



# The University of Texas Pan American



## Current UTPA Core (43 hours)

- 6 hours communication (one year first year writing sequence)
- 3 hours mathematics
- 6 hours natural sciences
- 3 hours visual/performing arts
- 3 hours philosophy, literature, language, cultural studies...
- 6 hours U.S. history
- 6 hours political science
- 3 hours social and behavioral sciences
- Component area option:
  - 2 hours computer literacy
  - 3 hours sophomore literature
  - 2 hours science labs

### Other current general requirements:

- Second language proficiency equivalent to 6 hours of college-level work, met through credit by exam, demonstration of proficiency on exam, or 6 SCH
- freshman-level Learning Framework class (3 SCH) required for all freshmen who don't meet exemption criteria (combination of high school rank, ACT, earning college credit on a college campus)

### Contact Person

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## University Characteristics

- 19,034 students enrolled (16,631 undergraduates)
- 678 full-time faculty, 119 part-time faculty
- 56 bachelor's degree programs, 56 Master's programs, 2 doctoral programs, 2 cooperative doctoral programs
- 86% Latino enrollment, primarily Mexican-American

## Issues in Current Core Revision

UTPA processes are strongly faculty driven and emphasize process that involves faculty to the greatest degree possible. All general curricular changes require full faculty vote in order to be recommended.

Construction of the faculty committee to address the core revision and agreement to the document that guides their actions was a critical issue for us. The committee is now working quickly, but the initial process steps necessary took an unfortunately long period of time.

The committee timeline for their remaining tasks and the important questions they plan to address are on the back of this page. They are currently accepting core and course suggestions from the faculty at large, which is proving to be a highly contentious exercise.

## UTPA Core Curriculum Committee Tasks and Timeline

Task					
Orient	Brainstorm	Deliberate	Share	Assess	Lay Groundwork
<b>Primary Work to Do</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form Committee</li> <li>• Become familiar with the new THECB core curriculum requirements.</li> <li>• Review other institutions' core curriculum practices for new ideas to consider.</li> <li>• Discuss initial areas that will need to be resolved prior to making a final decision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider ideas from faculty for courses in the current core</li> <li>• Consider ideas from faculty for courses and requirements not in the current core</li> <li>• Hear from departments who submitted proposals who wish to make their own cases directly to the CCC (English lit and Bio for science labs already completed).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider combination of courses and requirements and select a limited number (1? 2?) of combinations that appear to maximize student learning/ experience.</li> <li>• Work with departments to revise submitted courses, if necessary, if they appear to have a strong place in the core but could be improved given the combination of courses under consideration for the core.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share process of CCC and resulting core ideas with the campus community for input and Q &amp; A.</li> <li>• Hold faculty vote.</li> <li>• Revise and revote, if necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with departments in the final core, construct final assessment plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that UCC is aware of any new courses recommended in the new core so that the UCC can work with those departments to review those courses for addition to the course inventory.</li> <li>• (Faculty involved in new courses, or significantly revised "old" courses will prepare to teach them.)</li> </ul>
<b>Important Questions for Core Curriculum Committee to Resolve</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any "best practices" or promising ideas from other institutions that we should consider at UTPA?</li> <li>• How can we best manage this process so that the core decision can be made with the best possible outcome and minimal fuss?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does each course reviewed fit into the THECB definition for a core area including area of content coverage, student learning outcomes, and beginning assessment plan?</li> <li>• Does each course fit within the mission statement of the core curriculum and University?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any exciting new ideas for a core requirement?</li> <li>• Are those ideas superior to what we currently offer?</li> <li>• Does each requirement fit within the mission of the core curriculum and UTPA?</li> <li>• Is there an upper limit on the number of courses that should be placed under a particular requirement?</li> <li>• Do any courses need to be "tweaked" to fit better within their requirements or with the other courses that will be used?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is assessment of each core objective best done at the level of the individual class, requirement, or core?</li> <li>• Which assessment techniques are best matched to the objective and level of assessment?</li> <li>• What assessment structure will best support faculty in conducting and reviewing meaningful assessments?</li> </ul>	
<b>Timeline*</b>					
April – November 2012	November 2012 – February 2013	February – March 2013	March – April 2013	April – November 2013	September 2013 – May 2014

\* Required Dates: Core curriculum, courses involved, and assessment plan due to THECB in November 2013. New core to be offered to students beginning Fall 2014.