



Sam Houston State University

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David E. Payne

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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May 22, 2007

TO: Academic Affairs Council

FROM: David E. Payne
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Proposed Curriculum Revision

As you all know, for the last year we have been studying the best way to adapt to the state-mandated reduction to 120 credit hours for undergraduate degrees. Individual departments have analyzed their degree requirements to see how they could bring their degree requirements down to the 120-hour maximum without any cuts in general education. Each department has produced a response.

Following that exercise, an ad hoc committee (composed of Dana Nicolay, Philip Morris, Larry Hoover, Sharon Lynch, Kandi Tayebi, Somer Smith, and Dick Eglsaer) studied in great detail how cuts could be made in the general education program. They have solicited input from across campus about where cuts could be made and if cuts should be made. Based on this feedback, the committee generated seven options. These options were then distributed to the faculty for feedback. More than two-thirds of the departments responding to the committee survey were not in favor of maintaining the core as it stands, but there was great diversity of opinion about how it should be reduced in size. However, the option most approved by the departments involved removing the computer literacy course from the core. Only 14 percent of the faculty members were opposed to this option.

As we consider any change in the core curriculum, a key element is the state requirement that we demonstrate student competence in several areas, one of which is computer literacy. Thus, if we delete a computer literacy course from the core curriculum, we are still required to document computer literacy for each student.

In order to reduce the size of the core while still meeting this state-mandated requirement, the Council of Academic Deans and I propose the following:

The requirement for a computer literacy course will be deleted from the core curriculum. However, each department must develop and have approved a mechanism for producing computer literacy in its majors and an assessment procedure to ensure competence in

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computer literacy. This mechanism, including the assessment procedures, must be approved by the dean of the appropriate college and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Departments may choose to integrate computer literacy curricular material in their own curriculum or to require as a program requirement for their majors that they take a computer literacy course. In the latter case, offering the computer literacy course will assess the computer literacy of the enrolled students.

We believe this option maximizes flexibility for each department while maintaining compliance with state-mandated competency assessment.

This proposal will be the item for discussion at a meeting of the Academic Affairs Council scheduled for Friday, June 1, at 10:00 a.m. in LSC 320 Please make sure to attend this important meeting.

DEP:dlr
