

4-24-2009

SR-08-09-36R CFAHC

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### Recommended Citation

Marshall University, "SR-08-09-36R CFAHC" (2009). *Recommendations*. 299.  
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# **CORE FOUNDATIONS AD HOC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

## **SR-08-09-36R CFAHC**

Recommends that the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee's outline for a new general education curriculum, henceforth called Core Curriculum, be approved.

### **Core I: 9 hours**

- 3 hours: First Year Seminar (100-level)
- 6 hours of discipline-specific courses with an emphasis on critical thinking (CT) and active learning (100- or 200-level)

### **Core II: 25 hours (100- or 200-level)**

- 6 hours: Composition
- 3 hours: Communication
- 3 hours: Math
- 4 hours: Physical or Natural Science
- 3 hours: Social Science
- 3 hours: Humanities
- 3 hours: Fine Arts

### **Additional University Requirements**

- 6 hours of Writing Intensive credit in any discipline at any level
- 3 hours of Multicultural or International in any discipline at any level
- Capstone project in the major

### **Exceptions**

- Programs that have accreditation or certification requirements may request specific course exemptions to the Core Curriculum, subject to approval by the Dean of the college requesting the exception and the Chief Academic Officer/Provost.

### **Transfer Policies**

- Transfer Students
  - Freshman transfer students (those with fewer than 26 credit hours) must complete all 9 hours of Core I at Marshall University. Core II requirements may be fulfilled through a combination of transfer and Marshall credit hours.
  - Sophomore transfer students (those with 26 or more credit hours) must complete one CT course but are exempt from the remaining 6 hours of Core I. Core II requirements may be fulfilled through a combination of transfer and Marshall credit hours.
- Inter-College Transfers: When students who have enrolled prior to Fall 2010 change majors or colleges during or after Fall 2010 (resulting in a change of catalog that would include the new Core Curriculum), the new core requirements will be waived.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF CORE CURRICULUM

As First Year Seminar and other CT courses are developed, vetted, and approved through the Course Addition/Change process, the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee may have to make further revisions to the overall Core Curriculum outline for consistency with the actual course creation process. The Committee has, however, already substantially revised the proposal based on feedback from the four faculty forums during the week of February 16, 2009, and is currently working from the following amplified curricular outline:

### Core I: 9 hours

- 3 hours: First Year Seminar (100-level)
  - This is a new course, to be developed during Summer 2009 and submitted to Faculty Senate for approval in Fall 2009.
    - There will be no common syllabus. Faculty teaching this course will develop their own syllabus during faculty development programming.
    - The scope of the course will likely include the following elements: interdisciplinarity, critical thinking (via experiential learning), multicultural/international issues via the One Book, writing across the curriculum, and capstone-like independent research projects pursued with the assistance of an embedded librarian.
    - Enrollment is capped at 22 students per section.
  - Faculty who plan to teach First Year Seminar must, during the prior academic year, participate in faculty development programming sponsored by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. Faculty will receive a one-course reassignment to compensate for the extensive time devoted to faculty development.
  - The course will be taught by full-time faculty where possible. Exceptions may include long-term adjuncts, MOVC faculty, etc. Graduate Teaching Assistants are not permitted to teach this course.
  - Faculty who teach this course will, where necessary and with approval from the chair, be reassigned from teaching a course in the home department. Academic Affairs will provide funding for adjuncts to teach courses from which full-time faculty are reassigned.
  - Student Credit Hours (SCH) attached to First Year Seminar will remain with the instructor's home department.
- 6 hours of CT-designated, discipline-specific courses with an emphasis on critical thinking and learner-centered course design (100- or 200-level)
  - Courses that fulfill this 6-hour requirement may be existing courses reconceived or entirely new courses, five to seven of which will be revised or developed during Summer 2009 and submitted to Faculty Senate for approval in Fall 2009. In either case, each course in this category will provide students the opportunity to practice critical thinking skills specific to the discipline in which the course is offered.
  - Instructors teaching these courses must, in advance, participate in faculty development sponsored by the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (a day and a half workshop offered just prior to every fall term).

- These courses will be taught by full-time faculty where possible. Exceptions may include long-term adjuncts, MOVC faculty, and TAs who have completed faculty development.
- All sections of a course in this category must be revised to fulfill the requirement. (That is, "CT" designations will be course specific, not instructor specific.)
- CT-designated courses may also fulfill other college or program requirements.

**Core II: 25 hours** (100- or 200-level)

Courses in each of the Core II domains are yet to be identified. Each college that offers courses in the domains below will propose courses that are appropriate to the general education of students in any major, after which Core II as a whole will be submitted to Faculty Senate for approval.

- 6 hours: Composition
- 3 hours: Communication
- 3 hours: Math
- 4 hours: Physical or Natural Science
- 3 hours: Social Science
- 3 hours: Humanities
- 3 hours: Fine Arts

**COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND FACULTY DEVELOPMENT**

Provided this outline is approved by the Faculty Senate, the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee will administer a faculty survey in late April 2009 in order to determine which faculty members are at least notionally interested in teaching First Year Seminar. The committee will also administer a chair survey in late April 2009 in order to determine which extant 100- or 200-level courses in the disciplines each department might be interested in revising to fulfill the CT requirement.

Provided this Core Curriculum outline is approved by the Faculty Senate, the Office of the Provost will provide ten \$2,000 competitive stipends to faculty members for Summer 2009 to fund the development of the two types of courses proposed in Core I above. This ten-member team will submit appropriate Requests for Course Addition or Course Change as per the university Curriculum Committee's instructions for Faculty Senate approval in Fall 2009.

Provided the Request for Course Addition for First Year Seminar is approved by the Faculty Senate in Fall 2009, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning will initiate faculty development programming in Fall 2009 for faculty members who are planning to teach First Year Seminar in Fall 2010. This programming will involve year-long participation as a faculty cohort to discuss and plan individual syllabi, select the One Book, discuss experiential learning methodologies, etc. Faculty will receive a one-course reassignment in Spring 2010 (funded by Academic Affairs) to compensate for time devoted to AY 2009/10 faculty development related to teaching First Year Seminar.

Provided the Request for Course Change for CT courses in the disciplines are approved by the Faculty Senate in Fall 2009, the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning will

initiate faculty development programming (a day and a half workshop) in Fall 2009 for faculty members who are planning to teach those courses in Fall 2010. Instructors who may be assigned to a CT course at the last minute (e.g. graduate teaching assistants) in Fall 2010 will complete their faculty development (a day and a half workshop) the week before classes begin.

## **RATIONALE:**

Because revision of the general education curriculum involves many stakeholders and entails many considerations including curricular implications, staffing, faculty development, financial resources, and overall philosophy, the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee proposes several discrete steps for the approval process.

- 1) During AY 2007-08, Faculty Senate approved the eight Core Domains (*Critical Thinking; Mathematical/Abstract Thinking; Aesthetic/Artistic Thinking; Multicultural/International Thinking; Ethical/Social/Historical Thinking; Information and Technical Literacy; Oral, Written and Visual Communication*) that now serve as the philosophical and practical foundation for the two-pronged Core Curriculum outline described above.
- 2) During AY 2008-09, the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee prepared a proposal for a new Core Curriculum that would replace the current Marshall Plan, solicited extensive faculty input, and revised the proposal to take into account expressed concerns about curricular implications, scarcity of resources, faculty expertise, academic freedom, and guiding philosophy. The curricular outline now submitted for approval instantiates the ideals expressed in the approved Core Domains listed above (particularly the general education goal of balancing enhanced critical thinking skills with broad disciplinary knowledge).
- 3) Provided this Core Curriculum outline is approved by the Faculty Senate, the Core Foundations Ad Hoc Committee will oversee the development (during Summer 2009) and submission (in Fall 2009) of a **REQUEST FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSE ADDITION** for First Year Seminar and a **REQUEST FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSE CHANGE** for select extant courses across the disciplines that will be revised to incorporate critical thinking as a central learning outcome (currently called "CT" courses).
- 4) Fall 2009 will be dedicated to determining which courses will comprise Core II (in consultation with those colleges offering 100-/200-level general education courses) and submitting a final proposal to Faculty Senate for approval of Core II.
- 5) Spring 2010 will be dedicated to specifying any additional university requirements (e.g. writing intensive, capstone), developing thorough transfer credit policies, and consulting with colleges and departments as they revise their own degree requirements relative to the new Core Curriculum.
- 6) The Core Curriculum will be implemented in Fall 2010 for newly enrolled freshmen.

**FACULTY SENATE CHAIR:**

APPROVED BY THE  
FACULTY SENATE: *Paul Brannon* DATE: 4/24/09

DISAPPROVED BY THE  
FACULTY SENATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:**

APPROVED: *[Signature]* DATE: 5/1/09

DISAPPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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