

FAQ for AC Faculty in Preparing their New Core Curriculum

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1. **Who is responsible for submitting the “Call for Course Proposals for Inclusion” information?**
The department head/program coordinator will be responsible for submitting “Call for Course Proposals for Inclusion” information. The department head/program coordinator may also designate faculty to assist with course submissions. However, the department head/program coordinator is ultimately responsible for ensuring the quality of each course submission.
2. **Who will review the “Call for Course Proposals for Inclusion” information?**
 - **Requirement Review** – The Core Curriculum Redesign Task Force (CCRTF) will appoint Foundational Sub-Committees who will ensure that the submitted core inclusion information is complete and includes assignment and assessment descriptions that align with the THECB [Core Objective Descriptions](#) and that the assessment information meets the basic [direct outcome](#) and [benchmark](#) requirements.
 - **Requirement Review and Approval** – The Dean’s Council and Curriculum Committee will evaluate the quality of the submitted course information, needs of AC students, and will also consider other institutional considerations to select the courses that will be submitted to the THECB for final 2014-2015 (and future) core curriculum approval.
3. **When will my course be assessed?**
 - **Departmental Review** – Beginning in fall 2014, faculty must annually assess the required core objectives. The department head must collect and maintain records of assessment information/evidence of improvement made based on assessment information.
 - **Institutional Review** – The Director of Institutional Effectiveness will collect core curriculum course information for institutional purposes on an annual or biennial basis (frequency to be determined by the Assessment Committee by the conclusion of the fall 2013 semester).
4. **How will my course be assessed?**
When a course is selected, the department head/program coordinator of the selected program will be contacted to complete an [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Form](#) **or** will include the data/assessment information on the core curriculum assessment portion of the updated [Program Review form](#). Despite the name of the collection form, the same information will be requested of department heads/program coordinators to ensure the department has fulfilled THECB requirements. Further, the AC Assessment Committee will annually/biennially evaluate information related to the core curriculum submission.

5. **Must the same assignments/assessment be used across each course section?**

- **Assignments** – Under the approval of the department head/program director, assignments related to a core objective may be tweaked to meet the needs of a course section. However, the assignments must share enough commonality to ensure core objective attainment equity amongst each section.
- **Assessments Methods** – The overall assessment method/s (e.g. rubric, embedded questions, etc.) used to assess each core objective must remain consistent across all course sections. However, the actual evaluation tool may be tweaked to meet the needs of a course section. For instance, a rubric used to assess communication could be tweaked to meet the specialized needs or achievement criteria set by a course's honors section. Likewise, a department head measuring critical thinking may request that faculty select 5 questions (of the faculty member's choosing) from a question bank and embed these questions on a final exam.

6. **Can one assessment method be used to evaluate multiple objectives?**

Yes. For example, if a course's foundational component area requires that the communication skills, critical thinking skills, social responsibility, and personal responsibility core objectives be directly assessed, an assignment that fully incorporates each area could be formed and different sections of an analytic rubric could be used to assess the student's achievement of each required objective. However, please note that if a rubric was worth 100 total rubric points and contained a personal responsibility section worth up to 10 points, the benchmark for fulfillment of the personal responsibility area would ideally be set and evaluated on a scale from 1-10 or at least given adequate weight on the rubric scale.

7. **How do I choose benchmarks/targets?**

The THECB requires that internal and external evidence be used in the formation of informed benchmarks/targets. Further, AC will be asked to prove that both internal/external information was used in the formation of each core curriculum benchmark. As a result, please view and consider all of the available resources listed below before forming your new benchmarks/targets:

- **Internal** – Consider what past departmental data tells you, what the [General Education Competency Committee findings](#) tell you, what the [Graduate Student Survey General Education Competency Results](#) tell you, etc.
- **External** – Consider what [CCSSE](#) tells you (pages 51-61), what any specialized accreditation expectations/findings tell you, etc.
- **Updated Data** – Additional internal data (e.g. Graduate Student Survey results by major) will be provided to academic deans and department heads and external data (e.g. SENSE results) and/or other external surveys will be listed on [AC's survey's page](#) as the results become available.

8. **Who will be contacted for assessment results and assessment samples?**

The department head/program coordinator will be contacted for the assessment results and assessment samples.

It is up to the department head/program coordinator to ensure that the core objectives are taught in each course and to decide how data will be collected (i.e. have an assessment team assess a set number of samples from across all course sections, have each instructor assess each student or a random sampling of students in their course section, etc.), but at the conclusion of each semester/year, the department head/program coordinator needs to be in possession of all tabulated results and findings because the department head/program coordinator will be responsible for providing all course-related information to the institution.

9. **Will the assessment samples and information required on the AC Core Curriculum Assessment Form provide anonymity for students and faculty?**
- **Students**—Part III of the [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Form](#) or the last portion of the core curriculum assessment portion of the updated [Program Review form](#) (note: the instructional assessment committee will decide which submission form to use) requests copies of the assessment instrument (e.g. copy of rubric) and a few examples of student work from the course (e.g. student work evaluated with rubric). The department head/program coordinator can remove student and course section identifiers prior to sending the sample assessment materials to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness. Otherwise, all student and course section identifiers will be removed by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness prior to the dispersion of course assessment information to the THECB or any other entity.
 - **Faculty**— When the overall assessment results are provided to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the department head/program coordinator may categorize the results in any way that is useful to the department (e.g. dividing the results by content delivery method categorizations). However, the results provided for institutional assessment are intended to provide an overview of the objective attainment for all students within a course or within the student sampling and not of a particular student's or faculty member's performance. Therefore, the assessment process will in no way evaluate individual students or faculty members. Instead, the assessment process will focus on gaining an overall view of student objective attainment.
10. **How will the information and assessment samples be used?**
- **Information Use** – The information provided in Part I and Part II of the [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Form](#) or the data and improvement-related information in the core curriculum assessment portion of the updated [Program Review form](#) may be made accessible to the general public. AC assessment methods are transparent.
 - **Assessment Sample Use** – To ensure that students cannot access assessment materials (e.g. list of possible embedded exam questions) prior to taking a course, samples of student work will not be made available to students or the general public. The sampling materials will be used only for assessment and institutional improvement purposes. Therefore, student work samples will only be provided to the THECB, SACSCOC, and to those deemed appropriate by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Should a situation arise where samples need to be posted online so that the samples may be accessed by an external reporting entity, the sample files will be password protected.

11. **Once the proposal is submitted, can I change information related to my course (assessment, target, etc.)?**
- It depends. In some instances, department heads/program coordinators can change course information by following the steps identified on the [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Close-Out Form](#). For more information, please refer to the following guidelines:
 - **No Changes for Submitted 2014-2015 Proposals** – Once the course information for 2014-2015 course inclusion has been submitted, the basic outline of the assignment and assessment information related to the course cannot change until the conclusion of the spring 2015 term. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness will send information to the appropriate department heads/program directors concerning the [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Close-Out Form](#).
 - **No Changes for Untimely 2015-Future Change Requests** – At the beginning of each semester, the department head/program coordinator responsible for core curriculum courses will be sent the appropriate assessment collection forms. It is expected that the information submitted on end-of-year forms will align with the information the courses indicated they would collect at the beginning of that year.
 - **Yes for Timely Change Requests** – At the conclusion of each spring semester, each person responsible for submitting a "Call for Course Proposals for Inclusion" will be given the opportunity to follow the steps identified on the [AC Core Curriculum Assessment Close-Out Form](#). Once the outlined steps are followed and the proposal is edited, major changes in course information will be sent to the Curriculum Committee and/or Dean's Council for their review and approval. If approved, the new plan will take the place of the old plan.

12. **What happens if I fail to collect data or produce evidence of course assessment?**

Courses that fail to produce evidence of alignment with THECB required objectives or adequate assessment of the required objectives will be reported to the Curriculum Committee and/or Dean's Council to ensure that one of the following occurs:

1. The course is removed from the core curriculum.
2. The proper action is taken to ensure the infraction does not occur again and that the course immediately complies with THECB requirements. Course granted a reprieve by the Curriculum Committee/Dean's Council will be subjected to more frequent assessment.

13. **Why did AC choose this assessment process?**

The requested information is [required by the THECB](#). However, when possible, this process was aligned with AC's current processes.