# Texas A&M-Corpus Christi

## SACS: Self-Study Report

### 3.5.3 The institution defines and publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including its general education components. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs. (Undergraduate program requirements)

**Compliance Status:** Compliance

<table>
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<th>Narrative</th>
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<td>Texas A&amp;M University-Corpus Christi publishes requirements for its undergraduate programs, including the general education core curriculum requirements, both in the print catalog for the academic year and the online catalog. The programs published comply with the mandates of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Texas A&amp;M University System Policy 11.06 Core Curriculum, and Texas A&amp;M-Corpus Christi Rule 03.02.02.C1 Development of New Academic Degree Programs.</td>
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### General Education Core Curriculum

A&M-Corpus Christi print and online catalogs include the University Core Curriculum Program that is in compliance with THECB Rules 4.28 and 4.29. The 45-hour University Core Curriculum Program is also published in undergraduate degree plans. Rule 4.28 states "each general academic institution, community college, and health-related institution shall design and implement a core curriculum, including specific courses composing the curriculum, of no less than 42 lower-division semester credit hours". Rule 4.29 allows for a core curriculum in excess of 42-hours. "An institution may adopt a core curriculum under this subchapter in excess of 42 semester credit hours, but no more than 48 semester credit hours, if the courses in excess of 42 semester credit hours are selected from the first five component areas of Chart II of §4.28(b) of this title (relating to core curriculum) excluding additional credit in the institutionally designated option and are approved by the institution's governing board".

The 45-hour core was developed in 1993 and first implemented for the fall 1994 semester. The group that developed the 45-hour core and continues to review it is the Faculty Core Curriculum Committee. This committee is composed of two faculty members from each college, a librarian, the co-directors of the University Core Curriculum Program, the associate vice president of academic affairs, the director of the Transition Center, and one of the academic deans. The purpose of the Core Curriculum Committee is to focus on issues involving the core curriculum program, such as course requirements, advising, transfer equivalency, freshman seminars, and assessment as stated in the Official Catalog of University Committees and University Administrative Councils. The core curriculum committee advises the co-directors on assessment of the core curriculum and also must approve any changes to the core curriculum such as adding a new course.

The process for making changes to the core curriculum begins in the colleges of the disciplines proposing a core change. The Faculty Core Curriculum Committee uses a "Core Change Form". Faculty in the colleges approve the change and then the form and proposal are...
forwarded to the Core Curriculum Committee for consideration. If the committee votes in favor of the change, the proposal is then forwarded to the Office of the Provost.

According to the THECB Core Curriculum Report Summary Form [12] received from the THECB in 2007 in response to the Institutional Core Curriculum Evaluation Report (submitted to the THECB in fall 2004 and finalized in fall 2006) [13], A&M-Corpus Christi's core curriculum meets the requirements of state law and the THECB.

A unique feature for first-year students taking core curriculum courses is the First Year Learning Communities Program [14]. This program began in fall 1994 and has students co-enroll in linked core curriculum courses during the first year of college. The goal is to help students understand how to integrate material from different courses and to recognize and understand multiple perspectives. What makes this program unique among institutions is that all full-time first-time in college students enroll in learning communities in the fall and spring semesters of their first year.

An additional distinct feature in the 45-hour core is the inclusion of the upper-division course Foundations of Professional Ethics (PHIL 3340). This course was added to the core curriculum as a semi-“capstone” course. The faculty wanted students to take the course as they were completing the core curriculum in order solidify their experience and to ensure that A&M-Corpus Christi students are prepared for "lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in the global community [15]."

Students graduating from A&M-Corpus Christi must successfully complete courses in 11 core curriculum disciplines: English composition (six semester hours), U.S. history (six semester hours), political science (six semester hours), natural science (six semester hours), mathematics (three semester hours), oral communications (three semester hours), economics (three semester hours), social science (three semester hours), literature (three semester hours), fine arts (three semester hours), and philosophy-professional ethics (three semester hours). These courses constitute the 45-hour core curriculum [6].

The names of courses in the 45-hour core curriculum are in the online and printed version of the University catalog, undergraduate degree plans, and on the University Core Curriculum Programs Web page [16]. In addition, the learning communities in the First Year Learning Communities Program are listed on S.A.I.L., the University student portal [17]. In compliance with THECB Rule 4.28 [7], core curriculum courses are transferable among Texas state institutions. Students completing the core curriculum at one institution are not required to take additional core courses if they transfer to another state institution [6].

The 45-hour core was most recently evaluated in the self-study [18] submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In addition, the University Core Curriculum Programs Program Review [13] also evaluated the 45-hour core. The co-directors of the University Core Curriculum Program, in consultation with the Core Curriculum Committee, added college algebra to the 45-hour core in response to the program reviews.

The core assessment plan first is based on a curriculum map [19] aligning the 77 exemplary educational objectives for each core component area with the 14 basic intellectual competencies and
perspectives in the core. As mandated by the THECB, the basic intellectual competencies and perspectives are used as the student learning outcomes for the 45-hour core [20].

Core assessment and oversight is a shared responsibility between the University Core Curriculum Program Resource Group, Faculty Core Curriculum Committee, and University Core Curriculum Program co-directors. The University Core Curriculum Program Resource Group designs, implements, collects, enters, and uses the assessment data. The Core Curriculum Committee reviews the results and advises. The co-directors of the University Core Curriculum Program coordinate and lead the overall effort and are responsible for the core assessment reports.

**Undergraduate Degree Programs**

**Internal and External Reviews**

Undergraduate Programs at A&M-Corpus Christi have United States Department of Education classification of instructional programs codes as required by THECB [21]. The University uses a rigorous process of program assessment to ensure that all undergraduate degree programs are held to widely accepted standards and practices. The assessment of academic programs consists of two main components: annual internal program evaluation and five-year external program reviews.

The first assessment is an annual process of internal program evaluation. The use of WEAVEonline, the A&M-Corpus Christi-approved electronic software, documents the unit plan objectives, measures, findings, and follow-up actions for academic and administrative departments on campus [22]. Using the WEAVEonline assessments, faculty members discuss the results and make the changes necessary to close any loops. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness assists and coordinates the University-wide assessment efforts, providing resources, recommending assessment-related materials, as well as technical support. Each college and educational program is specifically aligned with the University mission and strategic plan while they remain unique with respect to their discipline.

External program reviews ensure the quality of undergraduate programs. The University has developed a set of academic program review guidelines, according to which "each academic program will be reviewed at least once every five years unless a different schedule is approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the appropriate Dean [23]." The program review is initiated by the associate vice president for academic affairs. A committee of the program faculty members prepares the self-evaluation and submits it to the provost's office. A team of one to two faculty members from peer institutions comprise the external review team. Upon completion of the review, the team prepares a report and submits it to the Office of the Provost. The self-evaluation [24] and review report [25] for the criminal justice program illustrates this process.

The self-assessment team uses the University guidelines to assess the way in which the program relates to the profession and to the college and University mission. The team studies the curriculum and learning outcomes and compares them to peer institutions, and a program profile outlining the program's distinctive characteristics [23].

A&M-Corpus Christi's academic programs are accredited by external agencies that include: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, AACSB International-The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, National Association of Schools of

**Program Approval**

As a member of the Texas A&M System, the University procedures are aligned with the System. System Policy 03.02 [26] outlines the procedures and responsibilities for the revision of mission statements and the tables of programs. This policy also details the requirements for complying with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. System Regulation 03.02.01 [27] provides the approval procedure for any changes or the creation of a mission statement, as well as the table of programs.

Texas A&M System Regulation 03.02.02 [28] outlines the process for ensuring the coherence and appropriateness of each program and the approval process for new programs for the system. All new and revised programs must be approved by the chancellor and the board of regents before they are presented to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. A&M-Corpus Christi upholds this procedure and specifically outlines the approval process within the University in University Rule 03.02.02.C1 [5].

University Procedure 03.02.02.C2.01 [29] provides the process for the development of new courses and catalog revisions. All additions and changes to a college section of the catalog [1] must be approved by the faculty and the dean of that college. All substantive academic changes in the catalog are approved by the Faculty Senate and the provost/vice president for academic affairs. In addition, the development of proposals for new academic degree programs must conform to University Rule 03.02.02.C1 [5].

All proposal requests for new degree programs must be approved through the faculty curriculum review process of the relevant college and by the dean of that college. Approval must then be obtained from the Faculty Senate and the provost/vice president for academic affairs, prior to submission to the president. The president submits the proposed degree programs to system and THECB for approval. The bachelor of applied science illustrates the review and approval process for new programs at the University. This program was approved by the Faculty Senate, the Provost's Council and the President [30] [31] prior to being forwarded to the system level for further approval. All programs at A&M-Corpus Christi have been approved by the THECB and they are listed on the THECB's Web site in its list of approved programs [32].

**University Undergraduate Catalog**

All revisions to the University catalog are outlined by University Procedure 03.02.02.C2.01 [29]. The revision of the academic sections of the catalog begins in the colleges and goes through a faculty curriculum review process before it receives the approval of the dean. The substantive academic changes are then reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate. Once approval by the senate is conferred, the changes must be approved by the provost/vice president for academic affairs.

Changes to the general sections of the catalog are approved by the head of the appropriate unit before they are sent to the provost/vice president for academic affairs. Changes in general sections relating to non-academic matters such as student affairs, alumni information, and student affairs
are approved by the provost. Academic matters in these sections, such as admission standards and the academic calendar, are first approved by the Faculty Senate before they return to the provost for final approval.

The speaker of the Faculty Senate is responsible for informing the provost of sections as they receive approval or disapproval. Sections that are not approved by the Faculty Senate or the provost will be returned to the appropriate college or unit for further revision. The changes then follow the same path of approval until they are accepted. As deemed necessary by the provost, some changes are reviewed by the Provost's Council.

Once the catalog has received approval by the necessary bodies, hard copies are printed and made available at no charge for any individual who wishes to have one. The catalog is sent in late May for printing by Printing, Inc. in Wichita, Kansas [33]. The catalog is available for distribution on campus in mid-July. The catalog can also be viewed online in a PDF version that replicates the printed version exactly [2]. The online version is available in late May. Students may find the catalog online through the catalog Web site [2] or through the student portal S.A.I.L. [17]. Changes to courses in the catalog are reflected in the S.A.I.L. portal [34].

The undergraduate catalog [1] includes sections on admissions [35], the general academic policies and regulations [36], tuition and fees [37], financial assistance [38], veteran's educational benefits [39], academic support services [40], student services [41], undergraduate programs [42], and the University Core Curriculum Programs [6]. The colleges of business [43], education [44], liberal arts [45], nursing and health science [46], and science and technology [47] each have a substantial section that has information about the college, the degrees available, the specific degree plans, majors, minors, tracks, specializations and emphasis areas. All undergraduate courses are listed in one section at the end of the catalog by the type of course (i.e., accounting, English, physics and so forth) [48]. The latter section of the catalog also includes a listing of all undergraduate faculty and librarians including information on their title, department, and degrees [49]. Transfer students can obtain information on A&M-Corpus Christi transfer policies [50], the lower-division transfer courses, the Table of Common Courses, and the Texas Common Course Numbering System [51]. Information on the policies regarding the prevention of alcohol abuse and illicit drug use [52], hazing [52], and student travel [53] are included in accordance with the University's commitment to producing students who are responsible citizens [15].

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The student portal S.A.I.L. [17] is used for student registration; financial aid application and award; viewing unofficial transcripts, grades, and class schedules; purchasing a parking permit; and paying tuition. Students can log on in advance of the registration date and access the class schedule for the next period of registration [34]. The class schedules include who is teaching the course, the time, the location, and the prices on the books and materials needed. Students may also view how many students are currently registered in the course and how many seats are available. The S.A.I.L. portal also includes tutorials on how to check student e-mail [54], register for classes [55], resolve a complaint [56] and receive a refund [57].

**Conclusion**

The requirements for the undergraduate programs and the general education core curriculum requirements are printed in the undergraduate catalog and online at Texas A&M University-Corpus
Christi. The undergraduate programs at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi comply with Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board mandates, Texas A&M University Systems policies and regulations, and A&M-Corpus Christi rules and procedures.

Evidence

- UD 048 UG Catalog Printable Format
- UD 477 University Catalogs Webpage
- SD 037 THECB 5-45 Criteria for New Baccalaureate and Master's Degree Programs
- BD 187 TAMUS 11-06 Core Curriculum
- UD 139 AMCC 03-02-02-C1 Development of New Academic Degree Programs
- UD 1060 Undergraduate Catalog p. 78-80
- SD 137 Texas Administrative Code 4.28
- SD 160 Assumptions and Defining Characteristics
- UD 1037 Official Reocrd of Committees and Councils
- UD 370 Core Curriculum Committee
- UD 819 Core Change Form
- UD 823 THECB Core SUmmary Report Form
- UD 065 Institutional Core Curriculum Evaluation 2004
- UD 1229 FYLCP Web Site
- UD 042 3.10.5-05 TAMUCC New Mission Statement
- UD 1059 FYLCP Website
- UD 954 SAIL screenshots
- UD 820 Core Self Study
- UD 620 Core Curriculum Map_all
- SD 160 Assumptions and Defining Characteristics
- OD 155 CIP Codes
- UD 052 WEAVEOnline User's Guide
- UD 062 AcademicProgramReviewGuidelines
- CD 089 Undergrad Criminal Justice Review Self Study
- CD 090 UG CJ Review External Reviewers Report
- BD 003 TAMUS 03-02 Policies for the Establishment and Revision of Mission Statements and Tables of Programs
- BD 167 TAMUS regulation 03.02.01 Approval Procedure for Mission Statement
- BD 004 TAMUS 03-02-02 Approval Procedures for Degree Programs, Administrative Changes, etc
- UD 053 AMCC 03-02-02-C2-01 Development of New Courses and Catalog Revisions
- UD 1231 Faculty Senate Minutes Approving BAAS
UD 1164 BAAS Request 2-15-08 modified
SD 009 2.1-20 THECB Inventory CIP
OD 156 printinginc website
UD 1127 Class Schedules
UD 1232 Undergraduate Catalog, Admissions
UD 1233 Undergraduate Catalog, General Academic Policies
UD 1234 Undergraduate Catalog, tuition and fees
UD 1235 Undergraduate Catalog, financial assistance
UD 1236 Undergraduate Catalog, veteran's educational benefits
UD 1237 Undergraduate Catalog, academic support services
UD 1238 Undergraduate Catalog, student services
UD 1239 Undergraduate Catalog, undergraduate programs
UD 1056 Graduate Catalog, College of Business
UD 1058 Graduate Catalog, Education
UD 1057 Graduate Catalog, Liberal Arts
UD 668 Graduate Catalog College of Nursing and Health Sciences p172
UD 1055 Graduate Catalog, Science and Technology
UD 1240 Undergraduate Catalog, Undergraduate Course List
UD 1241 Undergraduate Catalog, Faculty and Librarians List
UD 1242 Undergraduate Catalog, Lower-Division Transfer Courses, Table of Commons Courses, TCCNS
UD 1242 Undergraduate Catalog, Transfer Admissions
UD 1243 Undergraduate Catalog, Lower-Division Transfer Courses, Table of Commons Courses, TCCNS
UD 1244 Undergraduate Catalog, Prevention of alcohol Abuse and Illicit Drug Use
UD 1245 Undergraduate Catalog, Student Travel
UD 1246 Islander_email
UD 1247 Registration Checklist
UD 1248 Complaint Resolution
UD 1249 How to receive a refund

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