THE CORE OBJECTIVES ASSESSMENT TEAM (COAT) HANDBOOK

Contents

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COAT is responsible for overseeing implementation of the general education core curriculum assessment process, training assessors, and maintaining the assessment rubrics.

Major Responsibilities

- Maintaining and developing core objective rubrics
- Creating assessment schedules for courses and core objectives
- Informing faculty of assessment responsibilities
- Educating faculty about assignment alignment and core objectives
- Reviewing assignments for alignment to rubrics
- Scheduling and organizing the COAT Summer Assessment Days each year
- Draft core curriculum assessment report each year

COMPOSITION OF COAT

COAT Co-Chairs

- The COAT Co-Chairs shall be selected from the members of COAT who are active and in good standing with the committee.

- Candidates for the Co-Chair position will undergo a selection process prior to being put on a ballot and voted on by current members of COAT.

- The COAT Co-Chairs are selected on an alternating two-year schedule so that one Co-Chair is selected each year to replace the Co-Chair that has served two years.

Co-Chair Selection Process

- COAT members who wish to be considered for a Co-Chair position must have served on COAT for no less than one year.

- COAT members who wish to be considered for a Co-Chair position must have participated in a minimum of one COAT Summer Assessment Days.

- Members who are eligible should submit their names and a 250-word (maximum) statement of interest explaining why they would like to be considered for the Co-Chair position to the current Co-Chairs no later than November 1.

- If more than one candidate applies for the position, then those names will be submitted to the current COAT members for a blind ballot election no later than the December meeting of COAT. If only one candidate applies for the position, then that individual will become a Co-Chair.

Co-Chair Responsibilities

- In collaboration with the Curriculum Office and the VP for Academic Services, post the multi-year assessment schedule, rubrics, and other relevant documents on the COAT website and distribute materials to Discipline Leads, Associate Deans, Directors of Collegiate Academies, Executive Deans, Deans, and Provosts as deemed appropriate.

- At the beginning of each long semester and as needed for various late-start or late-add courses, notify all faculty whose courses are being assessed that term, informing them of the requirements and deadlines related to the COAT assessment.

- Before the end of each long semester, notify all faculty whose courses are being assessed to submit the student artifacts via Canvas.

- Facilitate the coordination of COAT Summer Assessment Days, including hosting Interrater Reliability workshops for faculty that will be assessing artifacts.

- Participate in District-wide curriculum related events as needed.

- Bring comments and/or questions presented by faculty and administration to COAT for discussion during regular meetings that are open to interested parties.

COAT Committee Members

Terms, Appointments, and Composition

- Any full-time faculty member is eligible to serve a three-year term on COAT. One year served equates to one academic year, including summer term. Members can serve no more than two terms of three years each before rolling off the committee for at least one year.

- The membership should be reflective of all Core Component Areas across the District and should also include representatives from Non-Component areas across the District.

- When vacancies arise, the Curriculum Office/Academic Services will contact Executive Deans, Deans, Associate Deans, Directors of Collegiate Academies, and/or any other administrative supervisors as appropriate to solicit recommendations for faculty to serve on COAT, with due attention paid to campus representation.

- It is the goal of COAT to have representation from every academic campus. Executive Deans, Deans, and Associate Deans responsible for filling COAT vacancies in specific areas should consult together to appoint an appropriate faculty person, considering factors such as discipline, campus, course load, other committee assignments, and interest.

Meeting Attendance

- In general, members are expected to attend all meetings in person. Meetings typically occur once a month during the afternoon of the second Monday of the month.
- Members may attend meetings via Zoom when necessary for medical reasons. In these cases, the member shall notify the Co-Chairs of the need for Zoom attendance. Additionally, the member is responsible for following the appropriate HR procedures for working from home.
    - Any video or audio from COAT meetings streamed over Zoom or any other platform is not to be recorded or otherwise distributed.
- If a member is not able to attend a meeting in person for any reason, the member shall inform the Co-Chairs and the Curriculum Office Staff of the absence.
- Members may miss up to 3 meetings per academic year without the need for additional action or documentation. Additional absences will be reported by Academic Services to the COAT Co-Chairs, who will then determine a reasonable solution for the attendance issues based on input from the committee member. Such solutions may include the following: alternative course arrangements in consultation with the relevant administrative supervisor, additional or increased subcommittee work, participating in COAT Summer Assessment Days, or rolling off the committee if necessary.
- Due to considerations of continuity, institutional memory, and subcommittee responsibilities, proxies for absent members are neither necessary nor desirable.

Individual Member Responsibilities

- In addition to in-person attendance and the general committee-level work, individual committee members have the following responsibilities:

- Reviewing and voting on documents, policies, and other COAT official business.
- Addressing any concerns or questions regarding assessment voiced by Discipline Leads or COAT committee members.
- Serving on at least one subcommittee while a member of COAT.
- Participating in the selection of new Co-Chairs as elections are held in accordance with the COAT Handbook.
- Participating in COAT Summer Assessment Days is strongly encouraged, but not required.
- Disseminating information about COAT activities to the member's campus and component/non-component area as appropriate.

COAT SUBCOMMITTEES

Standing Subcommittees

There are seven Standing Subcommittees:

- Rubric Review
- Assessment Schedule Review
- Policies and Procedures
- COAT Assignment Alignment Review (CARC)
- Canvas Development
- Core Curriculum Assessment Draft Report
- Adjunct Outreach

Rubric Review Committee

The Rubric Review Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of 1) reviewing the rubrics in a logical and timely fashion, 2) maintaining and developing core objective rubrics, confirming they conform with THECB objectives or general education competencies, reviewing the rubrics after each assessment cycle, and 3) informing the full COAT committee of any potential changes. (Changes must be voted on by the full group and completed the semester prior to implementation.)

Assessment Schedule Review Committee

The Assessment Schedule Review Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of 1) examining at regular intervals the cycle used to assess each of the Texas Core Objectives to determine if modifications are needed and 2) establishing the schedule for which courses will be formally assessed each academic year.

Policies and Procedures Committee

The Policies and Procedures Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of 1) reviewing and updating the COAT Handbook, 2) establishing procedures for amending the handbook in the future, and 3) writing and proposing new polices/procedures for conducting COAT meetings, for attendance and make-up procedures, and for others as needs arise.

COAT Assignment Review Committee (CARC)

The COAT Assignment Review Committee (CARC) shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of 1) inviting the faculty to submit assignments to the committee for review, and 2) reviewing assignments for alignment to rubrics and the core objectives.

Canvas Development Committee

The Canvas Development Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of 1) developing the COAT Assessment "course" in Canvas during each assessment cycle, and 2) creating Canvas course shells for Summer Assessment Days. These Canvas courses will be used to communicate information to faculty, and also used by the faculty to upload their assignments for alignment review and student artifacts for grading.

Core Curriculum Assessment Draft Report Committee

The Core Curriculum Assessment Draft Report Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of reviewing data to help develop the continuous improvement plan, draft a report on core curriculum assessment results annually as well as for the ten-year report to the THECB and SACSCOC.

Adjunct Outreach Committee

The Adjunct Outreach Committee shall be a standing subcommittee with the purpose of building content for adjunct training meetings at the beginning of the semester and being a point of contact at a particular campus.

Ad Hoc Subcommittees

Ad hoc committees are temporary in nature and members are appointed by the Co-Chairs who establish the committee. Ad hoc committees function to address an immediate need by making recommendations or conducting work as assigned.

COAT RESPONSIBILITIES

Develop/Maintain Rubrics

- Assessment rubrics must be created and updated to conform to THECB standards as necessary for each core objective or general education competency.

- After each COAT Summer Assessment Days, the COAT Co-Chairs will compile the results of the optional Evaluation of COAT Summer Assessment Days, which will be administered to participating faculty via Canvas. The survey will contain questions about the assessment process: inter-rater reliability training, COAT rubrics, the usability of the Canvas course, time spent on assessment, etc. Survey results will be used to improve the overall assessment and evaluation process.

- The Rubric Review Standing Committee will review the rubrics used in each assessment cycle.

- The full COAT Committee will be informed of any potential changes to the rubrics. Rubric changes are discussed and voted on by the full committee.

- Rubric changes must be completed in the academic year prior to the assessment of the given core objective to ensure faculty have enough time to amend assignments to fit the rubric changes.

Conduct Assessment

COAT Assessment Process

- The process is organized on a three-academic year cycle for assessing the six Texas Core Objectives, mandated by the THECB. Two objectives are assessed each Academic Year during the long semesters only:

  - Academic Year 1: Empirical & Quantitative and Personal Responsibility

  - Academic Year 2: Communication Skills and Teamwork

  - Academic Year 3: Critical Thinking and Social Responsibility

- At regular intervals, the Assessment Schedule Review Committee will examine the cycle used to assess each of the Texas Core Objectives to determine if modifications are needed.

- Courses from a variety of disciplines are assessed each semester based on foundation component areas. Each foundational component area must be represented for assessment of at least one of the Core Objectives during the academic year.

- The Assessment Schedule Review Committee is responsible for establishing the schedule for which courses will be formally assessed each academic year.

COAT Summer Assessment

- The date(s) for COAT Summer Assessment Days will be selected by COAT and Academic Services.

  - COAT Summer Assessment Days usually occur before or during the Summer I session.

  - Invitations to participate in COAT Summer Assessment Days will be sent to all faculty and college administrators. These invitations will be sent via email by the COAT Co-Chairs to faculty, the Associate Deans, and the Deans on each campus.

- All assessments must be accomplished by using designated Core Objective Rubrics edited and adopted by COAT.

  - Rubrics must not be changed or modified during COAT Summer Assessment Days. Changes to rubrics are only made by COAT during the academic year.

  - These rubrics are maintained by Academic Services support staff and published on the COAT website.

  - COAT Co-Chairs assume the direct responsibility to assure that the rubrics emailed to all involved faculty are the same as those being used by COAT for assessing student assignments used in the actual assessment.

- A ranking scale of 1 through 4 is used to assess artifacts.

  - Artifacts that do not meet assessment expectations must be scored as a 1 by faculty.

  - Artifacts that partially meet assessment expectations must be scored as a 2 by faculty.

  - Artifacts that meet assessment expectations must be scored as a 3 by faculty.

    ○ A benchmark ranking of 3 qualifies as satisfactory.

  - Artifacts that exceed assessment expectations are scored as a 4 by faculty.

- To maintain effective inter-rater reliability for the assessments, COAT Co-Chairs and Academic Services staff will implement all reliability measures necessary to achieve highest levels.

Analysis of Resulting Data

- Academic Services has the direct responsibility to maintain these data and will submit this data to the COAT Co- Chairs by August 1 of each Academic Year.

- COAT Co-Chairs will email these data findings to Discipline Leads, Faculty Council Teaching and Learning Committee, Associate Deans, Directors of Collegiate Academies, Executive Deans and Deans in formats that clearly show the percentages of students reaching each benchmark.

- Because the assessment process is undertaken at the institutional level, it is not the responsibility of individual instructors or disciplines to develop and implement strategies for improvement. Rather, the process for continuous improvement is guided by a combination of faculty, discipline leads, COAT members, and other stakeholders. Strategies for improvement are based on assessment results distributed to faculty. Once such strategies have been identified, the Discipline Leads will discuss the plan of action with COAT and other relevant stakeholders.

Make Recommendations for Improving Teaching and Learning

- Based on recommendations made by the Dean of Academic Services and the Vice President of Academic Affairs, appropriate enhancements for continuous improvement are requested by COAT from faculty throughout the district for each assessment objective.

- COAT Co-Chairs are responsible for submitting assessment-based presentations for the Faculty Development Conferences held during the week before the fall semester. Such presentations are made by presenters selected by the Co-Chairs and are based on continuous improvement needs. The COAT presentations will be coordinated directly by the COAT Co-Chairs with the Academic Deans at each college campus.

Advise and Assist in the Creation of Relevant Assessment Assignments

- Co-Chairs will work with Discipline Leads prior to designated assessment cycles to determine appropriate assignment alignments required to correctly assess each course's learning objectives.

  - The COAT Assignment Alignment Review Committee will invite faculty to submit assignments that will be reviewed by committee members to determine if these assignments align with the assessment rubrics.

Review Data and Draft Core Curriculum Assessment Report

- COAT sub-committee reviews data to help develop a continuous improvement plan and drafts report on core curriculum assessment results annually, and for ten-year report to the THECB and SACSCOC.

COAT TIMELINE

Fall Semester

- The full COAT Committee will meet during Development Week.

  - This meeting should include discussion of COAT Summer Assessment Days, agenda for the semester, meeting dates and times, discussion of topics/concerns related to the meetings held by Discipline Leads.

- No later than the end of the first week of the semester, COAT Co-chairs will send notifications to faculty members who are teaching courses scheduled for assessment.

  - The notification should include an explanation of the process, course selected, core objective to assess, associated core objective rubric, and submission process.

- No later than the end of the first week of the semester, Canvas course invitations are sent to the faculty teaching courses being assessed.

  - The Canvas course contains information regarding the assessment process, instructions for submitting artifacts, and information on submitting assignments for review by CARC.

- The COAT Co-Chairs will notify individual COAT members who will be rolling off the committee after the next summer assessment.

- Rubric changes for the next Academic Year should be made and voted on by COAT prior to November.

- Intermittent reminders sent to faculty instructing courses which are being assessed.

  - Academic Services collects the names of faculty that did not submit artifacts by the due date. Faculty who have not submitted artifacts by the due date will be reported to their Associate Deans.

Spring Semester

- The full COAT Committee will meet during Development Week.

    - This meeting should include discussion of the upcoming COAT Summer Assessment Days, agenda for the semester, meeting dates and times, and discussion of topics/concerns related to the meetings held by Discipline Leads.

- No later than the end of the first week of the semester, COAT Co-chairs will send notifications to faculty members who are teaching courses scheduled for assessment.

    - The notification should include an explanation of the process, course selected, core objective to assess, associated core objective rubric, and submission process.

- No later than the end of the first week of the semester, Canvas course invitations are sent to the faculty members who are teaching courses being assessed.

    - The Canvas course contains information regarding the assessment process, instructions for submitting artifacts, and information on submitting assignments for review by CARC.

- Dates for COAT Summer Assessment Days should be selected by COAT and Academic Services.

- Intermittent reminders sent to faculty instructing courses that are being assessed.

    - Academic Services collects the names of faculty that did not submit artifacts by the due date. Faculty who has not submitted artifacts by the due date will be reported to their Associate Deans.

- Communicate with Academic Services to ensure that artifacts from both Fall and Spring semesters are ready for the COAT Summer Assessment Days.

- In March, send COAT Summer Assessment Days invitations to faculty and college administration.

- In May, send reminders to all COAT members and any additional faculty members and/or administrators who have volunteered to assist at COAT Summer Assessment Days.

Summer

- Check with Academic Services to ensure that artifacts from both Fall and Spring Semesters are ready for assessment.

- Conduct COAT Summer Assessment Days.

APPENDIX A: RELEVANT TERMS

Artifact: Student work assigned and collected by faculty to be assessed using COAT assessment rubrics

CWID: College Wide Identification Number

SACSCOC: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

THECB: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

APPENDIX B: AFFILIATED ASSESSMENT GROUPS

Curriculum Office Staff

- The Curriculum Office Staff will be responsible for the following:

    - Correspondence with COAT Committee Members

    - Maintenance of the COAT website within CougarWeb

    - Posting COAT meeting agendas to the COAT website within CougarWeb

    - Distribute COAT meeting minutes to the COAT Co-Chairs for approval. Once the minutes have been approved, the final version is posted to the COAT website within CougarWeb

Academic Services

- In order to facilitate the assessment process, Academic Services will:

    - Download the submitted assessment samples from the Canvas course scheduled for assessment at the end of each long semester

    - Maintain student data and assessment samples

    - Determine which students in the assessed courses have completed the requisite number of credit hours as determined by the Academic Services Office

    - Redact any student names and/or CWID numbers from artifacts being assessed

    - Assure that assessment samples (artifacts) from both the fall and spring semesters are available on assessment day

    - Compile scores and report to COAT the results of students meeting the designated standard

    - Serve as a resource for measurement issues

Discipline Leads

- In order to facilitate the assessment process, the Discipline Leads will:

    - Remind faculty of upcoming assessment duties

- Work with faculty in their department to develop the assignments to be used within their disciplines for assessing the objectives being sampled that semester

Relevant Faculty

- At the beginning of the semester, faculty are notified about the assessment process, the core objective that will be assessed, the associated core objective rubric, and the submission process.

- Faculty must submit artifacts via Canvas for assessment by the deadline established by COAT.

Academic Advisory Council

- Work with individual subcommittees to improve the overall assessment process and help improve communication between all parties involved in the assessment process.

- Provide professional development opportunities.