

University of North Texas Community Conversation about Core Component Area Option:

Summary Report

March 10, 2017

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Prompted by the THECB's decision to not accept Capstone courses in the Core Curriculum, the UNT community was confronted with the challenge to adjust its implementation of the Component Area Option (CAO) in the UNT Core. To that end, a series of meetings and electronic forums were made available to the UNT community. Data were gathered across five months (November 2016-March 2017) at Town Hall Meetings, Ad Hoc meetings, and from open comments submitted on the Office of the Core website. Seventy-six UNT community members including faculty, administrators, advisors, students, and directors attended the various meetings. The attendees represented university-wide programs such as CLEAR, Student Academic Success, Registrar, etc., administrators, and encompassed all colleges and schools.

Data were compiled into one document and examined for specific references to Core CAO. Data were coded into emergent categories. Further analysis revealed two categories: flexibility and specificity. Sixty-eight percent of the comments analyzed were related to flexibility and 32% to specificity. The category of flexibility netted three subcategories: allow more choices, make all Core courses FCA courses, and maintain the current policy of choosing three credits from the former Discovery list and three credits from the rest of the Core list. The category of specificity showed proposals for two courses of a general nature that would be required for all students.

Due to the overwhelming UNT community support for a flexible approach to the Core Component Area Option, a solution with flexible parameters seems most agreeable. The following are the flexible plans proposed by the UNT community who participated in this process.

1. Classify all Core courses at UNT by their Foundation Component Area (FCA). Students would be directed in the catalog to fulfill the expectation of the THECB to complete 36 credits within the mandated Foundation Component Areas and six credits from any other two courses. This provides departments, colleges, and students the freedom and flexibility to choose which six credits they would like to apply to the THECB mandated CAO. In essence, all Discovery courses and any newly approved CAO courses would be classified under the FCA to which they align.
2. Leave the current system in place. FCAs are defined by the eight THECB mandated categories. The CAO 1 is the THECB approved Discovery course list. CAO 2 is currently available for students to select three credits from CAO 1 or any FCA course.

Based on these findings from the UNT community, the following committees will review the two proposed options and report their recommendations to the Director of the Core Curriculum no later than April 10th: the Oversight Committee for the Core Curriculum, the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the Faculty Senate Executive Board, and the Faculty Senate. The rulings of the four faculty committees involved will be synthesized and shared with the Provost. The Provost, in consultation with the Directors of the Core and Institutional Effectiveness, will take into account the consensus of the four faculty groups and produce a recommendation for UNT's implementation of the CAO effective fall 2017. The Provost's recommendation will be submitted to the THECB on April 14th by the Directors of the Core and Institutional Effectiveness. All faculty committees will be informed of the recommendation sent to the THECB. Responses from the THECB will be shared with the UNT community and posted on the Office of the Core website when they become available.