

Adding a Computer Literacy Outcome to the Written Communication Competency of the TCU Core Curriculum

Background, Procedures, and Proposals

Background:

During AY 2002 – 2003, the Core Curriculum Committee held discussions in which Computer Literacy was identified as an important consideration in the building of the new core curriculum. Although not yet specified, it was understood that the teaching of such literacy might fit well within the area of Written Communication.

During AY 2003 – 2004, the Core Implementation Committee worked with representatives from the English Department to develop outcomes and action steps relative to the Written Communication II competency. The Faculty Senate and Faculty Assembly approved these outcomes and action steps in the spring of 2004. Embodied within the approved outcomes and action steps is language which addresses Computer Literacy, specifically as it relates to writing. Although the language suggests computer literacy as an outcome, it does not detail what computer skills students would be expected to attain.

In the spring of 2003, SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) found that TCU did not provide adequate proof that each student was demonstrating Computer Literacy. The TCU response, prepared by Dr. Bonnie Melhart, indicated that students were attaining computer skills in various ways at TCU. The response was rejected by SACS. Subsequently, in the spring of 2004, Dr. Melhart approached the Senate Executive Committee to discuss plans for addressing the issue.

The result of this discussion is a proposed amendment to the Written Communication II outcomes and action steps. This amendment is necessary to clarify what computer skills students will be expected to attain. We feel that the proposed amendment will serve this purpose and satisfy the Computer Literacy requirement of SACS

Procedures:

Discussion and drafting of formal procedures for amending the TCU Core Curriculum will take place this academic year. This is part of the ongoing charge to the Core Implementation Committee. The Senate Executive Committee will bring a motion to the Senate this academic year detailing these procedures. If approved by the Senate, it will be brought before the Faculty Assembly for a vote.

Proposals:

Since such procedures have not yet been proposed and approved, the Senate Executive Committee brings the following motions:

- I. The TCU Faculty Senate shall have one-time authority, on behalf of the Faculty Assembly, to make an amendment to the TCU Core Curriculum.**

Explanation: This motion would give the Senate the authority to vote upon, and approve, a clarifying amendment to the TCU Core Curriculum. Such authority would be limited to this one action related to Computer Literacy and could not be applied to any other parts of the TCU Core Curriculum. Once action relative to this motion is concluded, the aforementioned authority would expire.

- II. The TCU Faculty Senate accepts the amendment to the outcomes and actions steps portion of the Written Communication II competency as specified on the attached document.**

Explanation: This motion would append the Computer Literacy outcomes and action steps (shown in italics on the accompanying sheet) to the outcomes and action steps for Written Communication II. The rest of the document is identical to the document approved by the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Assembly in the spring of 2004. (The new outcomes and action steps are the result of a cooperative effort between Ed McNertney – chair CIC, Bonnie Melhart, Dan Williams and Carrie Leverenz from English, and the FSEC.)