

UCC Category D-Synthesis Assessment Report

From

Synthesis Assessment Committee

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Introduction

This report is presented to the University Core Committee from the committee charged with assessing the effectiveness of courses being offered for credit in the Synthesis Category-Category D of the University Core Curriculum. It addresses the issues and procedures outlined in the Assessment Plan presented and approved by the Core Committee in the spring of 2001.

The committee members have addressed four main activities. First; course syllabi were gathered and examined by respective committee members from the School in which the course(s) are being offered. Syllabi range from two pages to fifteen and address the goals with varying degrees of clarity. Overall, faculty believe their courses are addressing the goals set forth for Category D courses. Committee members concur with this claim. Second; Three hundred sixty eight students were surveyed during the last three weeks of the fall 2001 semester. In general, student perceptions of the content and effectiveness of their synthesis course were very positive with more than twenty-five percent taking additional time to write comments. A detailed analysis of these findings follows this introduction. The survey instrument and statistical analysis are contained in appendix A. Third; Fifteen faculty representing ten different courses responded to a faculty survey (appendix B). The majority of faculty were quite positive in their responses. A summary of their comments comes after the student survey analysis. The survey instrument is found in appendix B. Fourth; after examination of the above information, committee members make the following recommendations:

Recommendations

1. The goals and objectives for Category D should be reviewed on a periodic schedule with all faculty, both veteran & neophyte, who teach courses meeting this Core requirement.
2. Funds should be made available through a grant application procedure for course enhancement via field experiences, guest lectures, technology, etc.
3. Class size and teaching loads need to be closely monitored in order to enhance the learning environment. Faculty were unanimous in their request for more time for class experiences and preparation.
4. Where-ever possible, synthesis courses should be taught by full time faculty.