

General Education Council  
Minutes  
2.26.01

**Committee members present:**

T. Hindson-Liberal Arts  
S. Day-Chair Rep  
T. Mottet-Fine Arts and Communication  
K. Moffeit-Business  
V. Sriraman-Science  
M. Lord-Education  
C. McCall-Education  
L. Thomas-Health Professions  
S. Gronberg-Science  
B. Brown-Liberal Arts  
J. Crawford-Chair Rep  
B. Melzer-Health Professions

**Committee members absent:**

B. Stone-Applied Arts  
D. Perkins-Applied Arts  
J. Ross-Business  
F. Blevens-Fine Arts and Communication  
A. Lopez-Student Rep  
M. Benavides-Student Rep

Meeting convened at 3:33 p.m.

R. Brown asked the Council to review the minutes from the February 12th meeting.

Corrections:

Paragraph 5, line 1 should be changed from Hindson to Hindson on the minutes.

Paragraph 8, line 1 should be changed from V. Sriraman asked the Geography Representatives how these theories are demonstrated to V. Sriraman asked the Geography Representative if the general mechanics of the Equilibrium Theory are different? They indicated they were the same.

**Motion:**

R. Brown asked for a motion to approved the minutes with the above mentioned corrections from February 12<sup>th</sup>. M. Lord so moves. J. Crawford seconds the motion. The February 12<sup>th</sup> minutes are approved pending the above mentioned corrections.

M. Lord told the Council they moved some of the old communication information away from the Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component, but the old literary information is still reflected in the literary component attached to this proposal.

**Motion:**

The Subcommittee recommends that the Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component should incorporate all the following assumptions, definitions, objectives, requirements and assessments:

***Texas Coordinating Board Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component***

**Assumptions**

1. Every institution of higher education will adopt a core curriculum...
2. ...a core curriculum should contain courses that establish multiple perspectives on the individual and the world in which he or she lives...

**Definition**

The objective of the humanities and visual and performing arts component of the core curriculum is to expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behaviors, ideas, and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature, philosophy, and the visual and

performing arts, students will engage in critical analysis, form aesthetic judgements, and develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society. As a strand running throughout the core curriculum, the essential skill of critical thinking which is embodied in this component, embraces methods for applying both qualitative and quantitative skills analytically and creatively to appropriate subject matter in order to evaluate arguments and construct alternative strategies.

#### Exemplary Educational Objectives

The way in which colleges and universities achieve these outcomes will thus vary in accordance with the particular circumstances of the institutions. The outcomes for student learning provide both guidelines for instruction and also a profile of the student . . . The student will be able to:

1. demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in arts and humanities;
2. understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context;
3. respond critically to works in the arts and humanities;
4. engage in the creative process or interpretive performance and comprehend the physical and intellectual demands required of the writer or visual or performing artist;
5. articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities;
6. develop an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the humanities and arts;
7. demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

#### **Southwest Texas State University Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component Definition**

The SWT Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component encompasses three of the previous SWT perspectives which existed prior to THECB's General Education Core. It includes the Fine Arts Perspective, the Philosophical Perspective, and the Literary Perspective.

1. Fine Arts
  - ◆ The Fine Arts requirement introduces students to the elements, principles, and history of art, music, theatre, and dance from pre-history to the present.
2. Philosophy/Critical Thinking
  - The Philosophy requirement introduces students to certain key matters which are foundational for all areas of human inquiry and experience including the nature of knowledge, belief, and value and the norms governing correct thought and action. Its content consists of specific views philosophers have developed about these fundamental issues, and its methodology includes the study and application of these norms. A component of the philosophy requirement, the essential skill of critical thinking is the ability to use the principles of good thinking in the development and evaluation of arguments or the reasons offered to support a claim. Its content consists of the nature of an argument, the types of reasoning, the features of clear, correct thinking and the fallacies of reasoning.
3. Literature
  - The Literary requirement introduces students to literature as an academic discipline-teaching basic methods of critical analysis, promoting understanding and appreciation of literature as an art form, and illustrating the role of literature in its historical, social and cultural contexts.

Some defining characteristics of the literature requirement are:

It emphasizes survey-rather than specialized-knowledge about literature.

This basic knowledge lays the groundwork for advanced study, giving students the facility to ask increasingly sophisticated questions of literary texts.

It equips students with basic tools of textual analysis, teaching them to read literature closely with attention to form, syntax, and language.

It heightens students' awareness of literature as art, its capacity to order experience in aesthetically pleasing and moving ways.

It places literary work in context--historical, social, cultural--exploring particular works as a record of human experience and as part of a definable tradition.

### Requirements

All students will complete the following credit hours within this component:

Fine Arts: Three semester hours

Philosophical: Three semester hours

Literary: Three semester hours

### Objectives

The SWT **Fine Arts requirement** sets forth the following objectives:

1. To foster student awareness by exposing students to a wide variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To enable students to present and explain the historical and social context in which a given work of art was created; articulate the meaning/meanings of a given work of art within a historical and social context; present and explain the given works of art in the context of an individual artist's career, aesthetic convictions and/or personal history.
3. To enable students to articulate the elements which make up works in the various artistic disciplines; comprehend historical and social influences upon critical procedures and values applied to the arts.
4. To enable students to apply the principles of critical and aesthetic judgement.
5. To enable students to comprehend the concept of aesthetic principles, articulate the elements which make up works in the various artistic disciplines, and define principles within the artistic discipline.
6. To enable students to comprehend the influence of philosophy and its impact on various arts across cultures and within cultures; to enable students to comprehend the relationships between literature and arts across cultures.

No longer considered a separate component with the core curriculum, SWT considers **Philosophy and Critical Thinking and Problem Solving** to be important for enabling students to :

1. Identify philosophical issues
2. Read philosophical texts
3. Understand the foundational nature of these thoughts
4. Understand contributions of major philosophers
5. Understand and evaluate the reasons philosophers have offered for their views
6. Understand and apply basic guidelines for good thinking and proper action
7. Identify, construct and evaluate arguments
8. Understand the nature of inductive and deductive reasoning and valid and sound arguments
9. Assess claims, hypotheses, theories, these, and beliefs with reference to the evidence and reasons which support them
10. Identify and avoid confused thinking in their study of such common fallacies and *ad hominem*, equivocation, hasty generalization, and false cause.

The SWT **Literary requirement** sets forth the following objectives:

Students will:

1. Read a literary text with a grasp of its content--for example, details of plot and character, major structural divisions, key images and ideas
2. Analyze a literary text in order to explicate its meaning and to identify significant formal and linguistic features
3. Explain ways in which a particular literary work reflects and shapes the historical, social and cultural circumstances in which it was produced
4. Identify representative authors and works in a particular literary tradition
5. Recognize significant themes and techniques shared by works in a particular literary tradition

#### Assessment

In evaluating students' success in meeting the objectives of the requirement for the Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component, faculty will rely on a variety of assessment tools:

1. Objective exams will test students' comprehension of arts terminology and trends
2. Critiques of gallery exhibitions, concerts, recitals, and dramatic productions will be used to measure students' abilities to articulate aesthetic aspects in specific contexts
3. Review of syllabi and other written course materials by the Fine Arts 2313 Coordinating Committee will assure consistency across the four departments and across sections within departments
4. Essay questions and exams that determine whether students have achieved a satisfactory grasp of content and achieved minimum competence in reading and analyzing literature
5. Papers, essays and other writing assignments that determine whether students have achieved minimum competence in reading and analyzing literature, and present a central idea that is adequately developed and competently organized
6. To help determine instructor, course and program effectiveness:
  - a. Faculty surveys, including peer review of syllabi and tests
  - b. Mid-course student assessments
  - c. End-of-course student evaluation

#### Courses meeting the Humanities & Visual and Performing Arts Component:

##### **Fine Arts Requirement:**

Art 2313	Introduction to Fine Arts
Dance 2313	Introduction to Fine Arts
Music 2313	Introduction to Fine Arts
Theatre 2313	Introduction to Fine Arts

##### **Philosophy/Critical Thinking requirement:**

Philosophy 1305	General Philosophy
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##### **Literary requirement:**

English 2310	British Literature before 1785
English 2320	British Literature after 1785
English 2330	World Literature before 1600
English 2340	World Literature after 1600
English 2359	American Literature before 1865
English 2360	American Literature after 1865

##### **Discussion:**

T. Hindson asked how the Education Department felt about Dance being connected with the Fine Arts?

M. Lord told the Council that the Dance Department works fine with the Fine Arts.

T. Hindson asked the Council what part of the Philosophy 1305 course was philosophical?  
The Philosophy 1305 course is 2/1 philosophical which is 1/3 typical of Philosophy courses around the state.

R. Brown told T. Hindson that the course requires critical thinking for SACS so it uses the old General Studies perspectives and requirements.

T. Hindson asked how many freshmen take the Philosophy 1305 as freshmen?

R. Brown told the Council that 30-50% of incoming freshmen take Philosophy 1305 their freshmen year.

Grade distributions for freshmen courses:

Philosophy-65-70% are A, B or C and 20-25% are D, F or W

History-28-29% are D, F or W

Math-33% are D, F or W

The Council would like to see the numbers for enrollment and the grade distribution for all the General Education courses.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Sriraman told the Council that he was concerned about the lack of a formal definition for the Mathematics Component, but R. Northcutt gave significant changes to the definition.

#### **Motion:**

The Subcommittee recommends that the Mathematics Component should incorporate all the following assumptions, definitions, objectives, requirements and assessments:

#### ***Texas Coordinating Board Mathematics Component***

##### Assumptions

1. Every institution of higher education will adopt a core curriculum...
2. ...a core curriculum should contain courses that establish multiple perspectives on the individual and the world in which he or she lives...

##### Definition

The objective of the mathematics component of the core curriculum is to develop a quantitatively literate college graduate. Every college graduate should be able to apply basic mathematical tools in the solution of real-world problems.

##### Exemplary Educational Objectives

The way in which colleges and universities achieve these outcomes will thus vary in accordance with the particular circumstances of the institutions. The outcomes for student learning provide both guidelines for instruction and also a profile of the student . . . The student will be able to:

1. to apply arithmetic, algebraic, geometric, higher order thinking, and statistical methods to modeling and solving real-world situations;
2. to represent and evaluate basic mathematical information verbally, numerically, graphically, and symbolically;
3. to expand mathematical reasoning skills and formal logic to develop convincing mathematical arguments;
4. to use appropriate technology to enhance mathematical thinking and understanding and to solve mathematical problems and judge the reasonableness of the results;
5. to interpret mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables and schematics, and draw inferences from them;
6. to recognize the limitations of mathematical and statistical models;
7. to develop the view that mathematics is an evolving discipline, interrelated with human culture, and understand its connections to other disciplines.

## **Southwest Texas State University Mathematics Component**

### Definition

Mathematics serves as the means for calculation, and the description and prediction of phenomena in the world. Mathematics solves problems, both practical and abstract, in a process that begins with the recognition and creation of patterns, acts through logic and axiomatic development, and culminates in the invention of algorithms.

### Requirements

All students will complete one Mathematics Component course from the approved list of courses. The courses that satisfy the Mathematics Component present the basic information for the discipline. The following set of goals should be addressed by courses satisfying the Mathematics Component:

1. Calculation and Manipulation
2. Mathematical Patterns in Geometric and Numerical Systems
3. Algorithms and their Application
4. Modeling Phenomena from the World
5. Axiomatic and Theoretical Mathematical systems

### Objectives

After completing the course, the student should be able to demonstrate facility with the concepts of the course through the solution of problems. The skills to be demonstrated include:

- mastery of calculation skills taught;
- recognition of problem types;
- carrying out correctly the appropriate algorithms for solution;
- construction of models by reformulating verbal problems mathematically; and
- application of the basic axioms to solve problems which are not merely repetitions of situations fully explored in class.

*Complete* understanding could be demonstrated by solving problems from the natural or social world: modeling an observed phenomenon, recognizing a pattern which suggests a method of solution, and using calculation and manipulation techniques taught in the course to carry out a procedure known to solve the problem. More sophisticated problems would require some theoretical development, perhaps modifying an algorithm taught in the course, or even creating a new algorithm.

### Assessment

In evaluating students' success in meeting the objectives of the requirement for Essential Skills Computation in Mathematics, and in assessing the overall effectiveness of courses that satisfy the requirement, faculty use some or all of the following measures:

1. Objective quizzes and tests that determine whether students have mastered the skills in the course. Many questions test skills pertaining to one of the categories listed above. There are also problems which require correct use of skills in two or more of the categories. Determination of the proper suite of skills to be applied is a significant component of many of these problems.
2. a) Faculty surveys, including peer review of syllabi and tests; and  
b) End-of-course student evaluation

These measures help determine instructor, course, and program effectiveness.

### Courses

Courses satisfying the Mathematics Component are:

	<b>Course</b>	<b>Prerequisite</b>
Math 1315 score	College Algebra	Math 1311 or appropriate test
Math 1316 score	Survey of Contemporary Mathematics	Math 1311 or appropriate test
Math 1317 score	Plane Trigonometry	Math 1315 College Algebra
Math 1319 score	Mathematics for Business & Economics I	Math 1311 or appropriate test
Math 2321 score	Mathematics for Life Sciences I	Math 1315 or appropriate test
Math 2417	Pre-Calculus Mathematics	Math 1315 College Algebra
Math 2471 Mathematics	Calculus I	Math 2417 Pre-Calculus

The various courses provide different sets of knowledge for students who have different educational goals. Modeling examples which might engage science or pre-engineering students may not interest business students, and vice versa. On the other hand, business and economics students will need different mathematical preparation for later courses in quantitative analysis than physics students will need for later courses in differential equations and multi-variable calculus.

**Discussion:**

T. Hindson asked the Council what was taught in the Math 1316 course.  
 S. Gronberg told the Council that probability, statistics, graphs and finance are just a few of the areas covered in the course. The course is geared towards non-math majors or liberal arts majors. Math 1316 does not have a prerequisite.

The motion passed unanimously.

B. Melzer told the Council that the Communication component was a combination of speaking and listening and reading and writing.

**Motion:**

The Subcommittee recommends that the Communication Component should incorporate all the following assumptions, definitions, objectives, requirements and assessments:

***Texas Coordinating Board Communication Component***

Assumptions

1. Every institution of higher education will adopt a core curriculum. . .
2. . . . a core curriculum should contain courses that establish multiple perspectives on the individual and the world in which he or she lives. . .

Definition

The objective of the study of a communication component of a core curriculum is to enable the student to communicate effectively in clear and correct prose in a style appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

Exemplary Educational Objectives

The way in which colleges and universities achieve these outcomes will thus vary in accordance with the particular circumstances of the institutions. The outcomes for student learning provide both guidelines for instruction and also a profile of the student. . . . The student will be able to:

1. understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing and presentation;

2. understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communication choices;
3. understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e. descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication;
4. participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding;
5. understand and apply basic principles of critical thinking, problem solving, and technical proficiency in the development of exposition and argument;
6. develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or to give an oral presentation.

### **Southwest Texas State University Communication Component**

#### Definitions

The SWT communication component has two requirements within the component: a speaking and listening skills perspective, as well as a reading and writing requirement:

- **Speaking and Listening Skills**

The speaking and listening skills requirement develops students' verbal/oral and nonverbal communication skills in three specific communication contexts: interpersonal communication; small group communication; and public speaking. Further, the requirement introduces students to fundamental theories that explain human verbal/oral and nonverbal communication in its various forms or contexts. The over-arching objective of the requirement is to help students achieve competence in verbal/oral and nonverbal communication skills

- **Reading and Writing requirement**

The reading and writing requirement introduces students to the principles of expository writing – the kind of objective, audience-directed prose they will use in college and beyond to explain and defend their ideas. Although self-expressive and narrative writing are not, in themselves, the focus of the requirement, students gain experience in utilizing these modes as means of developing and supporting ideas. Since effective writing goes hand in hand with intelligent reading, the reading and writing requirement also develops students' abilities to read, understand and analyze a variety of texts, including students' own writing.

The reading and writing requirement has long been considered a cornerstone experience of the undergraduate curriculum because of its decidedly practical value in the classroom and on the job. However, the first-year English sequence at SWT also looks beyond the practice. It aims to discipline through and expression, giving students the opportunity to study the art of written communication for its intrinsic worth.

#### Defining Characteristics

The Communication component includes the following required areas:

- The **Speaking and Listening Skills** develop competent communicators who:
  - are aware of their own communicative verbal/oral and nonverbal behaviors while engaged in those behaviors and use *the knowledge gained from* that awareness to improve their communicative skills.
  - understand fundamental theories that explain human communication and enhance communication effectiveness.
  - appropriately adjust both the form and the content of verbal/oral and nonverbal messages to situation, audience and purpose; use appropriate verbal/oral and nonverbal symbols to express ideas and feelings.
  - accurately listen to, interpret and evaluate the messages of others; listen critically in order to analyze and make accurate judgments about the messages they receive.
  - recognize and appreciate diversity; respond and appropriately adapt to differences in messages from different cultures and genders to enhance understanding.
  - value and seek constructive feedback to improve their communication skills; know that communication reticence can be overcome by working to improve their sense of self and developing skill in presenting messages to others.

- recognize and engage in ethical communication; recognize all participants in a communicative act make choices and must accept responsibility for those choices; willing to reflect on and address those choices and responsibilities.
- The **Reading and Writing** requirement will:
  - introduce students to the writing process so they understand the multi-stage, recursive nature of that process.
  - equip students with skills and strategies applicable to each stage of the writing process.
  - explore writing as both a communication tool and a learning process for understanding and responding to challenging texts and ideas and for exploring their own thoughts and experiences
  - challenge students to produce clear, correct, and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience and to learn coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience
  - offer opportunities for writing; producing essays with related drafts and revisions
  - challenge students with a variety of thought-provoking expository and literary texts and offers strategies for reading and understanding those texts.
  - provide a forum for discussing and analyzing assigned texts; reading selections serve as sources of ideas for essay topics and as texts of rhetorical and stylistic analysis.
  - equip students to integrate the work of others into their own writing including appropriate ways to cite and document that work.

### Objectives

After completing the requirements for the communication component, students should be able to:

- **Speaking and Listening Skills**
  - posses enhanced speaking and listening skills as demonstrated in interpersonal interactions, group discussions and public presentations
  - engage in productive, self-reflexive analysis of their own communicative behaviors
  - apply fundamental theories of human communication to real-life interpersonal, small group and public speaking situations.
  - appropriately adapt both message form and message content to situations, audience and purpose including appropriately organizing messages, using appropriate language and effectively delivering oral messages
  - make reasoned, critical judgments of messages they receive
  - seek and appropriately respond to constructive feedback to enhance communication skills and develop confidence
  - recognize and avoid unethical communicative behaviors
- **Reading and Writing requirement**
  - formulate a central idea (thesis)
  - develop a thesis in an orderly way
  - form clear and effective sentences
  - adapt vocabulary to purpose and reader
  - apply the grammatical and mechanical conventions of written English
  - demonstrate the ability to read critically and to analyze various types of texts
  - draw on written sources to support ideas
  - use standard procedures of citation and documentation

### Assessment

In evaluating students' success in meeting the objectives of the communication component, and in assessing the overall effectiveness of courses that satisfy the requirement of the component, faculty use some or all of the following measures:

1. Objective quizzes and tests, including final exams, that determine whether students have achieved a mastery of course content through ability to comprehend, analyze, apply, synthesize and evaluate oral communication messages; including pre-test and post-test which measures student knowledge of speech communication principles

2. Essay questions and exams that determine whether students have achieved a satisfactory grasp of content and achieved minimum competence in reading and analyzing literature
3. Papers, essays and other writing assignments that determine whether students have achieved minimum competence in reading and analyzing literature, and present a central idea that adequately developed and competently organized
4. Written outlines of informative and persuasive oral presentations which document students' skill in presenting ideas with appropriate support, organizing messages, informing listeners, and appropriately using evidence and reasoning to ethically persuade listeners
5. Participation in whole- class and small-group discussions to demonstrate student mastery of interpersonal and group communication principles and skills
6. To help determine instructor, course and program effectiveness :
  - a. Faculty surveys, including peer review of syllabi and tests;
  - b. Mid-course student assessments
  - c. End-of-course student evaluation.

Courses meeting the Communication Component:

• ***Reading and Writing***

<u>Course number:</u>	<u>Course Title:</u>	<u>Prerequisites:</u>
ENG 1310	College Writing I	
ENG 1320	College Writing II	ENG 1310

• ***Speaking and Listening Skills***

<u>Course number:</u>	<u>Course Title:</u>	<u>Prerequisites:</u>
COMM 1310	Fundamentals of Speech Communication	

The motion passed unanimously.

**Motion:**

B. Melzer asked that the subcommittee be disbanded with thanks.

K. Moffeit so moved. M. Lord seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Council would like to thank all those who worked on the subcommittee.

R. Brown told the Council there are lots of General Education Course Syllabi in his office in ASBN-100. These are the syllabi that should reflect the new criteria approved by the Council. He suggest that teams of two or three people would work together to review a set of courses. B. Melzer told the Council they had used teams of three people in the past to review the courses, but she thought the job could be done with two.

R. Brown asked the Council to defer the University Seminar, Institutional Option, to a later date because the new Assistant Dean will be making changes for more coherence and goals for the course than in the past.

The syllabi will be reviewed on odd numbers of alternate years, but will be collected yearly. R. Brown told the Council that it was a working council on campus and he wanted to thank them for all their hard work.

T. Mottet will do the training for the pilot senior interviews. He needs three or four teams of two. We also need more females on the review team to make each team male/female.

R. Brown sent out another set of portfolio review materials for those students we are tracking. In Fall 2001 we will have an additional sample of students to review. It was suggested to the Council that they review taped communications of these students. We will pay the students we interview for the senior interviews \$50 each. C. McCall agreed to be part of the interview team. We will do the interview after Spring Break.

K. Moffeit will be leaving in the Fall, but she has been on the Council since Spring of 1996. We would all like to thank her for her work on the Council.

We would like to consider an off campus retreat for next year. One consideration is the Ashville Institute in June to stay in tune with the national agenda on general education.

R. Brown mentioned developing a more effective and distinctive General Education for our institution.

Next year AAC&U will be in Washington and it would be a great opportunity for two or three Council members to attend.

**Motion:**

R. Brown entertained a motion to adjourn. C. McCall so moved. M. Lord seconds the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 4:10.