



# TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

P.O. Box 12788 Austin, Texas 78711

## MEMORANDUM

December 13, 2002

Pamela P. Willeford  
CHAIR  
Martin Basaldua, M.D.  
VICE CHAIR  
Raul B. Fernandez  
SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

TO: Chancellors and Presidents of  
Public Community Colleges, State Colleges, and Universities

Neal W. Adams  
Ricardo G. Cigarroa, M.D.  
Marc Cisneros  
Kevin P. Eltife  
Jerry Farrington  
Cathy Obriotti Green  
Gerry Griffin  
Carey Hobbs  
Adair Margo  
Lorraine Perryman  
Curtis Ransom  
Hector de J. Ruiz, Ph.D.  
Robert W. Shepard  
Windy Sitton  
Terdema L. Ussery II

FROM: Glenda O. Barron  
Marshall Hill

SUBJECT: Instructions for Submission of Institutional Core Curriculum  
Evaluation Reports

Coordinating Board rules, Chapter 5, Subchapter A, rule 5.8, require that each public institution of higher education evaluate its core curriculum at five-year intervals. Because Senate Bill 148 of the 77th Legislature required each institution to adopt a new core curriculum by fall 1999, institutional summary reports of the first evaluation of the new core curriculum will be due in fall 2004. This first evaluation of the new statewide core curriculum will focus on *compliance* with the basic elements of the core curriculum as specified in Coordinating Board rules and the guidelines entitled *Core Curriculum: Assumptions and Defining Characteristics*. Although these instructions outline the mandatory components of each evaluation, they should not be construed as limiting an institution's creativity to go beyond the required evaluation elements.

Don W. Brown  
COMMISSIONER  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

512/427-6101  
Fax 512/427-6127

Web site:  
<http://www.theccb.state.tx.us>

### Resources for Evaluating Core Curricula

The following resources are essential to your institution's evaluation:

- Text of the transfer of credit law (TEC 61.821-62.831), attached.
- Coordinating Board rules related to transfer of credit (Chapter 5, Subchapter S), attached.
- *Core Curriculum: Assumptions and Defining Characteristics*, as adopted by the Coordinating Board, attached.
- A copy of the original letter indicating approval of your institution's core curriculum and letters approving subsequent changes to the core curriculum, if applicable.
- Online access to the *Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual* (web site) and/or the *Texas Common Course Numbering System* matrix (web site).
- Documentation used at your institution to develop the core curriculum in its current form.

### Focus of the 2004 Evaluation

The transfer of credit law suggests two important issues to address in the evaluation of an institution's core curriculum: compliance and effectiveness. For this first statewide evaluation of newly adopted core curricula, the emphasis of our

review process will be on compliance issues—in other words, an analysis of how well the core curriculum offered at your institution reflects the required elements for core curricula as described in Coordinating Board rules and the document entitled *Core Curriculum: Assumptions and Defining Characteristics*. We commend those institutions that have already begun assessing the outcomes/effectiveness aspect of their core curricula—an analysis of the degree to which students are actually mastering the intellectual competencies, perspectives, and exemplary educational objectives—but we also recognize that not all institutions will have reached that stage. The assessment of core curriculum effectiveness and outcomes will be a very important component of the second evaluation that will be due in 2009.

### **Issues to Address in the Evaluation**

Coordinating Board rules specify that each institution's evaluation must, at a minimum, address four issues:

1. the extent to which the curriculum is consistent with the elements of the core curriculum recommended by the Board;
2. the extent to which the curriculum is consistent with the *Texas Common Course Numbering System*;
3. the extent to which the curriculum is consistent with the elements of the core curriculum component areas, intellectual competencies, and perspectives as expressed in *Core Curriculum: Assumptions and Defining Characteristics* adopted by the Board; and
4. the extent to which the institution's educational goals and the exemplary educational objectives of the core curriculum recommended by the Board are being achieved (to be fully addressed in the 2009 evaluation).

Each of these issues should be addressed in the summary evaluation report. In cases where the evaluation may have found the institution's current core curriculum to be inconsistent with the requirements, the report should specify what actions are being taken to correct the deficiencies and a timeline for those actions to take effect.

### **Required Elements for the Report to the Coordinating Board**

Each evaluation must contain the following elements:

- 1. A table that compares the institution's core curriculum with the core component areas and exemplary educational objectives of the core curriculum recommended by the Board. The table should also indicate which courses are included in the *Texas Common Course Numbering System* matrix.**

Most tables will be in the form of a matrix that aligns specific courses in the core curriculum with the exemplary educational objectives for the applicable component area. Simply making checkmarks to indicate that a course meets the objectives is not sufficient; the evaluation should specify the means employed to verify that specific courses meet the objectives and the types of evidence that were used for verification.

**2. A brief description of the purpose and substance of the institution's core curriculum.**

The description may echo language in the rules and the *Assumptions and Defining Characteristics*; in addition, it may specify institutional goals and objectives beyond the elements in the statewide core curriculum.

**3. An analysis of how the institution's core curriculum is addressing the required perspectives and intellectual competencies.**

The institution should verify that each intellectual competency and perspective is reinforced throughout the core curriculum.

**4. A description of the processes and procedures used to evaluate the institution's core curriculum.**

The description should specify who at the institution took part in the evaluation, the time frame for the evaluation, the actual steps in the process, and any plans for how the process might be modified in the future. It should also identify how the institution plans to implement an ongoing evaluation process for the future.

**5. A description of the ways in which the evaluation results are utilized to improve the core curriculum at the institution.**

This should include a description of changes that have already been made in response to the evaluation results and those that may be planned for the future.

**6. Either a description of the institution's plan for evaluating student outcomes of the core curriculum between 2004-2009 or a description of the results of an evaluation of outcomes that has already been completed.**

If evaluation of student outcomes has not yet begun, there should be a detailed plan for addressing this element in the next five years.

**7. (Optional) Additional comments, observations, or suggestions about how well the stated goals of the statewide core curriculum are being achieved and what might be done differently to help in that effort.**

If your institution has identified problems either with the core curriculum guidelines or their implementation, please give specific examples and suggestions for what could be done to correct the problems.

Chancellors and Presidents of  
Public Community Colleges, State Colleges, and Universities  
December 13, 2002  
Page Four

### **Report Length**

The report should be a *summary* of the evaluation conducted at the institution. Documentation of specific details of meetings and processes should be maintained at the institution, but not necessarily submitted with the report. The suggested length is no more than 25-30 pages double-spaced, plus attachments. In the coming months, Coordinating Board staff will be developing an electronic template to allow institutions to submit their reports online.

### **Due Date**

The due date for each institution's core curriculum evaluation report is no later than **October 1, 2004**.

### **Review Process**

Coordinating Board staff will attempt to complete their reviews of the evaluation reports prior to January 1, 2005.

### **Questions and Assistance**

For questions or assistance with the evaluation, the following staff members are available to help:

**Community and State Colleges:** Dr. Julie Leidig, 512-427-6443 or  
[Julie.Leidig@theqb.state.tx.us](mailto:Julie.Leidig@theqb.state.tx.us).

**Universities:** Dr. Catherine Parsonneault, 512-427-6214 or  
[Catherine.Parsonneault@theqb.state.tx.us](mailto:Catherine.Parsonneault@theqb.state.tx.us).

Attachments