

Core Curriculum Oversight Committee

Date: September 16, 2014

Time: 12:30-2 pm

Meeting location: Chancellor's Conference Room

Attendance: Manuel Espinoza, Gwen Persons, Martina Juarez Lopez, Hans Morgenthaler, Cecilio Alvarez, Ruben Anguiano, Phillip Gallegos, Yong Liu, Sam Welch, Kent Homchick, Mary Lee Stansifer, George Kacenga, Carol Golemboski, Jana Everett, Jeff Franklin, Neda Barrett

Guest: Kenneth Wolf

Agenda

1. Introductions. Manuel Espinoza is the new CCOC chair. Welcome to a new semester!
2. Last semester the Committee asked for revisions to be made to SOCY 3720. The revisions were made and the Committee approved the course.
3. Form which will be used to review Core-area syllabi in fall 2014 was shared with the Committee. Suggestions: Share the form with schools and colleges so they know in advance what is expected from them. Clean up the area about attendance a bit. Under Writing requirements, add indication how writing is incorporated in the course, math and science exempt. Add year and semester on the form.
4. Proposed CCOC policy revisions:

QI: Should the CU Denver Core be "open" to allow all CCOC-approved courses to satisfy Core requirements, or should the Core remain "restricted" to allow academic units the option of limiting CCOC-approved courses to satisfy Core requirements for that particular college or major?

Current CCOC Policy: Colleges or schools may restrict student choices of Knowledge Area Core courses consistent with content requirements of the program and may require specific Knowledge Area Core courses as part of major requirements.

Issues: When the campus-wide Core was adopted in 1990, there were only three undergraduate colleges/schools, and only Business restricted Core courses (social science). There are now seven undergraduate colleges/schools and most outside of CLAS have Core restrictions. Should requirements for the major be separate from Core requirements? An 'open' Core would allow all-CCOC approved Core courses to count toward Core requirements independent of the major course(s) that may be required in a Core Knowledge Area.

Possible Directions: At the May meeting, the discussion seemed to favor an "open" Core. There seemed to be a consensus among the group that the Core should not be limited by the restrictions. To highlight the issues, the following situation was posited: "A student takes a Core course and then changes his/her major. That major restricts the Core. The Core class that student took and passed no longer counts towards the satisfaction of Core requirements." CCOC members (voting and advisory) found this hard to accept.

Decision: The voting members of the committee voted eight-to-two to approve the change to a genuinely open core, such that schools and college no longer would be able to place restrictions upon the Core (though of course they can place any requirements they choose within their majors).

Q2: Should the CU Denver Core policy be modified to allow "double dipping" between Core and the major?

Current CCOC Policy: Students may not utilize Core courses defined by their major department to satisfy Knowledge Area requirements. Students may utilize Core courses defined by their major department to satisfy International Perspectives and Cultural Diversity requirements.

Issues: The double-dipping restriction in the Knowledge Areas was imposed to encourage students to take a breadth of general education courses, even in the area defined by their major. If a course meets learning objectives of the Core and the major, should the course be allowed to count for both? CU Denver advising units have been allowed to decide internally whether or not they allow transfer students to double-dip between Core requirements and their major department, and most do not currently allow it. Is the current restriction on double dipping a "barrier" for a student's graduation?

Possible Directions: At the May meeting, the discussion seemed to favor "double-dipping." It was argued that the current restriction was a "barrier" to graduation and that the CCOC should play an active role in removing those obstacles. However, the idea that the CCOC should be equally concerned with "enforcing the breadth of the Core" (as one voting member phrased it) was also posited.

Decision: The voting members of the committee voted eight-to-two to remove the restriction upon double-dipping in the Knowledge Areas.

Q3: Once an undergraduate student matriculates at CU Denver, should transfer credit (non-gtPathways courses) applied to the Core be required to meet "exact" equivalency to satisfy the Core?

Current CCOC Policy: There is no current CCOC policy, and practices differ among academic units. The Registrar's office is seeking clarification on this issue.

Issues: The original CCOC policy was that matriculated CU Denver students were restricted to CU Denver approved Core courses and could not transfer in any Core credit. This policy was dropped because of the gtPathways program of guaranteed transfer and application of general education courses among Colorado public institutions of higher education. In the absence of a CCOC policy, schools and colleges utilized their authority to develop individual policies/practices for the application of transfer credit to the Core. Requiring an "exact" equivalent is much more restrictive than requiring the transfer course to meet general Core requirements (lower division, general content, minimal pre-requisites, etc.)

To illustrate, students matriculate at UCD but then, for instance during summer in their home state, take a course at another institution that is comparable to a UCD Core course on the expectation that it will transfer back to UCD. Some of those students have been denied Core credit, while at the same time all incoming transfer students automatically receive credit for such courses whether they are exactly equivalent or not, as agreed in the statewide gtPathways policy.

Possible Directions: At the May meeting, the notion that the learning content of any given transfer course was perhaps more important than its "exact equivalency" was posited. There seemed to be growing agreement on this point. However, the role of the CCOC in protecting the "integrity of our Core courses" (as one voting member phrased it) was put forth. Advisory members representing the Registrar and Advising offices asked for

guidelines from the CCOC on how to determine whether a transfer course satisfies the Core without being an exact equivalent.

With respect to policy-making authority, the CCOC, not the academic units, have authority over transfer credit into the Core. The idea of exact equivalency pertains to majors in ways that it need not pertain to the Core and serves as an obstacle to student attraction and progress. Should it so decide, the CCOC can stipulate that: i) matriculated students be allowed to transfer courses back into CU Denver for Core credit; ii) only general Core requirement comparability, not exact equivalency, be used as the criterion; and, iii) the Registrar's Office, in consultation with the academic advising offices, be authorized by the CCOC to make these judgments.

Decision: The voting members of the committee voted unanimously in favor of the three changes listed above.