

Preliminary Guidance from the A&S Core Curriculum Advisory Committee:

In an attempt to be as transparent as possible throughout this process, we will be offering updated guidance for UPDs and Department Chairs as frequently as necessary. The following are a series of initial responses to questions that reflect the interpretive trajectories of the CCAC. Again, there are many moving pieces here—we appreciate your patience as we all tackle this ongoing process for the first time. If there are further questions, please do not hesitate to email me. Thank you very much.

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A. General Guidance

A.1. Reminders:

A.1.a. Section VIII on the Distribution List Course Application is the most important part of the application form in the eyes of the CCAC – this is where you will be expected to describe how the course meets the criteria specified in the respective DL description. If the committee has to search through the attached syllabus to determine whether or not the criteria are met, it will likely send the application form back to the department with a request for clarification.

A.1.b. After approval by the CCAC (and only after approval), all proposals will then move to the A&S Curriculum Committee (or appropriate curriculum committee if the course is not offered in A&S) and then the University Curriculum Committee. New courses will receive the closest scrutiny in these steps, but all proposals will be reviewed (which is to say that approval by the CCAC does not automatically mean a course is approved for inclusion in the Core).

A.2. Other issues to consider:

A.2.a. Courses that appear in the A&S Core may also be counted in Majors.

A.2.b. It may be that, on occasion, a course will meet the criteria of more than one DL. In those cases, separate proposals for each DL must be submitted to the CCAC (and these separate proposals will be combined when the course is submitted to the A&S Curriculum Committee). The University policy for general education requirements is that each course may only satisfy one Core requirement (that is, one DL) in a student's degree audit.

A.2.c. No lab fees can be required by any new courses approved by the CCAC (although lab fees for current courses may be retained). Further guidance on this matter will be forthcoming.

A.2.d. It is expected that courses included in the Core will be taught at least every 2 years.

A.2.e. As a means of enrollment management, a department may need to create sections of Core courses reserved for majors. It is absolutely essential, however, that sections for majors adhere to all approved requirements for that course in both their qualitative and quantitative aspects (that is, sections of Core courses for majors and sections for non-majors should not differ substantially).

A.2.f. The understanding of the Core Curriculum Advisory Committee is that the Core serves as a general foundation for any degree at Baylor University. Therefore, we want to encourage Core

courses, as much as possible, to be open and inviting to all students across the university. That said, there will be times when prerequisites for Core courses will be inevitable (e.g. language course sequencing). Further, we are also aware that prerequisites may be needed for other select courses (e.g. original language literature courses in the Literature and Cultures DL and discipline-specific courses in the Research Writing DL). But, if specific prerequisites are required for courses (beyond upper-level standing), we encourage prerequisites to be limited as much as possible to courses within the Core.

B. Guidance for Specific DLs

(remembering that all the rest of the criteria in each DL not discussed below still apply)

B.1. Civic Engagement Seminar DL:

This Common Core course has been given tentative approval pending further study related to implementation. Therefore, we will not be accepting proposals for the DL until completing this task.

B.2. Literature in Context DL:

There has been some discussion about what the phrase “imaginative literature” means. At present, we have adopted a broader definition which generally excludes non-fiction, utilitarian, dogmatic, or programmatic texts. The expected genres that clearly fall into our working definition are poetry, fiction, novels, short stories, drama, folk tales, myth, epics, etc. That said, a case could be made for memoirs, collections of letters, literary essays, and other texts traditionally referred to as non-fiction as long as the course demonstrates attention to the aesthetic components of these texts.

B.3. Optional New Prefixes for Scientific Method Grand Challenges DL and Contemporary Social Issues DL:

In order to encourage the faculty to think creatively about interdisciplinary opportunities in these two DLs, we are working on obtaining approval to use non-department-specific prefixes (one for the Scientific Method Grand Challenges DL and one for the Contemporary Social Issues DL). These new prefixes will not be required for all courses in these DLs, but we expect they will be available if multiple collaborating departments wish to share a course.

B.4. Research Writing DL:

B.4.a. We are assuming that these courses are writing intensive and by that we mean that courses integrate writing into course objectives, make written assignments a significant part of coursework and the final grade, and use class time to explain and discuss the process of writing (including specific relevant issues like plagiarism and academic integrity).

B.4.b. Although these courses can be offered at any level, we prefer that these courses be created at a level early enough to allow students to learn and develop writing as an art that can be practiced throughout their academic careers.

B.5. Scientific Method Laboratory Course DL:

The language of the Scientific Method I Laboratory Course DL is a little obscure, particularly as it specifies the criteria for the second science requirement. We are working to clarify this with the A&S Science chairs and we expect to bring a formal revision to the A&S Council of Chairs in March. In the meantime (noting again that this is still somewhat fluid), we plan to work with the following interpretive principles:

- (a) All courses in the Scientific Method Laboratory Course DL will have a laboratory component, since the basic identity of the DL is that of a “Laboratory Course”;
- (b) In the original spirit of the Scientific Method Grand Challenges in Science DL, we hope to expand the DL to something like “Big Questions and Grand Challenges” for the purpose of including 3-hour non-lab science courses offered by departments that tackle big questions in science but do not quite meet the criteria of addressing a grand challenge.
- (c) Students will have the option of taking EITHER 2 courses from the Scientific Method Laboratory Course DL OR 1 course from the Scientific Method Laboratory Course DL and 1 course from the Scientific Method “Big Questions and Grand Challenges” DL.