Assessing the Texas Core Curriculum

Characterization and Comparison
Across Texas Public Colleges and Universities

Presented by
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Data prepared with assistance from Ms. Indalita Holt

38th Annual TAIR Conference
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Total Texas Core

- 28 - 488
- Median: 79
- Average: 89.5

- 5 institutions have more than 145 core courses
  - 3 have between 187-210
  - 1 is at 268
  - 1 is at 488

- Thirty-four (34) courses are core in more than half of institutions.
# 16 Core Courses*
Shared by 75% or More of All Texas Public Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Course</th>
<th>Percent of Institutions</th>
<th>Core Course</th>
<th>Percent of Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 1301 Comp I</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>ECON 2301 Princ of Macroecon</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 1302 Composition II</td>
<td>100% *</td>
<td>MUSI 1306 Music Appreciation</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST 1301 US History I</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>MATH 1314 College Algebra</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST 1302 US History II</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>ARTS 1301 Art Appreciation</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 2305 Fed Government</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>DRAM 1310 Intro to Theater</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 2306 Texas Government</td>
<td>92%**</td>
<td>ECON 2302 Princ of Microecon</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 2301 General Psychology</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>MATH 1324 Math for Bus/Soc Sci</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCI 1301 Intro Sociology</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>MATH 2413 Calculus I</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18 Courses*
Shared by 50-74% of All Texas Public Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Course</th>
<th>Percent of Institutions</th>
<th>Core Course</th>
<th>Percent of Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH 1332 Contemp’y Math I</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>ENGL 2327 Amer Lit I</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 1301 Intro to Phil</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>ENGL 2328 Amer Lit II</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTS 1303 Art History I</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>BIOL 1406 Biology for Sci Majors I</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 2332 World Lit I</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>BIOL 1407 Biology for Sci Majors II</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 1342 Elem Stat Meth</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>CHEM 1411 General Chemistry I</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 2323 Brit Lit II</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>CHEM 1412 General Chemistry II</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 2333 World Lit II</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>PHYS 1401 College Physics I</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTS 1304 Art History II</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>BIOL 2401 Anatomy &amp; Physiology</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 1306 Intro to Ethics</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THECB ASSESSMENT PLAN REQUEST

- Assessment Methods
- Measures
- Frequency & Timeline
- Criteria/Targets
- Analysis
- Actions and Follow Up
Many colleges provided detail about their assessment models beyond the minimum required. But omission of a specific description from a college report does not necessarily mean that the institution is not doing something like establishing inter-rater reliability or using a multi-tiered decision making model for action planning. It simply means it was not described in the assessment plan which was submitted.
Methodology

Reviewed 73 core assessment plans submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

- THECB is working to provide 18 missing or corrupted files excluded from this review
Methodology

The plans were reviewed for the following general categories:

- Types of Measures
- Samples
- Timelines
- Targets
- Rubric Usage
- Assignment Generation
- Analysis Model
- Action Planning Model
- Documentation Software
Direct External Measures

33 of the 73 institutions use some direct external measure
## Direct External Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Name</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Institutions Using Test</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ETSPP</td>
<td>Educational Testing Service Proficiency Profile</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>College Learning Assessment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAAP</td>
<td>Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Critical Thinking Assessment Test</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPI</td>
<td>Global Perspective Inventory</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Disciplinary Exams</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Exams**</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Cornell Critical Thinking Test; Health Education System Exam
Direct External Measures

- 7 schools provided some description of their sampling plan:
Direct External Measures

12 schools provided a target:

- **80% At or Above Average**

- **First Test 60% Above National Average; Second Test 90% Above Initial Score**
Direct External Measures

- 14 schools provided a timeline

- 3-YEAR ROTATION
- BI-ANNUALLY
- ANNUALLY
Indirect External Measures

45 of the 73 institutions reported use of some indirect external measure
## Indirect External Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Name</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Institutions Using Test</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE</td>
<td>Community College Survey of Student Engagement</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSSE</td>
<td>National Survey of Student Engagement</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENSE</td>
<td>Survey of Entering Student Engagement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Locally Developed Surveys</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Course Evaluations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Surveys**</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employer satisfaction surveys; IDEA; CSFI; Graduate exit survey; THECB Accountability Measures Data**
Indirect External Measures

7 Institutions provided some description of their sampling plan:

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS & SENIORS

FTFT SOPHOMORES

AS PART OF A FRESHMAN COURSE AND AN UPPER LEVEL COURSE
Indirect External Measures

- 12 Institutions provided a target

- At least 50th percentile of national average
- Initial 50% above national average; second 90% above national average
- 80% good to excellent
Indirect External Measures

- 14 Institutions provided a timeline

- 3-YEAR ROTATION
- EVERY SPRING
- SPRING OF ODD NUMBERED YEARS
100% of the 73 institutions reported plans to use some direct internal measure.
## Direct Internal Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embedded Exam rated by instructor</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded Exam rated by instructor using rubric</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline or department coordination or collection of instructor ratings</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments blind-reviewed by department or discipline committees using a rubric</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedded assignments that are blind reviewed by institution wide committees using a rubric</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other - i.e. A mid-level general education assessment each fall semester of all students who complete at least 45 hours</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Direct Internal Measures

- Samples, Timelines, Targets will be discussed with embedded assignments.
Portfolios
10 of the 73 institutions reported plans to use portfolios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessing Portfolios</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor rated portfolio</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind reviews of portfolios by department or disciplinary committees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind reviews by institution wide committees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 1 institution said they intended to assess Teamwork with portfolios.
- 1 institution stated that they would select 10 students each Spring who had applied for graduation (having at least 51 hours) and assess their portfolios.
- 1 institution uses target of 70% achieving mastery for their portfolio assessment.
Teamwork
15 of the 73 institutions reported plans specific for Teamwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plans</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plans specific to Teamwork</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor-rated group assignments</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-rated group assignments</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor and peer scored/rated group assignments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution-wide committees scored/rated group assignments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevailing Model:**
Assignments emphasize evidence of individual’s contribution and interaction within a team, rather than the end result.
Rubrics are used by students for peer review at conclusion of assignment.
Teamwork - Unique Approaches

- Assignments embed request for student to self-report on team functioning or write a self-reflection paper addressing the key elements of Teamwork.

- Senior level courses include a group project with a peer review adapted from Lencioni & VALUES rubrics.

- Some are tiered with the students’ peer reviews and an instructor’s rating of each student.

- 1 institution also used employer surveys.

- 1 institution assessed team content mastery, using the average of quiz scores done by group work.
Oral Communication
12 of the 73 institutions reported plans to rate Oral Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>2-Year</th>
<th>4-Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessing Oral Communication in student presentations or speeches or projects</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rated by an instructor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rated by an instructor and peer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rated by an institutional committee</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Visual Communication**

- 1 4-year institution reported that visual communication would be assessed along with oral communication
  
  This area may need some attention!

**Social Responsibility**

- 1 4-year institution uses reviews of Community and Civic Engagement collected by their Center for Civic Engagement
Who Uses Rubrics?

Prevailing model:

67% (49 of 73) use some type

23 4-year institutions vs. 26 2-year institutions

Most rubrics have a 4-pt scale

Unique approaches:

- Course matrix with the level as introducing, developing, and mastering
- Unique rubrics include a nationally recognized speech rubric & an internally developed writing rubric
## What Type of Rubrics?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>4-year institutions</th>
<th>2-year institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modified AAC&amp;U VALUE-based rubrics</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAC&amp;U VALUE rubrics, as is</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-AAC&amp;U rubrics</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What Kinds of Assignment?
Types: Highly diverse
Who Rates Assignments?

Institutions report using a mix of approaches.

Blind reviewed with rubrics - 43 institutions

- 34 By Institution-wide committee with rubric (21 4-year & 13 2-year institutions)
- 9 By department or discipline committee (5 4-year & 4 2-year institutions)

Scored or rated by instructor - 63 institutions

- 30 Without rubrics (16 4-year & 14 2-year institutions)
- 33 With rubrics (23 4-year & 10 2-year institutions)
Interrater Reliability

Establishing *interrater reliability* or calibrating the rating process was mentioned by 10%.

Best practice
Targets for Embedded Assignments

38 schools provided targets:

- **20% Varying**, benchmarked against prior performance or set by discipline or dept. faculty
- **50% Fixed target** for all core objectives
  - Range is 60% - 80% of students achieving 75% of target.
  - 70% is the most common practice.
- **For rating averages**, basic competence or above (i.e. 3 on a 4 point rating scale) or exceeding the national norms or peer group means
- **Unique approaches** -
  - Assoc Provost of Undergraduate Studies set the criteria at one college
  - Ratings for students with 30+ SCH were bench marked against ratings for students with 15 or lower SCH
Timelines for Embedded Assignment

- Every time course is taught - 4%
- Long semesters - 27%
- Annually - 27%
- Rotating Cycles - 43%
  - 2 Year cycle - 27%
  - 3 Year cycle - 12%
  - 4 Year cycle - 4%
Samples for Embedded Assignments

23 institutions addressed sampling plans.

Prevailing model -

Students with a specific characteristic from all core courses/sections chosen by rotating schedules

Unique:

- Set of 8 core courses with sections randomly targeted to ensure modality, time of day, campus, & faculty status represented with a minimum sample of 1000 students
- Matrix of courses sampled: introducing, developing, and mastering
- No sample—every student assessed in every core course, every time offered
Sample Types for Embedded Assignments

- 2% of entering population forms cohort tracked for 3 years
- Students with min. GPA of 2.0 with 15 SCH or fewer, 16-30 SCH, 31+ SCH;
- Students with 30+ or 40+ SCH of core
- Students with 45+ SCH, not limited to core hours
- Core Complete or Seniors
Who Analyzes Assessment Results?

- 11 - Other

- 38 - Institution Wide Committee
  - 13 - 4 year
  - 26 - 2 year

- 10 - Department Wide Committee
  - 3 - 4 year
  - 7 - 2 year

- 10 - Discipline Wide Committee
  - 3 - 4 year
  - 6 - 2 year

- 16 Multi-Level
  - 7 - 4 year
  - 9 - 2 year
Analysis Detail

 columna 2  4-year institutions compare results by modalities: online and face-to-face or other modalities

 columna 4  4-year institutions compare pre and post tests
Who Is Assigned Action Planning?

34 - INSTITUTION WIDE COMMITTEE
14 - 4 year
20 - 2 year

22 - DEPARTMENT WIDE COMMITTEE
8 - 4 year
14 - 2 year

18 - DISCIPLINE WIDE COMMITTEE
10 - 4 year
8 - 2 year

20 INSTRUCTOR DRIVEN
5 - 4 year
15 - 2 year

9 - Other
i.e. “College”, Provost, designated V-P
How is Action Planning Focused?

Centralized institutional control:
- Rotating focus on a single core objective
- Standing committee chooses weakest area for institutional focus
- Plans are developed for all areas not meeting criteria
- Performance deficits aligned with NSSE factors to select focus

Non-centralized control:
- Each college/division develops an action plan; no central focus based on results/findings
- Deans & department chairs receive diagnostic report of rubric elements; they each develop an action plan
12 Colleges named software used for Core assessment

- WEAVE Online (2)
- Blackboard (2)
- Pearson’s Learning Studio - Learning Outcomes Manager
- TracDat (2)
- SPOL (Strategic Planning On Line) (2)
- STC PRIDE (Learning Outcomes Assessment Database System)
- Internally developed systems
  - Institutional templates (i.e. Annual Outcome Assessment Survey form)
  - UHCL Assessment Information Management System (AIMS)
  - Saved to an open source location, i.e. google.doc, shared institutional drive)
Questions or Comments?

A detailed database is available, which includes data distilled from all plans submitted, covering quantitative and qualitative information for the variables identified in this presentation.
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