In June 2009, New Mexico State Secretary of Higher Education Peter White appointed Michelle Hall Kells, Associate Professor of English, to chair a task force for the purpose of discussing the strengths and weaknesses the University of New Mexico core curriculum. The attached report describes the work done over the last academic year by the Core Curriculum Task Force (CCTF), currently a group of more than two dozen faculty, staff, administrators and students from across the UNM campus.

At all phases of its operation, the CCTF has engaged a deliberative process toward a shared governance model. The CCTF did its utmost to be open, transparent and inclusive. During its formation, invitations for participation were sent to more than fifty faculty, staff, administrators and students. The CCTF has involved stakeholders from both UNM and CNM to address questions about what is working and what needs to be improved to promote student success and satisfaction with the current core curriculum.

The CCTF’s subcommittees researched and discussed their topics (see below) and reported findings at monthly meetings of the entire Task Force, allowing for discussion within and between groups. The CCTF’s final two meetings, held March 5 and April 9, 2010, were open to the public and targeted the input and participation of undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, administrators, and faculty. Both open meetings were highly publicized and covered by UNM Today, and held in UNM’s SUB to standing-room-only audiences who engaged the subcommittee chairs with questions and suggestions. Included as appendices in this report are minutes from those meetings, along with surveys of students, faculty and staff on their views of the core curriculum. The final report of the CCTF and additional supporting materials are available at the UNM WAC Website at: www.unm.edu/~wac/core

The Task Force respectfully submits this report in hopes that staff, administration, faculty and students can continue to work together to improve the core curriculum.
Final Report of the University of New Mexico Core Curriculum Task Force

Task Force Chair
Michelle Hall Kells, Associate Professor of English

Subcommittee Chairs
Chuck Fleddermann, Associate Dean, School of Engineering
Stefani Hines, Assistant Dean for Assessment, College of Pharmacy
Kathleen Keating, Professor of University Libraries
Wanda Martin, Director of Core Writing, Department of English
Doug Thomas, Associate Dean of Accreditation, Anderson School of Management

Provost Office Advisor
Wynn Goering, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

Secretary
Dan Cryer, PhD Student, English

Submitted 15 May 2010
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Executive Summary

The Core Curriculum Task Force Report is divided into five sections reflecting the findings of the Task Force’s five subcommittees, organized by the following topics: Educational Values, Educational Models, Student Learning Outcomes, Transfers and Writing Across the Curriculum. Subcommittee reports were completed individually but were informed by monthly meetings of the entire Task Force, so each should be read as an integral piece of the larger report. This summary coalesces the findings of the subcommittees into a set of observations about what’s working in the core, what’s not working, followed by a list of suggested courses of action for improving UNM’s core curriculum.

What’s Working

- UNM Student Learning Outcomes cover 3 of the 4 LEAP outcomes
- Core curriculum provides a broad range of courses that introduce students to a variety of disciplines
- Courses from other universities transfer easily to UNM’s core requirements

What’s Not Working

The following is a set of common findings that run through the Task Force report. They are not necessarily reflected in the report of each subcommittee, but emerge as a set of themes upon which the Task Force members agree.

- The content and outcomes of the core are currently not assessed.
- The core curriculum is based on courses rather than outcomes. This has several negative effects:
  - outcomes of the core are not assessable
  - transfer students can bring in courses that may satisfy requirements without providing them with the outcomes or skills the core intends them to possess
  - students can end up with widely varying outcomes from courses that fulfill the same core requirements
  - students who’ve taken upper-division courses that fulfill and extend the outcomes of lower-division courses must still take lower-division courses to satisfy the core
- The core curriculum comprises only lower-division courses, so students aren’t able to engage meaningfully with the core throughout their academic careers.
- No presentation of the core curriculum provides a clear articulation of general education goals and how they relate to core coursework, meaning that many students, faculty and staff are unclear on the core curriculum’s purpose.
- The current core curriculum places a disproportionate teaching burden on certain departments – particularly English and Math.
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE CORE

The following statement, excerpted from the Transfers subcommittee report, provides the single best, generalized statement of the Task Force’s recommendations:

The [Transfers] Subcommittee hopes the Task Force will consider recommending a model in which the “Core Curriculum,” now confined to an impoverished list of lower-division courses, becomes a broad and deep set of learning outcomes, in the lower division and the upper, in the majors and across the curriculum, that students could satisfy through a variety of means—taking courses, making public presentations, producing demonstrable results, or posting electronic portfolios. This (admittedly labor-intensive) approach need not disadvantage students transferring “Core” courses from NM colleges; all of these courses could still transfer and count toward degree requirements. But it would provide a more appropriate general education experience for students graduating from a research university, prompting them, at each stage of their education, to demonstrate the competencies that we claim characterize a UNM education.

With the above quote in mind as a statement of general recommendations, the following is offered as a distilled list of more specific recommendations from the five subcommittee reports.

The Core Curriculum Task Force recommends that the university
1. Develop a rationale, or explanation of purpose, for the core curriculum that is clearly presented and made available to students, faculty, advisors and administrators.
2. Support oversight of the core curriculum in a recognizable, capable and broadly representative body of faculty, staff and administrators.
3. Make faculty aware of the three existing UNM Learning Goals, which are based on LEAP’s four outcomes\(^1\); add to these goals LEAP’s fourth outcome (Integrative Learning) to promote higher-order critical thinking skills.
4. Create a set of Student Learning Outcomes, more specific than the general UNM Learning Goals, to guide the core curriculum with a coherent vision.
5. Build guidelines for faculty who want to propose courses for the core, explaining what is required for approval.
6. Develop and implement a university Writing Across the Curriculum program.

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\(^1\) The Association of American Colleges and Universities’ LEAP Outcomes are 1) Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World; 2) Intellectual and Practical Skills; 3) Personal and Social Responsibility; and, 4) Integrative Learning.
Core Curriculum Task Force Members

Chair: Michelle Hall Kells, Associate Professor, English
WAC Program Chair

**Educational Values Subcommittee:**
Chair: Chuck Fleddermann,
   Associate Dean, School of Engineering
Michael Nakamaye
   Professor, Math and Statistics
Gary Smith
   Director, OSET
Mark Childs
   Assistant Professor, Architecture & Planning
Rosalie Otero
   Director, University Honors Program
Veronica Mendez-Cruz
   Director, El Centro De La Raza
Gregory Evans
   Graduate Assistant, English

**Learning Outcomes Subcommittee:**
Chair: Stephani Hines
   Assistant Dean for Assessment, College of Pharmacy
Tom Root
   Outcomes Assessment Manager
Craig Timm
   Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education
Stephanie Hand
   Director Academic Advisement: Arts & Sciences
Steven Verney
   Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychology
Daniel Sanford
   Program Specialist, CAPS
Mark Ondrias
   Associate Dean, University College

**Gen Ed Models Subcommittee:**
Chair: Kathleen Keating
   Professor, University Libraries
Vicky Kauffman
   Director, Pre Calculus, Math and Statistics
Valerie Romero-Leggett
   UNM School of Medicine
Beverly Singer
   Director, Institute for American Indian Research
Amy Neel
   Associate Professor, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

**WAC Subcommittee:**
Chair: Doug Thomas
   Associate Dean of Accreditation, Anderson School of Management
Chuck Paine
   Associate Professor, English
Karen Olson
   Director, CAPS
Dan Cryer
   Graduate Assistant, English

**Transfer Students Subcommittee:**
Chair: Wanda Martin
   Director, Core Writing Program
Merle Kennedy
   Staff Council, Executive Committee
Nancy Middlebrook
   University Accreditation Director
Vanessa Harris
   Advisement Director, University College
Vicky Morris-Dueer
   Data Analyst, Institutional Research Office
Erin Lebacqz
   Associate Dean, CNM

**ASUNM Representative:**
Brian Moore, Undergraduate, Economics

**Faculty Senate Representative:**
Doug Fields, Professor

**Provost Office Representative:**
Wynn Goering, Associate Provost
Values Subcommittee Report

The values subcommittee of the core curriculum task force was asked to consider three questions: 1) How does the existing UNM core reflect LEAP outcomes? 2) Should the UNM core simply be a “distribution requirement” for undergraduate education? And 3) Does the current UNM core support or defeat student success.

1) As a starting point for reinvigorating the UNM core curriculum, the values subcommittee felt that an undergraduate education at UNM should reflect the Essential Learning Outcomes (LEAP Outcomes) developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. These four outcomes are 1) Knowledge of Human Cultures and Physical and Natural World; 2) Intellectual and Practical Skills; 3) Personal and Social Responsibility; and, 4) Integrative Learning. Each undergraduate curriculum at UNM should reflect these four outcomes in a way appropriate to the discipline. These four outcomes should be addressed throughout each curriculum as students develop the knowledge and skills important to their disciplines in a sequential way during their studies. Thus, the LEAP outcomes cannot be addressed in their entirety by a core curriculum that consists of a set of first and second year courses. Rather, these outcomes, and hence the UNM “core,” must also be woven into each undergraduate degree program. The core should not be a set of courses taken during the first two years, but rather should be a set of courses, or topics within courses, that lead to completion of the LEAP outcomes in a discipline appropriate way.

It should be noted that the values subcommittee is making a distinction in the way we define “core” compared to the way core is understood within New Mexico. As we know, the state mandates a general education core that is transferable between institutions. This is essentially a transfer module that is intended to allow students to transfer courses between institutions in New Mexico. The values subcommittee is referring to the “core” in a different way; we are discussing the core skills and knowledge that students should acquire through the course of their entire undergraduate education, not just in the first two years.

The values subcommittee feels that the UNM core, in reflecting the LEAP outcomes, should seek to create a set of core “threads” that are discipline specific and ensure that students meet the LEAP outcomes in a way that is appropriate for the major. The threads would be a pathway through each curriculum that would begin at the introductory level and would continue through the student’s time at UNM. The key is that the threads would allow each UNM student to complete the LEAP outcomes in a manner appropriate for the degree program. For example, at graduation a philosophy student should have acquired the critical thinking skills required to read, analyze, and understand philosophical texts, whereas an engineering student will have acquired the mathematical, basic science, and engineering science skills to critically evaluate design choices. Same outcome, but different pathways to achieving the outcome.

2) The values subcommittee feels that the current UNM core is basically modeled as a “distribution requirement” for undergraduate students. This model is not unusual in higher education in the US. While the committee feels that it is important for all students to have
some knowledge in disciplines outside their own, it is not necessarily best accomplished through choosing from a smorgasbord of courses. Rather, the committee feels that the intent of having students learn about other disciplines should be to expose students to the methods of inquiry in disciplines outside their own. For example, students shouldn’t necessarily take a literature course so that they can read, analyze, and discuss good books. Rather, in the context of the UNM core, the goal should be for students to learn how literature is analyzed by those in the field, to determine what are the important questions for those in the field, and perhaps, to see how the methodology of literary critics might be applied to their own fields.

3) The subcommittee feels that the question of whether the UNM core supports or defeats student success depends on the definition of success. If by success we mean does the current core help or hinder a student’s progress towards degree completion within 4-5 years, then the answer is that at best the core is neutral, or at worst (according to student input), the core is a hindrance to student success.

If on the other hand, we are asking whether the core supports student success beyond graduation either in a student’s chosen career or more generally, in life, then the question becomes more difficult to answer. Overall, the answer is probably that the core helps some students and doesn’t help others in these areas.

However, the subcommittee feels that for either of these definitions of success, a redesign of the core along the lines of threads that support individual majors will aid in ensuring that students progress towards degree completion in a timely manner, and will support ultimate student success in life better than the current core does.

The subcommittee was mindful of one other issue that needs to be addressed: how the core relates to transfer students. This is important both for students starting at other schools in New Mexico as well as students transferring from out of state. The subcommittee feels that the core should be designed in such a way that transfer students are not slowed as they progress towards graduation. Thus, it is essential that the work done by in-state transfers as part of the NM general education core be integrated into a new core. In addition, the core threads applicable to each program will have to be adapted to the needs of transfer students.
Core Curriculum Models Subcommittee Report

BACKGROUND
Our committee was charged with investigating how other universities create and govern general education. We found that there is a great deal of change going on around the country, everywhere from Harvard to Montana State University. We compared the core curriculum at UNM to core curricula at our peer institutions (such as NMSU, UNLV, and the University of Arizona) and to large public research universities who have recently undergone changes to their general education programs (such as Indiana University and Michigan State).

FINDINGS
We found descriptions of three models of general education, usually related to the type of institution. Two models are generally associated with small liberal arts or church-affiliated schools: the Great Book model focuses on the perennial human questions using the canon of Western literature, and the Effective Citizen model intends to educate students in the service of democracy or religious life. The Scholarly Discipline model, which is very common at large public research universities, is designed to produce beginning practitioners of various disciplines. Core curricula under the Scholarly Discipline model generally take the form of a distribution of required courses in which students “dip their toes into different pools of mostly introductory level discipline based learning.”

We examined core curricula from the following institutions: Indiana University, New Mexico State University, University of Arizona, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Michigan State University, University of Oklahoma, and Central New Mexico Community College. Like our peer institutions, UNM employs the Scholarly Discipline model and has a set of distribution requirements – courses in particular categories must be passed in order to fulfill the core curriculum requirements. We found that our core is relatively similar to that of our peer institutions with the exception that many institutions have more options for fulfilling core requirements than UNM (for example, using upper-division courses to satisfy the core). Other universities focus on achieving outcomes rather than completing specific courses. We noted several trends across the country. Universities are capitalizing on multi-disciplinary and cross-department cooperation. There is more emphasis on activity-based and inquiry-based learning, and schools are requiring courses which foster inquiry, abstract logical thinking, critical analysis, and the synthesis of knowledge. Schools are incorporating diversity requirements that incorporate studies of gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and non-western topics. Some institutions are using exit exams after completion of core courses to ensure the quality of general education.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Because it is unlikely that UNM will change its basic model of a set of distribution requirements (whether those are satisfied by particular courses or by achieving learning outcomes), we focused on suggestions for making that model work better. Our most important recommendation is that we need a clearly stated set of purposes and principles of general education. We must develop a rationale for the core curriculum that is clearly explained to students, faculty, advisors, and administrators. Instead of having students view core requirements as a barrier to getting into
their major or postponing graduation, we must convince them that there are valid reasons for taking the core courses – that we are educating for their entire future, not just their first job. We found excellent resources for statements of purpose. Indiana University’s general education website has a beautiful rationale for general education, and UNLV and Michigan State have informative statements as well.

Next, we must have strong faculty oversight of the core curriculum and a review process. The HLC accreditation report from last year noted that no one at UNM has taken responsibility for general education, and we believe that the faculty must take on that role. Fortunately during this process, we recovered some Faculty Senate documents dating from 1997 and 1998 that describe how the Faculty Senate Curricula Committee should govern the core – it was directed to invite additions and changes to the core for each new catalog and to institute periodic review of the core. The Curricula Committee is requesting a change to its charge to make sure governance of the core is included and also it will develop guidelines for adding or deleting courses from the core. Notification of core changes must be routed to all relevant groups, including Registrars Office, all University advisors, Colleges and Schools, Provost’s Office, and the NM Higher Education Department. Digital archiving of all documents related to the core is imperative.

For UNM’s core curriculum to succeed, we must have strong advising. Distributed models depend on excellent advising. The faculty must support initiatives to improve advising on campus. We must also collaborate with university advisors to ensure that all parties involved with students are committed to showing students the importance of core coursework to their overall education. In addition, core courses should be clearly identified in the catalog with special codes (as done at NMSU).

We must commit to bridging the gap between the core and higher level courses in the students’ chosen disciplines. Distributed models place the burden of integrating knowledge across courses on students. For example, Physics professors complain that their majors cannot use math to solve physics problems despite performing well in core math courses. And, of course, most faculty members complain that students cannot write in their disciplines after passing English 101 and 102. Good integrative models already exist at UNM in the form of writing across the curriculum programs. In particular, we recognize the writing program in the Anderson School of Management in overcoming the gap between the core and courses in the disciplines.

The current core curriculum places a disproportionate teaching burden on certain departments – particularly English and Math, although other departments can make the case that a substantial portion of their budget is spent on part-time instructors for core courses. We must work with the administration to make sure resources for teaching the core curriculum are appropriately distributed. These resources should include training from OSET or COE and financial incentives for faculty who participate in general education.

Finally, we recommend increased involvement of UNM faculty members with the New Mexico Higher Education Department task forces and committees. By participating on HED committees, UNM can influence core curriculum requirements throughout the state.
**Student Learning Outcomes Subcommittee Report**

**Questions & Problems**

The goal of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) subcommittee is to review existing UNM and outside resources and materials and generate broad recommendations regarding SLOs and the UNM Core Curriculum. The SLO Subcommittee addressed the following questions:

- How do the current UNM Core Competencies align with the UNM learning goals?
- Do the current UNM Core Competencies provide sufficient detail and breadth provide curricular guidance to enable UNM undergraduate students to graduate with a clearly defined minimum set of outcomes in each area (irrespective of the core curriculum courses taken)?
- What national level resources are available to help guide the review and/or development of SLOs?

**Background**

The NCA-HLC site visit team, in its 2009 *Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit*, commended UNM for adopting student learning goals based on the national Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative, but recommended the university make these goals more widely known “by seeking a more thorough alignment between its general education curriculum and these goals, and by making certain that the assessment that is conducted is well suited to determine the accomplishment of these goals.”

The team recognized that UNM, in partnership with the state New Mexico Higher Education Department (NM HED), had linked courses in its general education core to core learning competencies students are expected to achieve in six areas:

- Area 1: Writing and Speaking
- Area 2: Mathematics
- Area 3: Physical and Natural Sciences
- Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Areas 5 and 7: Humanities and Fine Arts
- Area 6: Non-English Language

The primary purpose of the Core Curricular Competencies is for transfer credits across New Mexico educational institutions (this point is brought up in Wanda’s too). They also recognized the University’s formal expectation of a systematic assessment for improvement process in those courses. However, they noted insufficient evidence that courses were completing that process and asserted that “the university has not created a definitive structure for institutional leadership of the general education curriculum…. [that would make it] clear who has responsibility for implementation of general education policies and practices, including systematic review of the curriculum, analysis of results of assessment of student achievement of core competency goals, and use of assessment results for improving student learning.”
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Student Learning Outcomes Subcommittee has accomplished the following tasks:

- Reviewed the UNM/NM HED Core Learning Objectives and considered them in the context of the types of SLOs needed to provide sufficient guidance to core curriculum courses to help ensure that all UNM students are graduating with a minimum level of proficiency in each of the Core Curriculum Areas independent of the student’s major.
- Generated a list of national-level resources and organizations that have identified minimum standards or levels of literacy for the U.S. college graduate (or, in the case of science and math the average American) in 3 of the 6 Core Competency areas: Areas 1, 2, and 3.
- Drafted an example of how a national level resource (like the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s “Science for All Americans”) can be used to create clear, high-quality, detailed yet “big-picture” student learning outcomes that can be applied in any core curriculum course in a given Area.
- Mapped the UNM Core Competencies with the UNM Learning goals for Core Competency Areas 1, 2, 3, and 6.
- Considered the current UNM Learning Goals in relation to the Association of American Colleges and Universities Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) Essential Learning Outcomes (the UNM Learning Goals were based upon the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes).
- Generated recommendations related to the findings of this committee.

GUIDING QUESTIONS AND FINDINGS

What does your subcommittee value about the current UNM Core Curriculum (what’s effective/working)?

- This structure of having 7 broad discipline areas works well to help students step outside of comfort zones and broaden horizons.
- To a certain extent, the core curriculum gives a “shared experience” for students in terms of having to take nearly the same courses, but this is also a concern (for reasons expressed by many others at the larger Task Force meetings) and the committee is uncertain of what real benefits are reaped from the “shared experience.”

What does your subcommittee want to improve (what needs to be changed)?

- Specific recommendations about what the committee wants to improve/change are under the Recommendations section.
- With respect to a very broad perspective on the core curriculum, the committee members agree with many of the general concerns expressed in the larger task force meetings. Also the SLO sub-committee members identified that students don’t know why they have to take a course. There is no clear articulation of general education goals and objectives for learning and how they relate to the core coursework.

Preliminary Findings:

How do the current UNM Core Competencies align with the UNM learning goals? Do the current UNM Core Competencies provide sufficient detail and breadth to provide curricular guidance to enable UNM undergraduate students to graduate with a clearly defined minimum set of outcomes in each area (irrespective of the core curriculum courses taken)?
The SLO Subcommittee finds that the UNM Core Competencies appropriately align with most of the UNM Learning Goals, however there are some gaps. More detailed descriptions are provided under each Area heading.

The SLO Subcommittee agrees that the UNM Core Competencies, as currently written, do not provide sufficient guidance for the UNM Core Curriculum. The UNM Core Competencies were developed for transfer course “equivalency” across the state, which is different from the Core Curriculum goal to have minimum baseline student outcomes in each of the 7 areas regardless of degree program. The Core Competencies can serve as a starting point for developing Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), but cannot stand alone as SLOs. SLOs need to define the minimum criteria expected of ALL students who graduate with a bachelor’s degree from the University of New Mexico.

The SLOs need to be specific enough to provide guidance to any approved core curriculum course addressing a specific curricular Area (e.g. writing and speaking, mathematics, etc.) such that different courses that address the same elements in the same Area (e.g. astronomy versus biology) produce students with similar outcomes. This will enable a consistency in the developments of skills, knowledge and responsibility across different courses, while enabling each course its own unique attributes. This will also enable an expansion of course offerings into the core curriculum. For example, SLOs in writing could be met by courses spanning a variety of topics in different colleges or departments (e.g. an anthropology class on the cultures of South America or a public health course in medical/health ethics), so long as each course approved in the core curriculum demonstrates meeting the SLOs.

The SLO subcommittee provides a brief summary below of their evaluation of the Core Competency alignment with the UNM Learning Goals and an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each Area Competency stands with respect to using them to guide future SLOs.

**Summary of Core Competency Alignment with UNM Learning Goals**

**Area 1: Writing and Speaking**

*Area 1 alignment with UNM Learning Goals (skills, knowledge and responsibility)*: Given that writing intersects with other disciplines rather than being a content discipline in and of itself, the focus on skills is appropriate. From the perspective of the writing conventions relevant to a particular academic department or field of study, communication has been reasonably well-addressed within each of the competencies.

*Potential for guiding SLOs*: These competencies appear to be relatively solid and complete and may provide a strong foundation for SLOs. There are some elements that are missing, such as language specifically addressing writing conventions in different disciplines (e.g. science writing). The weakest part of these competencies is making sure they are in language that is meaningful and accessible to students (e.g. replace “rhetorical strategies” with different, more accessible language).

**Area 2: Mathematics**

*Area 2 alignment with UNM Learning Goals (skills, knowledge and responsibility)*: The Area 2 Competencies are well distributed across knowledge, skills, responsibility.
Potential for guiding SLOs: Area 2 Competencies have recently been revised at the state level. The revisions are less detailed than the previous competencies and may be most appropriate for the transfer-credit issue. Additional details may need to be added as a framework for SLOs.

Area 3: Physical and Natural Sciences
Area 3 alignment with UNM Learning Goals (skills, knowledge and responsibility): Area 3 alignment with responsibility goal is a clear gap. Science has huge elements of responsibility that would be important for students to know. As written, Competency #3: Communicate scientific information can only be aligned with skills, but could be aligned with knowledge (and even responsibility) if there were emphasis on communicating accurate scientific information.

Potential for guiding SLOs: These need a fairly extensive re-working. There is not enough detail nor breadth (major elements are missing). NOTE: An example set of science SLOs have been written by this committee based upon the AAS Science for All Americans and may be used as a starting point for future work in this Area of science.

Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences
Area 4 alignment with UNM Learning Goals (skills, knowledge and responsibility): Mapping not done.

Potential for guiding SLOs: The initial assessment for Area 4 is that a moderate amount of work needs to be done with these if they were to be used as SLOs. There are missing elements (e.g. cultural aspects of psychology), in general, the Competencies are too vague, and they are oriented more towards social science than behavioral science. As written, it is difficult to tell how they would come together and be met across multiple courses in a general education program.

Area 5: Humanities – no review was done.

Area 6: Non-English Language
Area 6 alignment with UNM Learning Goals (skills, knowledge and responsibility): The focus on ‘Responsibility’ (elaborated considerably under ‘Rationale’ in the NM HED document) is laudable, but the other two areas (skills and knowledge) need to be filled out. Skills other than communication should be addressed (most notably, research), and the knowledge outcomes (with respect to vocabulary, idiom, and the formation of words and sentences) prerequisite to the skills & responsibilities outlined need to be addressed.

Potential for guiding SLOs: Competencies are focused on social ethics and knowledge of foreign cultures. While this is laudable, the ability to understand and communicate in the target language (which is the primary criterion for grading in most language courses) needs to be reflected in more than a single bullet item, and broken out further into discrete, assessable items with respect to vocabulary acquisition, word and sentence formation, and (where relevant) written communication. Furthermore, there is no mention here of teaching languages for the purpose of research skills, only of communication in a social setting.

Area 7: Fine Arts – no review was done.
**National Resources Available for Further Outcome/Competency Development**

**Area 1: Writing and Speaking**

Writing Assessment Principles, CCCC (Conference on College Communication and Composition). Outlines the state of the field in best practices w.r.t. Writing Assessment, as resolved in November 2006.

**WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition**

Articulated desired outcomes for introductory composition courses, reflecting broad similarities across general education programs. Included recommendations for building on outcomes in writing courses beyond the first year.

**Area 2: Mathematics:**

1. Nat'l Council of Teachers of Mathematics (http://www.education-world.com/standards/national/). These standards were adopted by the NM Public Education Dept. (PED) as the NM State Standards for Algebra, Functions, Graphs, Algebra, Trigonometry, Data Analysis, and Probability strands as well as "Process Standards."

2. Math benchmarks from Science for All Americans Project 2061. These are laid out as a series of general concepts (knowledge) students should know when they complete formal education. They are arrayed in 2 domains ("Nature of Mathematics" with chapters on 1) Patterns & Relationships, 2) Mathematics, Science and Technology, and 3) Mathematical Inquiry; and "Mathematical World" with chapters on 1) Numbers, 2) Symbolic Relationships, 3) Shapes, 4) Uncertainty, and 5) Reasoning. It includes a domain titled "Habits of Mind" (including both skills and values) with chapters on 1) Values and Attitudes, 2) Computation and Estimation, 3) Manipulation and Observation, 4) Communication Skills, and 5) Critical-Response Skills. Access these at http://www.project2061.org/publications/sfaa/online/sfaatoc.htm.

**Area 3: Physical and Natural Sciences**

Example SLOs were assembled as a conversational starting point and are based on the premise of public science literacy. The example Physical and Natural Science SLOs assembled by this committee were based upon work done by a diverse, esteemed panel of scientists and science educators as part of the American Association for the Advancement Science (AAAS) Project 2061: Science for All Americans. The example SLOs combine language from the book Project 2061: Science for All Americans (http://www.project2061.org/publications/sfaa/online/sfaatoc.htm) and from the Project 2061: Benchmarks (http://www.project2061.org/publications/bsl/online/index.php).

**Area 6: Non-English Language**

National Standards for Foreign Language Education, National Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

Outlines the definition of, and role for, Foreign language instruction at all levels. The Complete guide (Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century) provides specific guidelines for individual languages.
**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS (WHAT WE CAN’T ANSWER NOW BUT NEED TO CONSIDER):**

- What is the best process for development and adoption of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the Core Curriculum such that broad stakeholder input is obtained and the quality (depth, clarity, and breadth) of the SLOs is high across all six Areas?
- What will happen once the core curriculum SLOs are written? Will they be presented to the faculty, formally adopted, and then sufficiently promoted?
- If core curriculum SLOs are adopted, will there be a mechanism to help inform, guide and support faculty with writing clear, measurable course objectives that are aligned with the SLOs?
- Will there be a mechanism in place for using the student performance measurement results to improve student learning and performance? If so, what is the mechanism?

**PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 1**
Determine whether the current UNM Learning Goals work for the undergraduate core curriculum. The permanent UNM Core Curriculum Committee should review, discuss, and formally approve (or create their own) UNM Learning Goals to create a general curricular vision for the program. Establishing baseline goals are important for developing more detailed Student Learning Outcomes. The subcommittee also suggests including the following LEAP Goal in the UNM Learning Goals conversation: “Integrative learning, including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies. Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems.”

**Recommendation 2**
In order for adequate and meaningful Student Learning Outcomes to be developed for the Core Curriculum a new permanent committee needs to be assembled. The committee needs to be composed of (at minimum) several, highly committed faculty representatives in EACH of the Areas, as well as key decision-makers. This committee should develop drafts of SLOs for each of the areas and utilize multiple mechanisms for input from stakeholders.

**Recommendation 3**
The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) must be viewed as minimum expectations for ALL students who graduate with a bachelor’s degree from the University of New Mexico. The SLOs must be clear and well-defined enough such that the following criteria can be met: (a) they provide sufficient guidance for the development of measurable course objectives that clearly and directly relate to the SLO; (b) students from different sections of the same course and students in different courses that address the same SLOs leave with the same core SLOs (e.g. across science courses or across different courses that develop writing or communication).
Recommendation 4
Develop a multi-pronged mechanism to inform students about the core curriculum, the vision and goals of the core curriculum, and the SLOs related to the core curriculum. Students need to be aware of and engaged with the expectations related to their own learning.
**Transfers Subcommittee Report**

**BACKGROUND**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Type</th>
<th>Proportion of Students Transferring from Other Institutions Summer/Fall/Spring 2008-2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM 2-year &amp; Branches</td>
<td>1,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-of State 2-year</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM Public 4-year</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other 4-year</td>
<td>692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Transfers</strong></td>
<td><strong>2427</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table from which these numbers are abstracted shows that the number and distribution of transfer students has been almost identical since 2006.

The UNM Enrollment Report for Fall 2009 shows that each fall semester since 2005 UNM Albuquerque has enrolled between 150 and 190 “branch transfers,” defined as students now attending exclusively at the Albuquerque campus who were formerly attending exclusively at a branch campus. These students are included on the top line of the table.

**WHAT’S WORKING**

Transfer students from NM two-year colleges, on average, transfer from 26 to 70 hours of coursework. Because of statewide articulation of the mandated “Core” curriculum, most of these students transfer courses that meet most of the UNM Core Curriculum requirements.

Most transfer students (about 70%) bring their first-year writing courses, and UNM offers many options for placement or for bypassing English 101/102.

Math courses transfer easily; they are generally parallel among most institutions in the state, partly because of diligent work on articulation in that field.

Physical and natural science courses are usually accepted from two-year institutions, although UNM’s Biology courses, for example have been re-aligned and re-numbered in recent years.

Increasingly automated tables of equivalence for courses transferred from other institutions mean that most courses presented for transfer are accepted by UNM and that clearly equivalent lower division courses are applied appropriately to Core requirements.
**WHAT’S NOT WORKING**

Because HED general education competencies are grouped differently than those of the UNM Core, courses that fit the HED “Humanities and Fine Arts” group, including foreign languages, need to be slotted into several Core groups at UNM, which may cause confusion for some students.

The writing requirement of English 101 and 102 can be an obstacle for some returning students who may have many hours but no degree, or who bring courses that are not parallel to UNM’s, such as writing in the disciplines or freshman-year experience seminars with substantial writing instruction.

UNM offers fewer options than other in-state schools for completing the Speaking and Writing group.

Both versions of the CC – the university’s and the state’s – tend to view and list requirements in terms of courses, not in terms of outcomes that could conceivably be met in different courses. This is especially problematic for students who transfer significant work beyond the 100 and 200-levels in Core disciplines but then are required either to take lower-level courses or to seek their Dean’s permission to substitute their upper-division work for Core requirements. UNM-native students who move rapidly into disciplines of their choosing often face this same restriction; capable of performing at the 300-level, they are required to mark time in less challenging introductory courses.

UNM’s CC and the state mandate have conflicting goals:

- UNM’s goals for the Core are internally contradictory: focus on liberal arts, desire for shared academic experience, focus on skills/foundation, narrow set of options
- HED: seeks a 35 hour core that will transfer anywhere – priorities are economy, speed, smoothness of transition. These goals coincide with the narrow, highly specified, lower division, skills-oriented aspect of the UNM Core, but conflict with the goal of broad exposure to the liberal arts disciplines.

Because the CC is based on courses instead of outcomes, courses at different institutions may substitute for one another even if their outcomes do not match. This means that transfer students may be bringing in courses that meet the CC, but may not have met the outcomes that UNM’s CC courses require students to meet.

So it appears that some transfer students may be poorly served by the Core because the emphasis on seamless transfer between New Mexico institutions without the needed attention to articulation of learning outcomes may bring them to UNM Albuquerque with the credit but without the skills to succeed.

Other transfer students appear to be impeded by the over specified lower-division core, which may not recognize educationally equivalent (or even superior) outcomes of transferred courses that don’t fit the checklist.
**OPEN QUESTIONS**

The UNM Core Curriculum was never designed to be assessable. Its goals are vague, and there is no way to determine whether or to what extent it accomplishes them.

The following data could be helpful in determining what’s working and what’s not:

- Retention rates: transfer vs. native students
- Completion rates: transfer vs. native students
- Demographics/populations: transfer vs. native students (which groups of students transfer in higher numbers vs. start at UNM in higher numbers – possibly look at age, gender, income, race/ethnicity)

We learned from our OIR representative that these questions would require sophisticated data analysis and tracking that is currently not available for transfer students, who do not move through the system in trackable cohorts as beginning freshmen do. Given time and resources, OIR could provide this data.

Other open questions reflect faculty concerns about which we have little concrete evidence but an abundance of anecdote and experience:

- Skills transfer to higher-level courses – do transfer students have the skills needed to succeed in 300- and 400-level classes at UNM? (not sure what data would reveal this)
- Whether transfer students are less equipped with writing and math skills, specifically, than native students.

Sustained attention to outcomes, assessment, and articulation on the model of the statewide working group in mathematics would likely help to address these questions. Obviously, these issues are politically loaded.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

“Curriculum” in its broad sense, means the aggregate of our courses of study, what we want students to learn, and what they learn by putting ideas together in ways we haven’t predicted. The Subcommittee hopes the Task Force will consider recommending a model in which the “Core Curriculum,” now confined to an impoverished list of lower-division courses, becomes a broad and deep set of learning outcomes, in the lower division and the upper, in the majors and across the curriculum, that students could satisfy through a variety of means—taking courses, making public presentations, producing demonstrable results, posting electronic portfolios . . . .

This (admittedly labor-intensive) approach need not disadvantage students transferring “Core” courses from NM colleges; all of these courses could still transfer and count toward degree requirements. But it would provide a more appropriate general education experience for students graduating from a research university, prompting them, at each stage of their education, to demonstrate the competencies that we claim characterize a UNM education. The UNM Student Learning Goals, adapted from the LEAP report, could provide a framework.
The WAC Subcommittee recognizes Writing across the Curriculum (Writing across Communities) as a potentially integral component to the enrichment of the Core Curriculum and undergraduate education at UNM. Writing across the Curriculum: (1) engages students and faculty with the content through active learning; (2) promotes higher order critical thinking skills (e.g. synthesis, analysis, evaluation); (3) advances student learning outcomes; (4) facilitates assessment.

UNM’s role in the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) Project represents a timely and relevant opportunity to promote writing across the curriculum as a valuable means for enhancing student engagement. WAC (Writing across Communities) cultivates intellectual authority and alacrity across disciplinary, professional, and civic contexts. Therefore, this subcommittee recommends the development and implementation of a centralized and meaningful WAC program at UNM. Some steps toward this action may include the following:

- The creation of a university-wide Core Curriculum Advisory Council with representation from Faculty Senate, Student Senate, Administration, Staff, Core Curriculum supporting divisions, and Graduate Teaching Assistants.
- Appointment of a university-level WAC Director (reporting to the Provost) to chair university-wide WAC Advisory Council.
- Appointment of a university-wide WAC Advisory Council with representation from all divisions related to undergraduate and graduate education at UNM to examine and propose institutionalizing and supporting WAC at UNM for undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty.
- Administrative support, incentives, and rewards/recognition to tenure-line faculty for design and teaching of writing-intensive core curriculum courses.
- Creation of E-Portfolio system where student work is stored and revised throughout their entire UNM career, showing student progress and helping them make connections between classes and disciplines.
- Inclusion in WAC initiative of strong faculty development component that includes support for research, writing and teaching.
- Development of robust assessment practices for evaluating the effectiveness of the core curriculum.
Appendices

1. Results of Student Survey on the Core Curriculum
2. Results of Faculty, Staff, TA, PTI Survey on the Core Curriculum
3. Open Meetings Format and Agenda
4. Minutes for Core Curriculum Task Force Open Meeting, 5 March 2010
5. Minutes for Core Curriculum Task Force Open Meeting, 9 April 2010
6. Student Learning Outcomes Open Meeting Handout
APPENDIX 1: RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEY ON THE CORE CURRICULUM

There were 153 questionnaires completed online, and 26 filled in by hand at the March 5 Open Meeting held in SUB Acoma rooms A&B. All respondents provided answers to all five questions. All data is supplied as percentages.

Question 1: How satisfied are you with the current core curriculum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfied Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat unsatisfied</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unsatisfied</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 2: Do you understand why UNM required the core curriculum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand why and think it’s good:</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand but don’t like the way it’s implemented:</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t understand why the school requires the core:</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 3: What changes would you like to see in the core curriculum if any?

- I think the core is fine the way it is: 5%
- I want more general class offerings: 30%
- I want more classes in my area of study: 65%

Question 4: What is your current class ranking?

- Freshman: 16%
- Sophomore: 24%
- Junior: 19%
- Senior: 41%

Question 5: What is your area of study?

- ASM: 10%
- Arts & Sciences: 49%
- Education: 10%
- Fine Arts: 5%
- Nursing: 5%
- Engineering: 14%
- Medicine: 3%
- University College: 4%
APPENDIX 2: RESULTS OF FACULTY, STAFF, TA, PTI SURVEY ON THE CORE CURRICULUM

The following survey responses were contributed by members of the faculty, staff, teaching assistants, and part-time assistants who attended the April 9, 2010 Open Meeting held in the SUB Acoma rooms A&B. There were a total of 16 responses. Not all respondents answered all the questions.

Question 1: Do you think the current Core Curriculum meets the needs of UNM and its students?

No; It is overly constrained

Sometimes

No (3 responses)

Somewhat, but needs to be broadened

Not exactly!

We need classes in Race/Ethnicity.

Some needs, yes. It does provide distribution “dipping toes”

I think it needs to be looked at and have courses added that may not have existed 5 years ago

Question 2: What would you like to see improved in the Core Curriculum Requirements?

More flexibility and focused at outcomes will help

Need sustainability course

Large lecture courses do not meet student needs for courses whose learning objectives involve teaching skill.

In our evolving electronic society, we need citizens who can work in data – i.e. we need a core value of understanding data formation, extraction, evaluation, computer basics: an electronic portfolio on data literacy.

Greater flexibility for students, including ability for honors students to use honors classes for this requirement

More mathematics and more foreign language requirements

The comments during the [open meeting] Q&A had great ideas: sustainability, community/society connections
I like the idea of skills based versus distribution (course specific) requirements

Emphatically, yes

Combine core and group requirements into one group. Students get confused all the time

More choices and more flexibility

More accessible to all students. Non-traditional students have the most issues taking classes for “freshman” students.

More courses, such as Sustainability intro course. Would like to see the process of getting a course approved set out and available to all departments

**Question 3: What is your position at UNM?**

- Faculty: 5
- Lecturer: 3
- Staff: 4
- Did not select: 4

**Question 4: What is your college affiliation?**

- Anderson: 1
- Architecture: 1
- Arts & Sciences: 6
- CNM: 1
- Engineering: 2
- UNM General: 1
- University College: 2
- Did not select: 2

**Question 5: Do you have any specific recommendations or ideas for the Core Curriculum Task Force?**

As you consider modifying your core and, subsequently, how to assess it, will you consider the other schools in the state? Other schools may be in the process of redefining their own Gen Ed Core (CNM is) and it would benefit students if we could work together. Additionally, since we must obey HED mandates for our degrees, the greater the deviation between UNM & HED vision for the core, the greater the conflict generated in the efforts of your partner institutions.

Harness and consolidate current programs:
At present, UNM students are limited to 3 units of foreign languages in the Core. This hampers students who want to go on exchange programs. Most exchange programs require 12 units to qualify for the exchange. This means a student would have to take 9 additional units over and above degree requirements (except foreign language majors) to take an exchange. Recommendation: Allow 9 units more of foreign language to count towards Humanities credits.

Thank you for your excellent efforts! I’d like to suggest including conflict resolution. Can our undergraduates demonstrate they are able to resolve/accept/respect differences?

Funding issues are important to offering small classes. As a PTI, I am aware of a need for a pool of experienced master teachers to draw from for teaching core courses. The University does not appear to value contributions toward achieving those goals.

Meet learning outcomes through a variety of non-discipline based requirements/options. Writing Across Communities is better than across curriculum. Upper division courses in the core is very important.

Funding is not needed to fix the core. More flexibility is needed.

In general, we should enforce our requirements more clearly and more strongly, regardless of financial consequences or loss of students. Better oversight of the advisors in general: faculty should have the last word.

Continue to move in a direction incorporating changes which can enrich/broaden the general education program. Within the Math Department, we are addressing our core curriculum, a daunting task, by trying to redesign Math 121 and, soon, math 120 – which are courses instrumental for most tracks. Focus on community based (outcomes) learning.

I just want to reiterate how important it is to give resources to departments who carry the burden of the core teaching (e.g. Math, English). Schools like College of Education, ASM, Engineering should not require courses offered by English, Math, etc. unless they help pay for those requirements. All schools should share the burden. Also, adding courses to the core curriculum will help those overburdened departments by distributing the load of teaching more evenly.

Increase opportunities to teach across disciplines/curriculum. Increase diversity and inclusion of minority faculty.
Include Race/Ethnicity classes from Social and Behavioral and Humanities. A class that would entice students to embrace diversity.

If one discipline has courses that meet all student learning outcomes, then students should not be able to just take classes in that one discipline. Distribution is important, but there should be more choices.

Add upper division courses to the Core.

Has there been any discussion of not requiring English 101? Reason being that many students (especially transfer) have tested out of 101 and only need 102. Would also like to see that upper level courses be considered for the core (especially in math and foreign languages).
APPENDIX 3: OPEN MEETING FORMAT AND AGENDA

Core Curriculum Task Force
Open Meeting Format
Spring 2010

Friday, March 5 SUB Acoma A&B 3:00-4:30 p.m.
Friday, April 9 SUB Acoma A&B 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Poster Session will open at 2:00 for one hour before the Open Meeting commences in order that participants can review displays in advance of the meeting.

The UNM Core Curriculum Task Force consists of faculty, staff, students, and administrators engaged in research and discussion to explore changes to the UNM core curriculum. The task force is examining approaches to reconfiguring the core curriculum toward improving the quality of higher education, increasing graduation and retention rates of undergraduates, and enhancing student satisfaction.

- Greg Evans (WAC Events Coordinator): Floor Manager & Promotion;
- Dan Cryer (Task Force Secretary): Open Meeting Minutes & Task Force Reports will be posted to the UNM WAC website at: www.unm.edu/~wac/core

Panel Members:
Core Curriculum Task Force Chair: Michelle Hall Kells
- (5) Subcommittee Chairs: Wanda Martin, Kathleen Keating, Stefani Hines, Chuck Fleddermann, & Doug Thomas:

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
From your own perspective (a) what’s working/effective about the current core curriculum; (b) what needs improvement/should be changed?

Program
Welcome & Opening Remarks (Kells) 3:00-3:05
Subcommittee Chair Presentations (Fleddermann, Hines, Keating, Thomas, Martin) (5 minutes each) 3:05-3:30
Open Discussion (Q&A)* (50 minutes) 3:30-4:25
Closing Remarks (Goering) 4:25-4:30

*All Task Force Members and audience participants may engage in open discussion section of program.

The final recommendations report of the Core Curriculum Task Force will be available as of May 15, 2010 on the UNM WAC website at: www.unm.edu/~wac/core

Please take a few moments to answer our short online survey (just 5 questions) at:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NWQDN5H
APPENDIX 4: MINUTES FOR CORE CURRICULUM TASK FORCE OPEN MEETING
MARCH 5, 2010

Opening remarks: Michelle Kells
Since August the CCTF has dedicated itself to a deliberative process aimed at improving UNM’s core curriculum (CC). These meetings are part of that deliberative process. Students are the CC’s most important stakeholders and must be included in any conversation dedicated to changing it. The Open Meeting Minutes and Final Recommendations Report of the Core Curriculum Task Force will be available on May 15 the WACommunities Website

Subcommittee Chairs’ brief audience on their mission and findings
Chuck Fledderma, Associate Dean of the School of Engineering, chair of the Educational Values Subcommittee: Subcommittee tried to find unifying principles in UNM learning outcomes, or a set of values, and in the outcomes of other schools. Found that LEAP outcomes are very good model. UNM outcomes somewhat address these, but UNM core should develop values that function as threads that extend through all disciplines.

Merle Kennedy, Transfer Articulation Manager at the Office of Admissions, sitting in for Wanda Martin, Director of UNM’s Core Writing program and chair of the Transfers Subcommittee: What’s working: Transfer students from NM two-year colleges, on average, transfer from 26 to 70 hours of coursework. What’s not working: Both versions of the CC – the university’s and the state’s – tend to view and list requirements in terms of courses, not in terms of outcomes that could conceivably be met in different courses. // UNM’s CC and the state mandate have conflicting goals. // Because the CC is based on courses instead of outcomes, courses at different institutions may substitute for one another even if their outcomes do not match.

Stefani Hines, Assistant Dean for Assessment in the College of Pharmacy and chair of the Learning Outcomes Subcommittee: There is no shared ownership of CC, no shared vocabulary for talking about it, so no conversation! Goals & outcomes of CC must be vetted and students should be part of this process. Outcomes should be clear and measurable; students taking different sections of same course should end up w/ same skills.

Doug Thomas, Associate Dean of Accreditation at the Anderson School of Management and chair of the Writing Across the Curriculum Subcommittee: Because instructors, accreditors and employers all place high priority on graduates’ ability to write, Anderson looked closely at its writing instruction, found that profs should articulate more clearly what they want and students should better understand function and importance of writing. English department shouldn’t bear full responsibility for teaching writing. Subcommittee recommends a writing across the curriculum program and writing center be implemented at UNM to respond to needs of students, instructors and employers.

Kathleen Keating, Professor of University Libraries and chair of the General Education Models Subcommittee: Found universities all over country are restructuring their CC. Many restructuring efforts include multi-department cooperation, activity-based learning, assessment of core w/ student exit interviews, wide variety of courses to satisfy requirements, diversity requirement.
Subcommittee recommends an oversight mechanism for UNM CC; updating of course catalogue; consistent and regular review of CC courses and CC course outcomes to ensure they meet CC outcomes, which also must be created.

**Student concerns as expressed in open Q&A**

- Students transferring credits often forced to take courses based in outcomes and skills they already have. This is especially frustrating for students going for a second Bachelor’s.
- Sustainability studies should be part of a modern CC (student petition circulated).
- CC is unfair to students who know what they want. This problem could be solved if variety of courses that satisfy CC requirements is expanded.
- Only lower-division courses can fulfill CC writing requirements – why not have higher-division, discipline-specific courses that can fulfill these? This would be especially useful for transfer students.
- CC courses are all lower division – this is frustrating for students who’d rather take upper-division courses.
- CC and reasoning behind it needs to be more clearly presented to students, say in orientation and course catalogue. One outgrowth of this problem is that students often don’t know the difference between CC requirements and requirements for their major.
- Student advising system seems broken – students get multiple answers to the same question and usually are unable to see the same advisor twice.

**Closing remarks: Wynn Goering**

Even though CC can seem burdensome it is useful because it anchors students in a time and place and gives them tools to progress not just through school and work, but through life. University can do a better job articulating this, but students should be open to this awareness.
Appendix 5: Minutes for Core Curriculum Task Force Open Meeting, April 9, 2010

Opening remarks: Michelle Kells

Since August the CCTF has dedicated itself to a deliberative process aimed at improving UNM’s core curriculum (CC). These meetings are part of that deliberative process. Students and Instructors are among the CC’s most important stakeholders and must be included in any conversation dedicated to changing it. The Open Meeting Minutes and Final Recommendations Report of the Core Curriculum Task Force will be available on May 15 the WACCommunities Website

Subcommittee Chairs brief audience on their mission and findings

Chuck Fledderman, Associate Dean of the School of Engineering, chair of the Educational Values Subcommittee: Subcommittee tried to find unifying principles in UNM learning outcomes, or a set of values, and in the outcomes of other schools. Found that LEAP outcomes are very good model, but can’t match perfectly with CC goals because CC is introductory. UNM core should develop values that function as threads that extend through all disciplines, so that students see methods of inquiry in a variety of fields.

Stefani Hines, Assistant Dean for Assessment in the College of Pharmacy and chair of the Learning Outcomes Subcommittee: We don’t have a CC based on student outcomes; it’s instead based on core competencies designed for articulation with other schools for transfer purposes. We need an outcomes-based CC that works for students, that someone is accountable for, and we need a mechanism for clearly communicating to students what the CC is.

Wanda Martin, Director of UNM’s Core Writing program and chair of the Transfers Subcommittee: What’s working: Transfer students from NM two-year colleges, on average, transfer from 26 to 70 hours of coursework. What’s not working: Both versions of the CC – the university’s and the state’s – tend to view and list requirements in terms of courses, not in terms of outcomes that could conceivably be met in different courses. // UNM’s CC and the state mandate have conflicting goals. // Because the CC is based on courses instead of outcomes, courses at different institutions may substitute for one another even if their outcomes do not match.

Amy Neel, Associate Professor of Speech and Hearing Sciences, sitting in for Kathleen Keating, Professor of University Libraries and chair of the General Education Models Subcommittee: UNM CC works on a Scholarly Disciplines model, as opposed to and Effective Citizens or Great Books model. To make this work we need rationale for CC that’s clearly explained to all stakeholders, strong faculty oversight including responsibility taken by faculty senate. Also, better distribution of classes and resources: A&S, specifically Math and English, are overburdened in current CC.

Major points & concerns expressed in open Q&A

- Sustainability Studies: SS 134 should be added to CC. Amy Neel responds that a group will be working on a set of forms for a formal CC addition request over the summer.
• Jamal Martin from Africana Studies likes idea of CC based on outcomes, but what about outcomes related to society and diversity? Some outcomes should reflect students’ need to cohabitate and work with diverse groups. He would like to volunteer for any such committee dedicated to creating and implementing these outcomes.

• Computer Science: Feels “computational thinking” is extremely useful for students, wants to know how to incorporate these principles into CC. Wanda Martin answers that the CC envisioned by the CCTF is based on skills & outcomes, not courses, so computational thinking could fit into a new CC in ways it may not necessarily fit into current CC.

• Honors College: It’s worth exploring how to get higher-order thinking skills from LEAP outcomes into CC. Michelle Kells responds that UNM adopted 3 of 4 LEAP outcomes but our vision of a new CC brings 4th one back by including upper-division courses that teach higher-order thinking skills.

Closing remarks: Wynn Goering
Remarks on JH Newman’s “The Idea of A University,” making the point that a university education can be both useful, in the sense of a vocational curriculum, and good, in the sense of a liberal arts curriculum. In terms of the Task Force, what we’ll end up with is a report from a thoughtful group of faculty, students and staff. Implementing the report’s recommendations in some way will be part of his portfolio for next year. While admin does have some of the same concerns expressed by the task force, it has a responsibility to thoughtfully consider issues of funding and sustainability.
APPENDIX 6: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES OPEN MEETING HANDOUT

UNM Core Curriculum Task Force
Student Learning Outcomes Subcommittee
Open Meetings Handout

• What is a student learning outcome (SLO)?
  o “clear, concise statements that describe in behavioral terms how students can
demonstrate their mastery of program goals” (from the UNM College Assessment
Review Committee workbook)

• How do SLOs relate to learning goals, course objectives and lecture objectives?

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UNM Learning Goals

Knowledge
Skills
Responsibility
(Synthesis/Application – recommended)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

• Guides core courses in all 7 Areas: writing/speaking, mathematics,
physical/natural sciences, social/behavioral sciences, humanities, non-
English language, fine arts
• Use UNM Core Competencies (used for transfer credits/state level) as a
  starting point

Course Objectives (for Core Courses)

• Must connect clearly with the SLOs

Lecture Objectives

• Must connect clearly with the course objectives

• How can well-refined SLOs help meet the goals of the core curriculum?
  o **Goal:** there are *minimum* expectations for ALL students who graduate with a bachelor’s
degree from UNM
    ▪ SLOs clearly describe those expectations
    ▪ SLOs provide sufficient guidance for the development of measurable course
      objectives that clearly and directly relate to the SLO
students from different sections of the same course (e.g. English 101), and students in different courses that address the same SLOs (e.g. across science courses or across different courses that develop writing or communication), leave with the same outcomes.

When this occurs, students have great flexibility in the core classes they can take.