requirements. Beginning with the Undergraduate Catalog 2010-2012, all colleges will be expected to have fully implemented the core curriculum and to use the university-wide Degree Audit rules.

Associate Registrar Dan Knaufft has been working with the Degree Audit liaisons from each college to ensure the smooth implementation of these changes.
Core Curriculum Overrides. Beginning in fall 2008, all overrides to the new university-wide core curriculum rules in the Degree Audit system will be performed by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. Students who wish to petition for such overrides should be referred to the Undergraduate Studies website, where instructions and an online form will soon be available.

Petitions for core curriculum overrides will be evaluated in consultation with the appropriate academic department(s). Both the student and the student's college will be notified when petitions are approved or denied.

Undergraduate Studies will not perform overrides to rules at the college level and below; these remain the exclusive province of the colleges, schools, and departments. Additionally, the colleges and schools may continue to override university-level rules that are not associated with core curriculum areas (e.g. Rule 850: Twenty-four of the last thirty semester hours in residence).

Responsibility for graduation certification still lies with the colleges and schools, though UGS staff will be available for consultation on university-level core curriculum issues as necessary.

These procedures for core curriculum overrides do not apply to the colleges and schools that have not implemented the core curriculum requirements and course lists for 2008-2010. Engineering, Fine Arts, Natural Sciences (for BS degrees only), Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work should continue to perform all necessary core curriculum overrides until full implementation in fall 2010.

Transfer students from Texas public institutions are eligible to declare the UT catalog in effect during the time they attended the previous institution, and choosing a prior catalog in some cases may be a better option for the student than core curriculum overrides. Because choice of catalog affects the student's entire degree plan, catalog declaration will occur within the student’s college or school, but UGS staff members will be available to consult with individual students on these matters when appropriate.

Core Curriculum Changes. During each Catalog development cycle, the Undergraduate Studies Advisory Committee (UGSAC) will review the lists of courses approved to satisfy the core curriculum, soliciting the input of appropriate academic departments. Any recommendations that emerge from UGSAC discussions will be presented to the Faculty Council for a vote and subsequently reviewed by the Provost, President, Executive Vice Chancellor, and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Each college and school will be notified of any changes to the core curriculum course lists as early as possible in the Catalog development cycle so that the most up-to-date information will be available during college- and department-level discussions about possible degree program changes, some of which may depend on the composition of the core.
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**Signature Courses.** Beginning with the *Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010*, the First-Year Signature Course will be required by the School of Architecture, McCombs School of Business, College of Communication, School of Education, Jackson School of Geosciences, College of Liberal Arts, and School of Nursing. The remaining colleges and schools are expected to adopt the Signature Course requirement, along with the rest of the core curriculum, for the *Undergraduate Catalog 2010-2012.*

Because the Signature Course is intended to be taken in the first year, it is important to encourage all students enrolled in (or seeking internal transfer to) colleges requiring the Signature Course to register for a section of the course during Summer Orientation or to reserve a seat in a spring section through the Signature Course office in Undergraduate Studies. The course will be offered in both fall and spring semesters, but more seats will be available in the fall. Students for whom the Signature Course is required will have priority in registering for the course.

**Course Flags.** The first flags will appear in the *Course Schedule* in fall 2009, though none will be specifically required by any degree program until the publication of the *Undergraduate Catalog 2010-2012.*

When Writing Flags become available, the Degree Audit system will recognize them as functionally equivalent to the existing Substantial Writing Component (SWC) designation. We hope to convert all SWC courses to Writing Flag courses by fall 2010. In the interim, students may count either Writing Flag or SWC courses toward any existing SWC requirement.

Each college and school has been asked to begin the process of identifying courses to be flagged. **Flag Proposal Forms for fall 2009 are due November 15, 2008.**

**Transfer Credit Issues.** In accordance with state law, students who transfer to UT from other Texas public institutions having completed the sending institution's entire core curriculum will be deemed to have completed the UT core curriculum, including the Signature Course.

Students who transfer to UT from Texas public institutions without having completed the sending institution's core curriculum will be deemed to have completed any individual statewide core curriculum component(s) that the sending institution certifies as complete, with the exception of the Institutionally Designated Option (Signature Course). On a case-by-case basis, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies will accept appropriate transfer coursework as fulfilling the Signature Course requirement.

State-mandated transfer of core curriculum credit from Texas public institutions will sometimes result in fulfillment of a core requirement by coursework that UT normally would not count when taken in residence. However, such transfer credit substitutes only for core curriculum purposes and does not replace coursework otherwise required by a degree plan.
Transfer credit outside a Texas public sending institution's core curriculum or from private or out-of-state institutions may also be counted toward appropriate UT core curriculum areas if transferred as a course in UT's core curriculum list or otherwise approved by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Undergraduate Studies plans to accommodate students admitted under the Coordinated Admission Program (CAP) in Signature Courses. Other students transferring to UT after the first year of college and enrolling in a degree program requiring the Signature Course must take a section of the Signature Course designated for transfer students\(^1\) or petition Undergraduate Studies either (1) to recognize appropriate transfer credit as a Signature Course equivalent, or (2) for permission to complete another appropriate course in residence in substitution for the Signature Course. Undergraduate Studies will publish the criteria that will be used to evaluate transfer students' petitions for substitution.

During the core curriculum implementation period, continuing students who internally transfer from a UT college or school that has not implemented the Signature Course requirement to one that has implemented the Signature Course requirement after the registration period for the student's second long semester in residence should also enroll in a section of the Signature Course designed for transfer students or petition Undergraduate Studies to substitute another appropriate course. This accommodation notwithstanding, all students considering transfer to a college or school that has implemented the Signature Course requirement should be advised to register for the Signature Course during the first year.

Any other issues arising during the core implementation period will be handled by UGS on a case-by-case basis.

Transfer credit currently accepted as Substantial Writing Component credit will be accepted as Writing Flag credit; other transfer credit will be accepted if it meets UT Writing Flag criteria. Transfer credit applicability toward the five other flag areas (Quantitative Reasoning, Global Cultures, U.S. Cultural Diversity, Ethics & Leadership, and Independent Inquiry) will be determined by the same guidelines used for in-residence coursework, under development for fall 2010 implementation.

Assistant Director of Admission Keith Baird is working with UGS staff to identify transfer credit applicable toward core curriculum and flag requirements, and to code core/flag attributes in the Automated Transfer Equivalency inventory.

While Undergraduate Studies will determine when transfer credit may be applied to university-level core curriculum requirements, the colleges, schools, and departments will make all decisions regarding the applicability of transfer credit to requirements at the college

\(^1\) Undergraduate Studies plans to develop sections of the Signature Course for transfer and nontraditional students, to be available for spring 2009.
level and below. In many cases, the same transferred coursework may be applied to both the core curriculum and a degree-level requirement.

Questions about these policies should be referred to Cale McDowell in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Attachment

cc: Dr. Steven Leslie, Executive Vice President and Provost  
Dr. Charles Roeckle, Deputy to the President  
Dr. Terri Givens, Vice Provost  
Mr. Cale McDowell, Deputy to the Dean  
Mr. Shelby Stanfield, Associate Vice President and Registrar  
Dr. Bruce Walker, Vice Provost and Director of Admissions
CORE CURRICULUM
(from Chapter 2 of the Undergraduate Catalog 2008-2010)

First-Year Signature Course: Three semester hours completed during the first year in residence. The following courses may be counted:

- UGS 302, 303
- TC 301, 302 (Plan II Honors students only)

English composition: Three semester hours. The following courses may be counted:

- Rhetoric and Writing 306 (or 306Q for nonnative speakers of English)
- E 603A (or TC 603A) (Plan II Honors students only)

Humanities: Three semester hours. The following courses may be counted:

- English 316K
- E 603B (or TC 603B) (Plan II Honors students only)

American and Texas government: Six semester hours. This coursework also fulfills the legislative requirement given on page 18. The following courses may be counted:

- Government 310L and 312L
- Government 105. This course is designed solely for out-of-state and other transfer students with five or more semester hours of coursework in American government who need one hour in Texas government to fulfill the legislative requirement.

American history: Six semester hours, of which three may be in Texas history. This coursework also fulfills the legislative requirement given on page 18. The following courses may be counted:

Social science: Three semester hours. The following courses may be counted:

- Anthropology 302, 305, 307, 309L, 316L, 318L
- Economics 304K, 304L
- Geography 305, 306C, 307C, 308, 309, 312, 319
- Linguistics 306, 312
- Psychology 301
- Sociology 302, 308, 308C, 308D, 309, 313K, 318, 319
- Social Science 301 (Plan II Honors students only)

Mathematics: Three semester hours. The following courses may be counted:

- Mathematics 302, 303D, 403K, 305G, 408C, 408K, 316
- Statistics and Computation 303, 304, 305, 306, 318
- Mathematics 310P (Plan II Honors students only)

Natural Science, Part I: Six hours in the same discipline. The following courses may be counted:

- Astronomy 301, 302, 303, or 307; 309; 309L; 309M; 309N or 309Q; 309Q or 309R; 309T
- Biology (two courses from one of the following series) 301D, 301L, 301M; 311C, 311D; or 416K, 416L
- Chemistry (two courses from one of the following series) 301, 302; 301H, 302H; 304K, 305; or 313N, 314N
- Geological Sciences 401, 303, or 420H; 302C; 302D; 302E; 302K; 302M; 302P; 404C or 405; 305E, 307
- Physical Science 303, 304
- Physics (two courses from one of the following series) 301, 316; 302K, 302L; 303K, 303L; 309K, 309L; or 317K, 317L
- Biology 301E (Plan II Honors students only)
- Physics 321H (Plan II Honors students only)

Natural Science, Part II: Three hours in a discipline other than that used by the student to fulfill the Part I requirement. Any course listed for Natural Science, Part I may be counted. In addition, any of the following courses may be counted:

- Anthropology 301, 304
- Biology 301C, 305E, 305F, 406D, 307D, 309D, 309F
- Computer Sciences 302, 307
- Geography 301C, 301K, 304E
- Mathematics courses at the level of Mathematics 302 or higher, excluding courses used to fulfill the mathematics requirement

Visual & performing arts: Three semester hours. The following courses may be counted:

- American Studies 330
- Architecture 308, 318K, 318L
- Fine Arts 310, 320
- Philosophy 317K, 346
- Studio Art 320K, 320L
- Theatre and Dance 301, 302T, 303, 303C, 317C, 317D