

# Status of Category Assessment Committees' Recommendations

December, 2005

## Category A2: The Ability to Think in Mathematical Terms

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
The A2 goal statement should be revised so as to clearly state that students should be able to interpret information and data presented in statistical form.	The Core Council approved changes in the goal statement.
The math faculty should give serious consideration to increasing the emphasis on mathematical applications.	The Chair of the Math Department has been made aware of this recommendation.
Math courses used to satisfy the core curriculum requirement should include more material pertaining to statistics.	The course content of MATH111 has been changed so that more class time is devoted to statistics.

## Category A2: The Ability to Communicate Effectively

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
The requirements for SPCH101 and SPCH107 should be standardized to minimize variation among sections.	The requirements for SPCH101 and SPCH107 have been standardized.
There should be less reliance on the use of adjunct instructors in SPCH101 and SPCH107.	Since the fall of 2002, the Communications Department has added a full-time faculty member whose entire teaching load (6-8 sections per academic year) consists of sections of SPCH101. The Council passed a motion recommending that there be less reliance on the use of adjunct instructors in CMST101 (formerly SPCH101) and CMST107 (formally SPCH107). The Chair of the Communications department has been made aware of this motion.

Category A1: Composition

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
<p>Funding should be provided to support teacher training workshops focused on writing pedagogy and assessment.</p>	<p>During the summer of 2005, a workshop will be conducted to train faculty scheduled to teach writing intensive courses. The Council has recommended that the Department of English seek funding to build and formalize teacher training workshops focused on writing pedagogy and assessment.</p>
<p>The number of fulltime faculty teaching composition courses should be increased.</p>	<p>This recommendation has been partially implemented. Most fulltime English professors are now required to teach one or more composition courses each semester. In the past five years, several fulltime, contract faculty members have been hired who teach 3-4 composition courses each semester.</p>
<p>There is a need for classrooms designed for the teaching of composition courses. Specifically, classrooms are needed that have movable tables in the middle of the room and computers situated around the periphery of room.</p>	<p>The Core Council recommended to the Department of English that resources be allocated to upgrade and standardize the integration of technology into the writing curriculum. The Director of the Core Curriculum has informed appropriate university officials responsible for planning classroom in the new library about the desirability of having a classroom that will accommodate technology appropriate to the teaching of composition.</p>
<p>The director and faculty teaching in the Composition Program should discuss the possibility of imposing a mandatory tutoring requirement, when necessary, on students in English 101 and English201. Tutoring should be conducted by Academic Skills staff members.</p>	<p>The Core Council has recommended that the composition program explore the implications of imposing a mandatory tutoring requirement (Academic Skills), when necessary, on students in English 101 and 201.</p>
<p>The composition program should be extended</p>	<p>The Core Council has recommended</p>

<p>beyond the first-year writing sequence to include writing intensive courses and other courses across the disciplines.</p>	<p>that the composition program extend beyond the first-year writing sequence and institute writing intensive courses across the disciplines. Beginning in the fall of 2005, several faculty members will modify one of their courses so that they will be taught as a writing intensive course.</p>
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Category C5: Global Communities

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
The UCC should convene a body of all faculty stakeholders and other interested persons to discuss possible changes in the Category's definition and its guidelines. The major focus of the discussion should be (1) whether or not courses pertaining to Europe should continue to be excluded from the Category and (2) the importance of a contemporary focus to all courses in the Category.	A meeting consisting of faculty stakeholders was held. Agreement was reached on the appropriate language for describing the Category's definition and guidelines. In fall 2003, language changes were approved by the Core Council. The new language appears in the latest version of the Guidebook for the University Core Curriculum.
In determining whether a course should be allowed in this Category, the Council should welcome courses that focus on linkages between cultures and courses that provide an in depth study of a specific culture or group of cultures.	This policy is now included in the core curriculum's <i>Policies and Procedures Handbook</i> .
In determining whether a course should be allowed in this Category, the Council should ensure that linkage courses include some discussion of the cultures being linked and culture courses should include some discussion of the linkages among cultures.	This policy is now included in the core curriculum's <i>Policies and Procedures Handbook</i> .
More C5 courses should be offered in the fall and summer.	Over the past five years, the number of C5 courses (and sections) taught during the fall and summer semesters have increased. For example, the number C5 courses increased from 6 in fall 2002 to 10 in fall 2004. The number of C5 sections increased from 12 in fall 2002 to 17 in fall 2004. Summer offerings have also increased. In summer 2002, there were 4 C5 courses and 5 C5 sections. By summer 2004, there were 6 C5 courses and 8 sections.
More C5 courses should be developed and offered on a regular basis.	While only one additional C5 course has been added since fall 2002, the number of sections of existing C5 courses has increased over time.
Reduce enrollments in sections of popular Category C5 courses that currently have large enrollments by offering more sections of these courses.	While the number of sections has increased, enrollments in individual sections have remained fairly stable in the past five years.

<p>Several full-time, tenure-track faculty positions should be created in Spanish. And full-time, tenure-track faculty members should be hired in geography and in anthropology.</p>	<p>An additional full-time faculty position was approved in Spanish. The fulltime nontenure-track position in anthropology has been converted to a tenure-track position for the 2006-07 year.</p>
<p>The Council should advise Schools that require students to enroll in a particular C5 course (as opposed to allowing majors to satisfy the requirement by enrolling a C5 course of their choice) to consider revising this policy.</p>	<p>Deans were informed of the Assessment Committee's concerns. No School elected to change its policy.</p>
<p>Using the Humanities as a model, C5 instructors should have workshops and retreats to exchange information, ideas and research.</p>	<p>Faculty members teaching in the C5 category (and Council members) participated in a retreat where issues related to C5 courses were discussed.</p>
<p>Additional faculty development funds should be available to faculty to develop new courses in C5 and improve existing C5 courses.</p>	<p>A three-day workshop titled, "Getting to the Core: Teaching and Learning Enhancement in the University Core Curriculum" has been established. The first workshop will be held in the summer of 2005. Twelve faculty members teaching core curriculum courses will meet to learn more about pedagogies related to core curriculum courses. The workshop is open to faculty teaching courses in the C5 category as well as to faculty teaching in other categories.</p>
<p>Additional library resources should be made available for courses in the C5 category.</p>	<p>In fall 2000, Academic Affairs established the Library Acquisition Fund. This fund is used exclusively to purchase materials related to core curriculum courses. The Fund's annual budget has ranged between \$5000 and \$10,000.</p>
<p>Funding should be made available to support students seeking to study abroad.</p>	<p>The Study Abroad Scholarship has been established for incoming students with a desire to study abroad. Beginning in the 2005-2006 academic year, funds from a grant from the Lilly Foundation will allow students in the Honors Program to apply for a grant to help fund study in a foreign country.</p>

Category B: The Self: Enhancement of Individual Development

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
Revise goal statement for Category B1	In fall 2000, the statement was revised and included in the latest edition of the <i>University Core Curriculum Guidebook</i> .
Revise goal statement for Category B2	In fall 2000, statement was revised and included in the latest edition of the <i>University Core Curriculum Guidebook</i> .
Enrollments caps in all Category B courses should not exceed 35 students.	Enrollment caps in most Category B courses have been set at or below 35 students. Caps in PHIL200 and PHIL201 - the course that almost all students take to fulfill the B1 (ethics) requirement – have recently been reduced from 60 to 40. Among all other Category B courses offered in the spring of 2005, only three had enrollments that exceeded 35 students: ART201, NUTR376, and ENG285.
More resources should be provided for field trips and other off-campus activities that enhance student learning.	After consulting with faculty in their Schools, core council representatives determined that there were relatively few faculty members teaching core courses that desired funds for field trips and other off-campus activities. Moreover, several existing funding sources for such activities were identified (e.g., the Humanities Foundation Account in the School of Liberal Arts and funds in an account controlled by the Office of Vice President for Student Affairs).
Additional funds should be made available for photocopying, creating slides, maps, transparencies, websites, CD-ROMs, and videotapes.	In the past five years, most departmental printing budgets have increased and the purchase of new computers and software have enabled interested faculty to make websites or burn CD-ROMS. Computer support staff has increased in size with an expert in web design working half time in the School of Liberal Arts.

	Faculty may purchase videotapes with money from the Library Acquisition Fund that was established in fall 2000. This fund is used exclusively to purchase materials related to core curriculum courses.
Category B goals should be included on all Category B course syllabi.	Beginning in the fall 2002, all syllabi for core curriculum courses are required to include relevant core curriculum goals.
There should be additional computer labs and a larger variety of software available for faculty and students.	The number of computers and computer labs has increased dramatically in the last several years. For example, when the Liberal Arts Center was built this facility included three additional computer labs. Software has also become more accessible to faculty and students. For example, SPSS is now housed on computers in several compute labs including the psychology lab and the social science lab.
Vending machine offerings should be expanded to include more healthy food.	Vending machine offerings have been expanded to include more healthy foods such as fruit.
A University museum or gallery should be established.	Art work is now displayed in most University buildings. A gallery has been established in the Administration Building. Funds have been raised to begin construction of a sizable gallery in the Liberal Arts Center.
Events relating to the Core Curriculum should be advertised on the USI website.	Events relating to the Core Curriculum are routinely advertised on the main USI website and the Liberal Arts web site.
Funding should be increased to bring expert speakers to campus.	The Core Curriculum Speaker series was established in the fall of 2001. Each academic year, two outside speakers are brought to campus to address an issue related to the core curriculum.

Category C4: An Understanding of the  
Major Thought and Creative Work of Western Culture

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
The Humanities Director should discuss with the Humanities faculty a mechanism for formal performance review.	As part of their annual evaluation, Humanities faculty members submit information (sometimes including student evaluations, syllabi, and sample assignments) pertaining to their Humanities course(s) to the chair of their department. Currently, the director of the Humanities Program does not play a role in the evaluative process.
Annual workshops for Humanities faculty should be continued.	In the last two years, the Humanities Program has not held a workshop. Workshops are likely to resume once a permanent director for the Program is hired in the spring of 2005. However, the success of the Humanities workshops has resulted in the establishment of workshops (in fall 2002) for those faculty members teaching in other Core Categories: C1/C2, C3, and C5.
The Humanities faculty should be annually surveyed to determine technical support needs. Funding be sought for: (1) slide purchases, (2) web page support, (3) two classrooms dedicated to the Humanities Program with state-of-the-art technology permanently installed. Technology needs include the presence of a full size screen, a projector capable of playing videos, CDs, DVDs, a slide projector, high quality speakers, and an ELMO system.	While faculty in the Humanities Program have not been annual surveyed, funds have been made available through the Library Acquisition Fund to purchase slides, CDs, and other media relevant to Humanities courses. A half time computer specialist (with a specialty in web design) has been hired who has the expertise to assist faculty interested in creating web sites. One room in the Liberal Arts Center has been especially equipped with state-of-the-art technology relevant to the needs of the Humanities faculty.
The Humanities faculty should take stock of the ways in which gender and other issues of diversity and under-representation are handled in the Humanities sequence.	This issue was discussed by the Humanities faculty shortly after the Category Assessment Committee submitted its report. It was generally agreed that those faculty interested in increasing their emphasis on gender and diversity issues should feel free to do so. It was noted that some members of the Humanities faculty were already emphasizing gender/diversity issues.

<p>The Humanities faculty should open a dialog with the Office of International Programs and Services to determine how Humanities/Foreign Languages might work with this Office to help increase international awareness among students at USI.</p>	<p>In their classes, Humanities faculty members often announce various events on campus and in the region that relate to international issues. Some faculty members have invited representatives from the Office of International Programs and Services to visit their classes and inform students about opportunities to study in foreign countries.</p>
<p>Humanities course prerequisites should continue to be vigorously enforced.</p>	<p>Chairs were asked to remind their faculty that Humanities course prerequisites be vigorously enforced. There is no evidence that suggests that these prerequisites are not being vigorously enforced.</p>
<p>The Foreign Language Department should clarify its policy related to whether native speakers (and other students who enter USI with advanced language skills) are exempt from the Humanities requirement.</p>	<p>The policy has been clarified.</p>
<p>The Humanities requirement should remain in the Core Curriculum.</p>	<p>The Humanities requirement remains in the Core Curriculum.</p>

Category D: The Synthesis: Integration and Application of Knowledge

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
<p>The goals and objectives for Category D should be conveyed to all faculty teaching courses in this category.</p>	<p>All faculty teaching courses in this category are required to list the core goals relevant to Category D course on their syllabi. In addition, Category D courses are periodically reviewed on a seven year cycle by the Core Curriculum Council. As part of this review, faculty members teaching these courses are required to specify course objectives. In addition, language changes pertaining to the goal and guidelines for Category D were approved by the Core Council in spring 2005.</p>
<p>Funds should be made available to faculty teaching core curriculum courses for course enhancement via field experiences, guest lectures, technology, etc. Funds should be distributed through a grant application process.</p>	<p>The Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence now funds these activities. Faculty members may apply for these funds by submitting a grant application.</p>
<p>Class size in Category D courses should be closely monitored.</p>	<p>Class size is closely monitored and there is no evidence that class sizes in Category D course have increased over time.</p>
<p>Category D courses should be taught by full time faculty.</p>	<p>The overwhelming majority of Category D courses are taught by fulltime faculty. In the rare instances where a Category D course is not taught by fulltime faculty member, care is taken to insure that the part-time faculty person is well qualified.</p>

### C3: An Understanding of Science and Scientific Thinking

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
The Core Curriculum Guidebook's description of Category C3 should be revised so that it is made explicit that students should obtain a broad based understanding of scientific knowledge, and the methods of obtaining that knowledge.	In spring 2004, the description was changed.
Science faculty should meet to discuss how the core curriculum might be altered to insure that students are exposed to a broad based education in science. That is, an education that exposes students to concepts and theories in multiple disciplines (biology, chemistry, physics, geography).	A special meeting of the science faculty was held in February, 2004, but no consensus was reached about appropriate changes in the core curriculum. This issue was also discussed at length by the Core Council. The Council considered several options, but decided to take no action until such time that the School of Science was prepared to made specific recommendations. At this time, various options are still under consideration.
Students should be advised to complete the Category C3 requirement early in their academic career.	The Council discussed this issue at length. Council concluded that the problem was not primarily the result of a failure of advisors to encourage students to take science courses. It was noted that some students' failure to complete the C3 requirement in a timely manner stemmed from (1) many students' aversion to science and (2) the fact that some science courses are meet enrollment caps before first and second year students register.

Category C1 and C2

The World: Enhancement of Cultural and Natural Awareness and an Understanding of Individual Development and Social Behavior

Committee Recommendation	Implementation Status
Department chairs should be advised that they have a special responsibility to appraise all adjuncts of the need to meet relevant Core objectives.	The Director of the Core Curriculum regularly reminds chairs of the importance of core goals and objectives.
A workshop for faculty teaching courses in the core curriculum should be conducted at the beginning of each academic year. The workshop should address the implementation and measurement of Core goals.	While workshops relating specifically to core curriculum courses are not offered on an annual basis, The Center for Teaching and Learning excellence has offered workshops on how to evaluate whether students are mastering course goals
All departments should be encouraged to include core goal - and how relevant courses meet them - in syllabi.	Faculty members are required to include core curriculum goals on all syllabi.
Workshops should be offered for faculty who administer multiple choice exams. Workshops should provide instruction on how to construct multiple choice exams that measure students' ability to interpret claims, evaluate quantitative or graphic information, apply familiar concepts to novel situations, reason deductively, and make logical predictions.	The Center for Teaching and Learning excellence has offered workshops on how to construct multiple choice questions.
The UCC Council, the UCC Coordinator, or department chairs should periodically remind all instructors teaching core courses that there are specific core objectives that must be met.	The establishment of a process whereby core courses are periodically reviewed, as well as a new requirement that all syllabi include core goals, has drawn all chairpersons' attention to the importance of core goals.
Core courses should periodically be resubmitted to the Core Council for evaluation and re-approval.	Core courses are resubmitted to the Core Council for evaluation and re-approval on a seven year cycle. The first set of courses was evaluated during the 2003-04 academic year.