True Blue Core Committee Meeting Minutes

December 01, 2023

**Voting members in attendance:** Leon Alligood, Laura Cochrane, Janet Colson, Teri Davis, Rebecca Fischer, Keith Gamble, Natalie Griffin, Angela Hooser, Suzanne Mangrum, Ann McCullough, Scott McDaniel, Amy Sayward, Jorge Vargas

**Voting members absent:** Yi Gu, Sungyoon Lee, Giselle Noel, Keely O’Brien, Kera Reynolds, Stephen Salter

**Ex Officio in attendance:** Susan Myers-Shirk, Jeff Gibson

**Implementation Team in attendance:** Christabel Devadoss, Tammy Melton, Kristen West, Elizabeth Wright

**Faculty Senate Observers in attendance:** Kari Neely

**True Blue Core Team in attendance:** Christina Cobb

**Guests:** Suzanne Sutherland, Kate Goodwin, Rebecca Calahan, Emily Baran, Greg Schmidt, Kimberly Evert, Don Hong, Mary Beth Asbury, Danielle Lauber, Natalie Hoskins, Lu Xiong, Robb McDaniel

Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Tabled items were discussed first.

## DATA 2025 Communicating with Data

Proposed for Non-written Communication

Interdisciplinary proposal with Keith Gamble, director, MTSU Data Science Institute and TBC Committee member, representing data science faculty.

New materials were provided that changed the number of sections offered and their cap to 25 students per section. Gamble provided an example of an assessable assignment in video format which illustrated what a student could produce at the end of the course. It also demonstrated how the assessable assignment aligned with the SLOs for the TBC.

The video also demonstrated the limited quantitative skills that are required to visually represent the data. Gamble remarked about the fit of the course for the Non-Written Communication category because it was designed for that category.

Gamble observed that this course addresses how to take a data set and tell a story with it and show what information you can get out of the data set. Students need to effectively communicate the stories they learn from their data sets.

### Approved: 13-0-0

## PS 1040 Dystopias, Dictators and Democracies

Proposed for Explorations in Civic Learning

Department represented by Robb McDaniel, the department’s TBC liaison

Changes recommended by the committee at the previous meeting were made by the course originator, Amy Atchison from Political Science. The proposal was approved with no discussion.

### Approved: 13-0-0

For the remaining proposals on the agenda, the committee discussed proposals by category rather than order of submission.

## HIST 2065 Themes in Global History

Proposed for the Explorations in Civic Learning

Department represented by Emily Baran, department chair; Suzanne Sutherland, departmental TBC liaison and coordinator for history in the TBC.

There was a question about how topics work in addressing the breadth of knowledge needed in General Education. While this course is focused on aviation, it will address aviation through time and around the globe.

No questions on the content

### Approved: 13/13

## ART 1040 Topics in Art and Design

Proposed for Explorations in Creativity and Cultural Expression

Represented by Laura Cochane, TBC departmental liaison and committee member

Committee requested correction of a category left out of the assignments breakdown in the syllabus. Course originator amended the syllabus and uploaded an updated version to Curriculog on December 01, 2023.

### Approved: with a friendly amendment, 13-0-0

## THEATRE 1820 Discovering Drama: A Playscript Study

Proposed for Explorations in Creativity and Cultural Expression

Department represented by Kate Goodwin, TBC departmental liaison

There was considerable discussion about whether the course should have been proposed literature requirement because the includes script reading and analysis in the syllabus. This suggestion came from the committee and not the course originator who said they were “trying to stay in their lane,” but also welcomed its possible inclusion in literature requirement.

There was further discussion about what was being approved today: just inclusion in the category or the category + literature.

TBC director, Myers-Shirk, asked the committee to limit its discussion/decision to whether the course should be approved as proposed for Explorations in Creativity and Cultural Expression. The question of whether the course could be included as a literature requirement needed further research and to be addressed as a separate question. Myers-Shirk promised to explore the options and report back to the committee.

### Approved as proposed: 13-0-0

## FOED 2000 How People Learn

Proposed for Explorations in Human Society and Social Relationships

Department represented by Kimberly Evert, TBC departmental liaison

Committee discussion began with the question of why the course originator chose B2 Inquiry 7 and Analysis as the secondary outcome for the course.

Evert responded that the course was developed by a committee. The assessable assignment involves the collecting of information and then analyzing it. It was the nature of the assignment that led to the selection of the secondary outcome.

TBC director, Myers-Shirk, reaffirmed the value of identifying a secondary outcome and reminded the committee that currently secondary outcomes are not being assessed; only the primary outcomes are required to be assessed. SACSCOC requires that we collect some kind of data on secondary outcomes, but identifying secondary outcomes and tracking them is sufficient at this stage.

Committee members suggested that this might be a good way to build out a blueprint that is based on learning outcomes. Having the secondary outcome can allow for more possible combinations.

## Approved: 13-0-0

## LSTS 2000 Leisure in Your Life

Proposed for Explorations in Human Society and Social Relationships

Department represented by Danielle Lauber, course originator

There was much discussion of the assessable assignment, including the complications of assessing group work. While the committee noted that the group work was well-structured and thoughtful, some members expressed concern about what it would mean for the assessment.

A discussion about the general nature of assessment ensued. TBC Director, Myers-Shirk, noted that all modalities of a course will need to be assessed. This includes dual-enrollment sections, which may include minors (students under the age of 18). Because of this, the committee must select artifacts carefully, particularly avoding videorecording, since those do not permit anonymization. For this reason, in non-written communication courses, videos are not being collected. Instead, the instructors’ evaluation sheets can be used as the artifact. There is a pilot assessment happening at the end of this semester with the non-written communication courses where this method will be used so we will have some idea of how well that works.

With this in mind and in light of the additional information provided by the course originator, the committee recommended that the individual research be assessed for this course and the course originator agreed.

### Approved: 13-0-0

## PSY 2180 Thinking: Intelligence and Creativity

Proposed for Explorations in Human Society and Social Relationships

Department represented by Teri Davis, TBC departmental liaison and TBC Committee member

Proposal approved as submitted with no committee discussion

### Approved: 13-0-0

## Comm 2100 Introduction to Human Communication

Proposed for Foundational Skills—Non-Written Communication

Department represented by Mary Beth Asbury, Chair, and Natalie Hoskins, TBC departmental liaison

Discussion began with a question from the committee: How is this different from Comm 2200, other than students might look at it as an academic field?

Professors Asbury and Hoskins responded: This course was already in the catalog but was redesigned with fewer speaking opportunities. Students will develop skills similar to those they develop in COMM 2200, but they are also getting a large unit which is an exploration of the discipline, including fundamental concepts and principles. The course provides a good introduction to Communication Studies as a discipline.

Committee members followed up with this question: What % would you say is the overlap between the courses?

Professors Asbury and Hoskins responded: COMM 2200 class focuses on one area of communication studies – rhetoric This includes audience analysis, incorporating and researching sources, and planning a speech. COMM 2100 includes nonverbal, intergroup communication, intercultural communication, etc. We wanted to include this class as well to show that the discipline is more than just speeches. While, yes, rhetoric is important, we want to give people more breadth of understanding about the field in this class.

The committee followed up with another question: 1800 seats are going to be offered, or 75 sections?

Professors Asbury & Hoskins responded: COMM 2200 has been our gen ed course forever. We assumed that we would disperse our previous enrollment in the new TBC. We have so many students in COMM 2200 so we thought that would be the same, but the numbers will probably shift now that two of the courses are in gen ed. And people will not be allowed to take both courses. We can amend the number of sections in the syllabus. However, there will probably be 20 or 30 sections of the course. Maybe 50 sections--because students like fewer speeches--with 25 seats.

Approved: 13-0-0 as amended; The change to the seat/section estimate was made by the TBC director on December 01, 2023. An amended syllabus was uploaded to Curriculog by the course originator on December 06, 2023,

## ACSI 2100 Introduction to Actuarial Science

Proposed for Foundational Skills--Quantitative Literacy

Department represented by Don Hong and Lu Xiong

Chair Ann McCullough expressed concern about whether the course should be included in the general education curriculum since SACSCOC Policy 9.3 prohibits inclusion of courses that “focus [too narrowly] on "those skills, techniques, and procedures specific to a particular occupation or profession."

Others had similar feedback:

* One committee member observed that the course didn’t strike them as a gen ed course because it was very specific and geared toward actuarial science. Further, the textbooks assigned were about actuarial science and not broader in scope.
* Another committee member commented on the syllabus, noting that the grading policy did not include the data analysis project submitted as an example of an assessable assignment. Professors Hong and Xiong responded that while it was not currently included in the evaluation table, it actually counted as 30% of the grade because it was part of the homework grade. They indicated it could be broken out from the other homework assignments. It assumes a certain level of understanding of terms that our students don’t have.
* Another committee member commented that the course was not appropriate for general education because it required higher-level statistical math.

Professors Hong and Xiong indicated that they were willing to make changes to the course but that their primary interest in applying for the course to be included in general education was to make students more aware of actuarial sciences, is a “signature program” at MTSU, and to make students aware of employment opportunities in actuarial sciences.

The committee discussed whether they should vote or table the proposal. The committee indicated to Professors Hong and Xiong that a simple name change would not satisfy the committee, and that there would need to be a substantive revision of the course content and selection of course materials not focused specifically on the field of actuarial sciences.

NOTE: On Thursday, December 07, 2023, Professors Hong and Xiong notified the Director of the True Blue Core that they wished to withdraw their course from consideration for the Core; the course was withdrawn from TBC consideration forced through to the Provost’s Office in Curriculog.

### Tabled: 11-1-0