

**SELF STUDY:**

**THE CORE**

*by the Faculty Senate Core Curriculum Committee*

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**I. Overview of the University of Toledo**

Founded in 1872 and located within the city of Toledo in the upper-northwest corner of Ohio, the University of Toledo (UToledo) joined Ohio’s public university system in 1967 to become one of 14 public universities. Today, UToledo is an R2 urban institution that enrolls approximately 14,000 undergraduates and employs over 1300 faculty, 3800 staff, and 800 graduate assistants. It offers more than 300 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and also has a medical school with its own campus.

Undergraduate students from all UToledo colleges must complete the University Core Curriculum described in Part II of this report. These students come largely from within the state, with 85.1% from Ohio. The racial and ethnic diversity of the UToledo undergraduate population looks similar to that of Ohio’s flagship institution, Ohio State University. UToledo is approximately 68% White, with 22% of our students classified as Ethnic Minority, 5% as International, and the remaining 4.3% unknown. However, unlike OSU’s undergraduate population, almost 27% of UToledo’s undergraduate population consists of first-generation college students. Perhaps even more importantly, 39% of our undergraduates are Pell grant awarded, indicating high financial need. Overall, a significant percentage of UToledo’s undergraduate population are economically disadvantaged.

In a time of much global upheaval, the Faculty Senate Core Curriculum Committee hopes that this external review will help us to redouble our commitment to a strong general education experience for our undergraduate students, strengthening our most important foundational program.

(See Appendices A-C for additional facts related to the university overall as well as our student population.)

**II. Introduction to the UToledo Core Curriculum**

**OVERVIEW**

The UToledo Core consists of a basic liberal arts curriculum required of all UToledo undergraduates. It offers a range of general education courses distributed across the arts and sciences and functions as a foundation for all students regardless of major. As the Higher Learning Commission states, general education should “impart broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess” (HLC Criterion 3.B.2). This basic principle has informed UToledo’s General Education curriculum for decades and continues to shape decisions regarding the UToledo Core.

The current philosophy and SLOs of the UToledo Core have remained consistent since 2013, when the UToledo Faculty Senate defined the Core for greater clarity to include a focus on multicultural education. At that time, the Faculty Senate stated:

The University of Toledo Core Curriculum consists of two components. **General education** courses are of broad interest and are distributed across categories including composition, fine arts, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences. These courses must be taught at the 1000- or 2000-level, and any course within our OTM\* must be included in our list of general education courses. **Multicultural courses** foster an understanding of and respect for different cultures and peoples, both within and outside the United States. Multicultural courses can be taught at any level and may or may not be part of the OTM.

*\*For more details on the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM), see Part III of this document, “State Requirements.”*

Since that time, all Core courses have been limited to the 1- and 2000-level except those that meet the Multicultural requirement, which includes courses from 1-4000 level.

The College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM) deliver the majority of the University Core Curriculum. CAL teaches approximately 75% of the Core offerings in the UToledo course catalog, while the remaining percentage comes primarily from NSM. Over the past five years, CAL has generated all student credit hours (SCH) for Composition courses, 93.4% of SCH for humanities courses, 78% of SCH for multicultural courses, and 94.6% of SCH for social science courses. NSM has generated all SCH for math courses and 97.8% of SCH for science courses.

(For additional details of the current Core Curriculum, see Part III of this document, “Curricular Structure and Development.”)

**PHILOSOPHY OF THE CORE**

The University of Toledo Core Curriculum consists of 36-42 credit hours of coursework that provide the educational foundation for all undergraduate degree programs. The UToledo Core exposes students to a range of disciplines that gives breadth to the learning experience, prepares students for advanced coursework in their degree programs, and develops students as lifelong learners who will thrive in and contribute significantly to a constantly changing global community.

As stated in the UToledo catalog, the Core Curriculum “gives students critical reasoning skills to explore complex questions, grasp the essence of social, scientific and ethical problems, and arrive at nuanced perspectives. It hones the ability of students to communicate artistically, orally and in writing. It allows students to recognize their place in history and culture, and to appreciate their connection to others in a multicultural world. It prepares students to be thoughtful, engaged citizens in a participatory democracy. It requires students to explore the whole range of the liberal arts, both for the intrinsic value of doing so and in preparation for study in their degree programs. It provides students with insight into the social and behavioral sciences; familiarity with the history, aesthetics, and criticism of all aspects of human culture, including the fine arts; and experience in the scientific, philosophical and mathematical processes required to examine theoretical and natural phenomena.”

**CORE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. **Communication:** UT students must demonstrate abilities to communicate meaningfully, persuasively and creatively with different audiences through written, oral, numeric, graphic and visual modes.
2. **Personal, Social, and Global Responsibility:** UT students must demonstrate understanding of and critical engagement in ethical, cultural and political discourse and capacity to work productively as a community member committed to the value of diversity, difference and the imperatives of justice.
3. **Critical Thinking and Integrative Learning:** UT students must be able to integrate reasoning, questioning and analysis across traditional boundaries of viewpoint, practice and discipline.
4. **Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning and Literacy:** UT students must demonstrate the capacity to apply mathematical reasoning and scientific inquiry to diverse problems.
5. **Information Literacy:** UT students must demonstrate the ability to find, organize, critically assess and effectively use information to engage in advanced work in a challenging field of study. Students should demonstrate responsible, legal, creative and ethical use of information.

**INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Broad and Integrative Knowledge
2. Specialized Knowledge
3. Intellectual Skills
4. Civic and Global Learning
5. Applied and Collaborative Learning

**NB**: These ISLOs were approved after the Core SLOs were already implemented. They are aligned to the Core SLOs on the Office of Assessment, Accreditation and Program Review’s webpage, but this alignment has not been formally approved by Faculty Senate. The current Core committee intends to recommend these alignments to this year’s Faculty Senate.

**III. Curricular Structure and Development**

**STATE REQUIREMENTS (OTM)**

State requirements impact the UToledo Core in important ways. The Ohio Department of Higher Education’s (ODHE) maintains a highly specific articulation and transfer policy that ensures students can transfer effectively between Ohio’s public post-secondary institutions of higher education.

This policy has resulted in the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM), a complete set of general education requirements at Ohio public colleges and universities. OTM courses are guaranteed to transfer to any of Ohio’s public institutions of higher education as an area credit.

Courses for the Ohio Transfer Module should be 100- and 200-level general education courses commonly completed in the first two years of a student’s course of study. Each public university and technical and community college is required to establish and maintain an approved OTM.

The OTM contains 36-40 semester of course credit in English composition (minimum of 3 semester hours); mathematics, statistics, and logic (minimum of 3 semester hours); arts and humanities (minimum of 6 semester hours); social and behavioral sciences (minimum of 6 semester hours); and natural sciences (minimum of 6 semester hours). Oral communication and interdisciplinary areas may be included as additional options. Additional elective hours from among these areas make up the total hours for a completed Ohio Transfer Module.

**CORE DISTRIBUTION AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS**

**36-42 TOTAL HOURS**

**Skill Areas (9 semester hours)**

1. English composition courses (minimum 6 hours)
2. Mathematics courses (minimum 3 hours)

**Distributive Areas (18 hours)**. Must include at least two courses totaling 6 hours in each of the following three areas. Students must choose two courses from different disciplines.

1. Arts and Humanities courses (minimum 6 hours).
2. Social Science courses (minimum 6 hours)
3. Natural Science courses (minimum 6 hours)

**Electives (9 hours)**

Students must take 9 additional hours of courses from *I. Skills, B. Math or II.* *Distributive* described above.

**Multicultural Courses (6 hours)**. Students must take one course from each of the following categories:

1. **Diversity of U.S. Culture courses** (minimum 3 hours) examine the economic, political, philosophical, social or artistic life of distinct cultural communities within the United States. Communities may include, but are not limited to, communities based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, and disability.
2. **Non-U.S. Culture courses** (minimum 3 hours) examine the economic, political, philosophical, social or artistic life of communities outside the United States.

**NB.** “Double dipping,” or the practice of allowing students to use one course to satisfy more than one requirement, is allowed, here. Students may satisfy both of the multicultural requirements with courses that simultaneously fulfill a second area of the core curriculum. One multicultural course may be a course that also meets one of the requirements in *II. Distributive Area*, and the other may be a course that also meets one of the requirements in *III. Electives*, as stated above.

**CURRICULAR PROCESSES**

The UToledo Core curriculum is composed of courses that the faculty in departments and degree programs submit to the Core Curriculum committee for recommended approval for inclusion in the Core. Procedurally, designated faculty and staff in the advising office submit courses to the UToledo Curriculum Inventory Management System (CIM), an online software system that automatically tracks new course proposals and modifications and sends them on to the next designated approver in the workflow.

Courses that come to the Core Curriculum for approval arrive in CIM having already gone through multiple layers of approval, since all new course proposals or modifications must typically be approved by a department curriculum committee, chair or program director, College curriculum committee, College dean, and Faculty Senate. The Core Curriculum Committee, in other words, does not evaluate courses on their individual academic merits as a department would, only on whether or not these courses align with the mission and learning outcomes of the UToledo Core.

Once the Core curriculum committee votes on whether or not to recommend the courses submitted to it, the Chair formally makes the committee’s recommendations to the full Faculty Senate. If Faculty Senate also approves, then the curriculum moves forward to the Provost for final approval.

The Core Curriculum Committee meet regularly during the academic year so that it can have live discussion and vote regarding new courses and modifications submitted to the Core. The committee reviews the curriculum with the Core Student Learning Outcomes in mind, particularly when new courses are proposed to the Core, but the committee does not have a standing rubric. Provided that they appear to align with the standards and SLOs of each distribution area, the Core committee usually winds up accepting new course proposals into the Core; rejections are rare. The committee does, however, sometimes “roll back” courses to the previous submitters with requests for alterations, usually asking the submitter to revise some aspect of the course—often the student learning outcomes—to align with the Core outcomes.

Recently, the committee has discussed the need for more governing documents that it might use to ensure a more consistent evaluation process. This is particularly true for courses that are submitted for the multicultural requirement. The SLOs for this requirement are relatively minimal. Given the importance of this requirement, the committee has begun to discuss how it might develop it more fully.

The Core Curriculum committee is also responsible for assessment of the Core. Historically, we have been supported by the Provost’s office. A full overview of our assessment practices occurs in Section V of this document, but we will state here that the Core committee has conducted a review of its assessment practices in the 2019-2020 AY (Appendix G) which suggested that the faculty committee with regular turnover was struggling to provide the sustained, consistent support of assessment necessary to a healthy Core. The committee’s report to Faculty Senate recommended the creation of a Core program director position occupied by a faculty member who could help manage assessment processes on an annual basis.

**FACULTY REPRESENTATION IN THE CORE**

**Overview.** There are several types of faculty at UToledo, all of whom teach within the Core. Full descriptions of each category, including their typical teaching loads, follow this table. Note that at UToledo, the designation of “Lecturer” refers to full-time teaching faculty, not contingent instructors. “Part-time Instructors” refers to instructors who are contracted per course only. Tenure-track/Tenured faculty and Lecturers are represented by the UToledo chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) through two separate collective bargaining agreements.

This table reflects the major faculty groups at UToledo and what percentage of instruction they provide to the Core curriculum:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Faculty Designation** | **What % Teach in the Core**  | **Full-time vs Contingent** |
| Tenured and Tenure-Track  | 17% | **46%** of faculty who teach in the UToledo Core are full-time |
| Lecturers | 29% |
| Visiting Assistant Professors | 9% | **31%** of faculty who teach in the Core are contingent |
| Part-time Instructors | 22% |
| Graduate Assistants | 12% | **23%** of the faculty who teach in the Core are a combination of graduate students, administrators (almost all of whom are also tenured faculty), and full-time staff. |
| Other, including Chairs and Program directors, Associate Deans, Professional Staff Association (PSA), Librarians, Post Docs, etc. | 11% |

**Analysis.** The above statistics indicate that almost one-half of Core instruction at UToledo comes from full-time faculty, while one-quarter plus comes from contingent labor. The remaining one-quarter consists of a combination of graduate students (who make up half that quartile) and a variety of other kinds of instructors, including full-time faculty who also work as administrators and staff affiliated with the university. For example, the academic Advisors for the College of Arts and Letters and the College of Natural Science and Math teach the required 1-credit “First Year Experience” courses for both those Colleges; they fall under the “Other” category.

**FACULTY DESIGNATIONS, INCLUDING TYPICAL TEACHING LOAD**

* **Tenured or tenure-track faculty.** Tenured and tenure-track faculty at UToledo are full-time faculty hired to perform in three areas: teaching, research, and service. They are collectively represented by the AAUP. They have doctoral degrees or the highest level of terminal MA (for example, MFA or MM). Tenured faculty may be assigned a maximum of 12 credit hours per semester or a minimum of 6, which means they typically teach between a 2/2 and a 4/4 load depending on their other responsibilities and the needs of their department.
* **Lecturers.** Lecturers are full-time, non-tenure track faculty hired as teaching faculty only.Some Lecturers have PhDs; others have MAs only. Research activity is not included in their letter of assignment as an expectation. Like TT faculty, Lecturers are represented by the AAUP and have their own collective bargaining agreement with the university that governs their workload, compensation, health care benefits, and so forth. Lecturers are assigned more courses to teach per semester than TT faculty: a minimum of 24 credit hours and a maximum of 30 (equivalent to a 4/4 load or higher). Many Lecturers perform some institutional service, although that is negotiated on a case-by-case basis with their department chair in relation to their teaching load rather than required as part of their assignment.
* **Visiting Assistant or Associate Professors.** Visiting assistant or associate professors are sometimes hired to fill curricular needs when a department cannot offer required courses within the major. They are typically hired for one-year contracts that may be renewed for up to three years only according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
* **Part-time Instructor.** Part-time Instructors are contingent faculty (adjuncts) who are contracted per course as needs arise. They receive $3000 for a 3-credit hour course. They are hired most frequently to teach lower-level courses, many of which are in the Core.
* **Graduate Students.** Graduate students teach a variety of Core courses, including those designated as Lecture (a combination of lecture, directed discussion, demonstration, or the presentation of materials and techniques); Discussion (used most often in conjunction with a lab); and Recitation (breakout groups which meet in conjunction with a lecture to review exams, discuss issues, address questions, and extend the instruction that occurs in the larger lecture).

**IV. Oversight**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Per the University of Toledo Board of Trustees (BOT) bylaws (UT policy 3364-1-01), the BOT retains the ultimate authority to approve and/or initiate the educational programs and academic requirements of the University. Curricular authority is delegated to the Provost by the BOT and President. The Collective Bargaining Agreement for Tenured/Tenure-track faculty and Lecturers stipulates that the administration must seek input from the Faculty Senate on undergraduate curriculum, including the addition or elimination of academic courses, certificates, programs and degrees; standards and requirements for undergraduate degrees; academic rules, regulations, policies and standards regarding undergraduate students; and the reorganization of Colleges and Departments.

**FACULTY SENATE**

**Overview.** In practice, most of the work related to the Core curriculum occurs within the UToledo Faculty Senate, particularly the Core curriculum committee.Before turning to the Core curriculum committee in particular, it is important to note some of the key features of Senate as a governing body.

**Mission.** The Faculty Senate is an elected body of faculty that describes its mission as “the responsibility to promote the mission, function and interests of the University of Toledo and its faculty” (Faculty Senate Constitution). The university Core is just one of Senate’s many responsibilities.

**Membership.** Members of Faculty Senate are elected from continuing, full-time members of the university faculty (Constitution Article III). Senators are elected for 3-year terms and may be re-elected for another, subsequent 3-year term. If they are elected for two terms in a row (six years total), at which point they are ineligible for re-election for one full year, after which they may be elected again.Many of the current representatives have had long careers as Senators, serving for six years at a time with one year off in between.

**Structure.** The Faculty Senate has three main structural units:

1. **Executive Committee**, including the Senate President. Prepares the bi-monthly agendas and manages both the Senate’s ad hoc committees and standing committees.
2. **Senators.** 64 Senators represent all of the institution’s Colleges plus the Library. The College of Medicine and Life Sciences has the most representation with 14 Senators, while the College of Arts and Letters comes in a close second with 13 Senators. The College of Natural Sciences and Math has 8 Senators, and all other Colleges have between 1-6 Senators.
3. **Standing Committees**. There are 9 standing committees run by the UToledo Faculty Senate. Each committee consists of one representative from each College including the Library. The committees report through the Fac Senate Executive Committee directly to the Senate.

**NB**. The Constitution does not have bylaws that dictate by what point in the year committee appointments must be made. Historically, the timing of assigning both Chairs and committee members has varied widely, with some committees getting populated early in the academic year and others considerably later.

**CORE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

**Overview.** Of Faculty Senate’s nine standing committees, three are devoted to undergraduate curriculum: (1) (2) Academic Programs committee; (2) Undergraduate Curriculum committee, and (3) Core Curriculum committee. The Core Curriculum Committee addresses all matters related to the Core.

**Membership.** Any member of the faculty may be appointed to the Core committee. The Core committee membership is re-populated annually (by the Committee on Committees). Senators are often re-appointed to the same standing committees, but not always, so the membership of the Core committee rotates regularly. The Faculty Senate President is responsible for appointing the Core committee Chair, and the Provost’s office is allowed to appoint one non-voting liaison.

**Duties.** The Faculty Senate Constitution assigns the Core Curriculum Committee duties that are numerous and broad in their scope (see Faculty Senate description <https://www.utoledo.edu/facsenate/committees.html#core-curriculum>). We have listed the constitutional duties here followed by the ways the Core committee typically operationalizes them:

1. **Review and recommend guidelines for implementing the Core.** The Core committee makes recommendations to Faculty Senate regarding implementing the Core. For example, the Core committee’s 2019-2020 report on assessment practices made several recommendations regarding improving the process for managing the Core; these recommendations were included in a written report and also presented to the full Faculty Senate body. However, there is no established process by which these recommendations get reviewed, modified or rejected, and then implemented. The recommendations the committee made in 2020 have not been acted upon.
2. **Review and recommend courses for inclusion in the Core.** The Core committee typically prioritizes this responsibility, ensuring that it reviews and recommends courses for inclusion in the Core in a timely manner. All Core course modifications, new courses proposed for the Core, and existing courses submitted for inclusion in the Core must be evaluated by the Core Curriculum Committee and then recommended (or not) to Faculty Senate.
3. **Collect data on Core course offerings.** With the assistance of the Provost’s office and particularly the Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review, the Core committee analyzes the data that come from the annual assessment of Core courses.
4. **Monitor syllabi to ensure that course objectives meet Core requirements.** The Core committee does not have a process in place for monitoring Core syllabuses.
5. **Review and make recommendations on all proposals within 30 days.** The Core committee makes every effort to review curriculum that has been submitted to it within 30 days. Some glitches in the new online curriculum tracking system in Spring and Fall 2020 created some delays when curriculum was not routed to the committee Chair, but those have since been resolved.
6. **Oversee the implementation of the University’s Transfer Module.** In practice, the Core committee has never overseen the implementation of the Ohio Transfer Module (OTM). The Provost’s office manages this process. (For more details on the OTM, see Part III of this document, “State Requirements.”)
7. **Approve courses that are proposed for inclusion in the Transfer Module.** Again, in practice, the Core committee has never approved courses for the OTM; the Provost’s office manages this process.
8. **Institute and implement ongoing assessment methods for evaluating the efficacy of the Core.** The Core committee oversees assessment for the UToledo Core with support from the Provost’s office. The Senate maintains a distinct set of student learning outcomes for the Core curriculum as mentioned in **Section II** of this report, while the Provost’s office makes the university’s Assessment Director available to the committee and sometimes, as currently, assigns her to the committee as the Provost’s faculty liaison. The relationship between the Senate the Provost’s office in regard to assessment of the Core is not spelled out explicitly, however; for example, it is not always clear who is supposed to initiate processes. The lack of clarity sometimes stalls action, leading to delays in assessment.
9. **Institute and implement ongoing assessment methods for evaluating the efficacy of the Core.** The Provost’s office, particularly the Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review, offers significant support for this process. In 2019-2020, the Core committee formed a faculty sub-committee on Core assessment as well as a Core assessment task force to ensure the active assessment of the Core.

The Core committee does not have a body of governing documents or policies that dictate how it fulfills the above duties.

(See Part III, “Curricular Processes,” for more information on Core committee practices.)

**CORE RESOURCES**

Like all of the Faculty Senate standing committees (with the exception of the Executive committee), the Core committee does not have any resources formally assigned to it.

The university provides Faculty Senate with a website that includes its membership, committee assignments, meeting schedule, and relevant documents such as the agenda, minutes, and constitution. That website does not function as an online archive for the records or work in progress of its various committees. Faculty Senate also does not maintain a shared drive with its committees. The current Core committee has archival records that date back to 2013-14 that were kept by a dedicated Core committee member, who then shared them on a flash drive with the current committee Chair. The current Chair has continued to maintain the records and will share them with the next committee Chair.

The Provost’s office has supported the Core committee’s efforts when it has made specific requests. For example, when the Core committee Chair requested compensation for the faculty who had been assigned to the special Core assessment committee and the Core task force in 2019-2020, the Provost’s office provided stipends to those faculty members. (To clarify, these funds were not awarded to members of the Core committee, just requested by the Chair to encourage faculty participation in these other sub-committees.) Similarly, the Provost’s office is underwriting the cost of this external review.

The Core committee does not have any dedicated secretarial support. The Provost’s office sometimes assists when requested; for example, the Provost’s office secretary helped the committee find available times and schedule its bi-monthly meetings in Spring 2021. Faculty Senate has a secretary assigned to it, but to date that position has consisted of work for the Faculty Senate Executive Committee plus the task of transcribing and archiving the minutes of the bi-monthly meetings.

**V. Assessment**

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

[Core Curriculum Catalog](https://catalog.utoledo.edu/general-section/university-undergraduate-core-curriculum/)

As stated earlier, the Faculty Senate Core curriculum committee oversees assessment for the UToledo Core with support from the Provost’s office. The Senate maintains a distinct set of student learning outcomes for the Core curriculum: communication; personal, social, and global responsibility; critical thinking and integrative learning; scientific and quantitative reasoning and literacy; and information literacy.

In 2017, the university collaboratively developed clearly stated institutional student learning outcomes to provide a framework for measuring student achievement in in five broad categories: Specified Knowledge, Broad and Integrative Knowledge, Intellectual Skills, Civic and Global Learning, and Applied Learning. [ISLOs](https://www.utoledo.edu/aapr/assessment/ISLOs.html) The current core curriculum assessment plan outlines the alignment between the core vs. institutional student learning outcomes.

**COURSE REPORTS AND STUDENT ARTIFACT REVIEW**

**Overview.** Departments contributing courses to the core curriculum complete an annual assessment report for each Ohio Transfer Module (OTM) course taught in the curriculum. The report documents the alignment of the course student learning outcome(s) with the core curriculum student learning outcomes, measures used to assess student learning relative to that outcome, and the percentage of students who either met, exceeded, or did not meet the intended outcome. The departments are also asked to describe the actions taken to improve the course based on their analysis of the results. Departments contributing courses to the core curriculum review assessment data at the course-level and use the information to improve student learning in their individual courses. The individual core curriculum course-level assessment reports are secured, maintained, and archived in the online assessment tracking tool. All faculty and staff members may review reports by using their UTAD credentials to access the system. (See Appendix E for sample assessment course reports.)

**Analysis of Assessment Practices.** In the 2019-2020 academic year, the Faculty Senate Committee on Core Curriculum conducted a longitudinal analysis of the core curriculum reports to review and address some of the challenges with the current process and presented their findings to the Faculty Senate. The Core Curriculum Committee also began to develop an internal system to review samples of student artifacts aligned with each core student learning outcome. The committee appointed a task force in the spring of 2019 to develop a rubric to review student artifacts from the courses aligned with the critical thinking and integrative learning student learning outcome. Although the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the collection of student artifacts, the rubric was developed, and the institution plans to conduct an internal review of the student work in 2020-2021. The same student artifacts will also be submitted to Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) Institute for their spring 2020-2021 review.

**PROVOST OFFICE SUPPORT**

The current comprehensive external program review of the core curriculum is fully supported by the Office of the Provost, which has provided significant assistance with the assessment process through the Office of Assessment, Accreditation, and Program Review, and which is also providing support for this external review. However, neither Faculty Senate nor the Core committee have any governing documents that make explicit what processes related to Core duties the Core committee members should be responsible for initiating and implementing, and which should be run by the Provost’s office. In other words, there is some ambiguity about the relationship between the Provost’s office and the Core committee in terms of managing and assessing the Core that can sometimes paralyze forward momentum.

The Core curriculum committee noted in their 2019-2020 longitudinal analysis a need to address shortfalls in their assessment process and determined that to do so within the broader context of an evaluation of the program was warranted. At the request of the Chair of the Core curriculum committee, this project was prioritized and funded through the Office of the Provost.

The University Assessment Director serves as the liaison between the Office of the Provost and the core curriculum committee, assisting with the data collection of course reports, and the coordination of the internal student artifact review. The office also offers to help faculty and staff write effective learning outcome statements, and to improve the alignment between course-embedded assessment and student learning outcomes. The office also reviews and offers periodic feedback to departments on the required elements of their syllabi, including course student learning outcomes statements. In the fall of 2019, all course syllabi affiliated with the core curriculum were reviewed. (See Appendix F for Core Syllabus report.)

**VI. Questions and Issues**

The current Core committee has worked hard to create space in its bi-monthly meetings for a larger conversation about the Core’s mission and values that extends beyond the local work of reviewing individual course submissions. Such questions include:

* Is the Core effectively fulfilling its broad mission?
* Are the current practices and processes used to maintain the Core effective? What could be done better?
* What mechanisms or policies are in place that help to ensure high quality Core courses?
* Does the percentage of Tenure-track/Tenured versus contingent faculty who teach in the Core impact its quality, positively or negatively?
* What is the role of the Core in supporting an education that values human diversity? More specifically, are the multicultural requirements effective?
* Is there an ideal size for the Core, or a limit to how many courses it should include?
* How does the Core contribute to the persistence and retention of students? (See Appendix N related to Core GPA and DFW rates.)
* How do we maintain a coherent assessment of the Core curriculum?
* Do Core courses cover all of the SLOs within the Core?

**VII. Appendices**

**Appendix A.** UToledo Institutional Data Report, 2019-20.

**Appendix B**. UToledo current Strategic Plan.

**Appendix C.** Fall 2020 Facts at a Glance.

**Appendix D.** 2018 Community Engagement Report.

**Appendix E1, E2, E3.** Sample Course Assessment Reports.

**Appendix F.** CoreSyllabus Report.

**Appendix G.** Core Curriculum Committee report on assessment practices in the 2019-2020 AY.

**Appendix H.** Overview of the UToledo Core Curriculum from the course catalog. <https://catalog.utoledo.edu/general-section/university-undergraduate-core-curriculum/>

**Appendix I.** List of UToledo Core Curriculum courses from the course catalog. <https://catalog.utoledo.edu/general-section/university-undergraduate-core-curriculum/courses/>

**Appendix J.** Excel spreadsheet with detailed catalog and enrollment information for all courses in the UToledo Core Curriculum. Enrollment data are from the past five academic years (Summer 2015 – Spring 2020) and courses are sorted by enrollment in descending order.

**Appendix K.** PDF with table showing average GPA by course category from the past five academic years (Summer 2015 – Spring 2020). Courses are categorized by general education distributive requirement - Composition, Humanities, Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science or not general education. Courses are separately classified by multicultural category – non-Western, US diversity or not multicultural.

Average GPA calculated separately for the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM) because the majority of core courses are offered by these two colleges. A small number of core courses are offered by other colleges; the average GPA for these courses is reflected in a separate column in addition to overall averages. Values shown are mean ± SD with number of course grades used in each calculation.

**Appendix L.** PDF with table showing DFW rates by course category from the past five academic years (Summer 2015 – Spring 2020). As with average GPA, results are classified by general education distributive requirement and multicultural category; and DFW averages are calculated separately for CAL, NSM, other colleges and overall.

**Appendix M.** PDF with table numeric student course evaluation results by course category from Fall 2019 and Fall 2020, the two semesters in which a new online student course evaluation system was utilized. Again, results are classified by general education distributive requirement and multicultural category; and average scores are calculated separately for CAL, NSM, other colleges and overall.

Ten separate tables are shown – one table for average scores across all nine questions followed by individual tables for each of the nine questions. Numeric results are from a Likert scale where 0 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree to each of the questions asked. Values shown are mean ± SD with number of course evaluation scores used in each calculation.

**Appendix N.** Some Core data related to DFW rates and GPA.