

# Subcommittee on the Core Curriculum Annual Report

2016 – 2017 Academic Year

**COMMITTEE NAME: SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CORE CURRICULUM**

**ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016 – 2017 ~ PREPARED BY MARY MAGOULICK (CHAIR)**

## COMMITTEE CHARGE

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**V.Section2.D.1.d. Scope.** The Subcommittee on the Core Curriculum shall be concerned with matters relating to the University Core Curriculum (Core), which include, but are not limited to, reviewing proposals for courses to be offered in the Core and assessing the Core. This subcommittee also provides advice, as appropriate, on procedural matters relating to the Core and its assessment.

## COMMITTEE CALENDAR (MEETING DATES ~ ALL FRIDAYS AT 1PM)

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<b>Meetings:</b>	8-19-16	8-26-16	9-9-16	9-23-16	10-14-16	11-11-16
	2-10-17	3-3-17	3-31-17			

**FORUMS :** 2-24-17 (training) 3-10-17 (discussion)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- As in previous years the primary focus of the committee's work was the review and approval of sections in Area B of the core (GC1Y & GC2Y), and revision of forms and procedures related to that process.
- We had fewer proposals than in some past years, and we have continually revised and streamlined the process (so that reviews go more smoothly), so we did not need to meet as often as in previous years.
- We held two forums in the spring, one a training seminar for those interested in teaching Area B sections and one a discussion seminar for anyone already teaching (or hoping to teach) in Area B. Fifteen faculty and seven SoCC members attended the training forum, and three faculty from the seminar submitted proposals shortly thereafter. Ten faculty and three SoCC members attended the discussion forum. Both forums seemed appreciated by those present. We recommend SoCC host at least one of each sort of forum each year.
- Our discussions/plans for the review of sections of GC1Y and GC2Y during this academic year (as recommended by last year's SoCC) at first proceeded well (this year's SoCC members voted to begin the review process). The SoCC chair met with the acting Associate Provost in the fall and followed up on the process we began planning in the previous calendar year. But further discussion was initiated particularly by the administrators on the committee, which ultimately led to a decision to try other methods (such as meetings and/or improved communication with all Chairs about Area B) to try to ensure better adherence to outcomes and standards for teaching these courses (which we hope will ultimately result in more routinely excellent teaching across Area B).
- A list of GC1Y & GC2Y sections approved by the committee is available at <http://intranet.gcsu.edu/socc>

## **SOCC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Representation</u></b>	Meetings attended	Regrets	Absences
Jamie Addy	Library	9	0	0
Kay Anderson Secretary	University Registrar (non-voting)	6	3	0
Nancy Beasley	CoAS, Areas A1, B1, C1	7	2	0
Diane Gregg	CoE, Area B1	9	0	0
Natalie King	CoAS, Area C2	7	2	0
Mary Magoulick* Chair	CoAS, Area B2	8	1	0
Christine Mutiti*	CoAS, Area D1, D2, B2	7	2	0
Brandon Samples Vice-Chair	CoAS, Areas A2, D2	8	1	0
Cara Smith	CoE, University Assessment Team & Provost's Appointee	7	2	0
Debora Stefani	CoAS Area A1, C1	8	1	0
Amy Sumpter	CoAS, Areas B1, B2, & E	6	3	0
Cliff Towner	CoAS	9	0	0
Jeff Turner	CoHS, Area B1	6	3	0
Stephen Wills	CoE	7	2	0
Dana Wood	CoAS, Area E	4	5	0
Jenq-Foung Ya*	CoB, Area D3	7	1	1

\* Elected Faculty Senators marked with an asterisk

GUESTS at meetings included (all invited for meetings during which their proposals were under review):  
8-26: Alex Blazer; 10-14: Marc Causey, Carrie Cook, Brad Koch; 11-11: Nicole DeClouette; 3-31: Juli Gittinger

### **MOTIONS BROUGHT TO THE SENATE FLOOR**

As a standing subcommittee of CAPC, SoCC doesn't typically recommend motions directly to the senate floor. No motions were recommended by SoCC this year.

### **OTHER SIGNIFICANT DELIBERATION (NON-MOTIONS)**

Issues related to oversight and leadership for Area B courses continue to concern the committee. For example, one of the goals established at the onset of the committee's work was to establish a protocol for reviewing existing core courses to ensure they meet the articulated learning goals. As reported in previous years, doing so is complicated by the fact that the courses in the core curriculum have shared oversight with departments and colleges. This year we were unable to come to any consensus about how to proceed in establishing such a protocol (because of difference of opinion among committee members). We urge the upper administration to appoint a Chair to oversee Area B courses, or to train/encourage all Chairs on campus to take responsibility for the oversight of these courses for any faculty in their departments who teach them.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEES AND OTHER GROUPS**

- Two Ad Hoc committees were formed to organize the forums we held in the Spring
  - Forum A (Feb. 24 Training Seminar): Chair: Jaimie Addy; Members: Jeff Turner, Brandon Samples, Dana Wood
  - Forum B (March 10 Discussion Forum): Chair: Mary Magoulick; Member: Cara Smith
- Vice-Chair Brandon Samples served again as our webmaster, maintaining our web presence.

## **COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS**

We have streamlined the process of reviewing Area B proposals to a method that seems to work well. We have one “lead reviewer” for each proposal who contacts and works with the proposer regarding revisions, questions, or suggestions. Normally once I (the Chair) receive a proposal I forward it to the group and ask for a volunteer to be lead reviewer. If no one volunteers I write a specific member to ask him/her to serve as lead reviewer. That lead reviewer then contacts the proposing professor and gives a report to SoCC on the day we actually review the proposal (of how well it fits the appropriate Area B rubric). I compose the email message letting the faculty member and his/her chair know that proposers (and chairs) are all invited to SoCC meetings in which their proposals are reviewed (to defend their proposals and answer any questions). But since the lead reviewer should already have been in contact with the proposer, it is unlikely that any reviews that day will come as a surprise. Sometimes we receive revisions from proposers (based on feedback from the lead reviewer) before the full review meeting. Our review process is thus now more transparent, streamlined, and comprehensible (we believe).

SoCC is eager to proceed with review of core courses early in each academic semester, particularly Area B sections, which means faculty and their chairs must submit proposals as early as possible (not write before registration begins). We also hope to hold more forums for those teaching (or wishing to teach) in Area B, and to organize training workshops for those wishing to design and propose new sections of Area B. We would also like to organize forums to discuss other aspects of core teaching (for instance assessment of Area C1 and related rubrics). We would appreciate more support for all these efforts (for instance communicating deadlines to faculty).

Various members have expressed concerns about the frequent requests we get right around registration time for “rushed” reviews of newly proposed Area B sections. Sometimes we must discuss reviews via email and are expected to approve proposals in a short amount of time (a few days). This concerns SoCC because some proposals do need revisions, but if we approve a proposal (even pending revisions), there is no guarantee that the faculty member will actually carry out revisions. We understand that sometimes faculty members are hired last minute and other emergencies arise, and we have been willing to work with faculty and administrators to facilitate quick turn-arounds under my leadership. But I cannot guarantee that all future SoCC Chairs will be equally able or willing to process requests for review so quickly. Nor can I guarantee that future iterations of the sub-committee will comply with rushed reviews and email votes. In any case, the whole process has more integrity when we can offer a full and careful review for every newly proposed section. We thus urge administrations to set guidelines requiring faculty to submit proposals in a more timely fashion.

## **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- We continue to have issues with our meeting time. One member this year was given a class to teach on Fridays at 1pm in the spring, so she was unable to attend spring semester meetings. She also could not attend meetings at the 3:30 Friday time tentatively proposed as a once-a-month meeting time last year, because of childcare issues. Most SoCC members agreed they’d prefer to meet earlier on Fridays as well, but because we have no set meeting time, and our committee is quite large, we struggle to find times when all members can meet.

- Although ECUS is in the process of changing our bylaws to reduce SoCC’s required number of Senators to 2 (from 3) this year, we nonetheless will continue to require a SoCC Senator to serve on another committee next year (because ECUS used up the extra Senator). SoCC requests that ECUS propose adding two more at-large Senators to the overall number of Senators so that we will always have a big enough pool of Senators to cover all committee Senator needs. Otherwise, an Elected Faculty Senator on SoCC must also serve on a second committee in the future.
- We also request that an administrator is assigned oversight of Area B courses (and perhaps the Core generally) who could actively guide us and oversee faculty teaching in Area B in various ways. This person (or someone) should have chair-like oversight of Area B courses (reviewing syllabi, etc.). Currently, we are skeptical that anyone is taking full “ownership” and “oversight” of these sections. The faculty teaching in Area B have no knowledge/communication with any such person. This de-facto chair could also help facilitate trainings for people wishing to develop Area B sections and forums to discuss teaching in the core.
- Another concern that arose in the committee’s discussions was the lack of faculty development or training available in support of developing courses/sections for the core curriculum, especially in Area B. We organized a training seminar to help faculty develop their proposals, build appropriate syllabi and understand issues particular to Area B such as “learning beyond the classroom” and the “fourth hour.” But we did this in a voluntary way without support from administration. If regular workshops in this area were offered, we believe we would receive more proposals for creative and interesting sections of Area B courses, and perhaps such seminars could be better supported (for instance administrators encouraging faculty to attend), and possibly offering financial incentives (or food).
- We believe that Area B courses are crucially important to the core and to our liberal arts mission. We recommend that all faculty teaching in Area B be full-time, permanent members of the faculty (not adjuncts). Ideally all Area B professors would be tenure track faculty, though we understand a number of lecturers have been hired specifically to fill the demand for these sections. Nonetheless, we feel these “gateway to the liberal arts” courses should initiate relationships with faculty that could be pursued in later, upper level courses (which is more likely to occur when tenure-track faculty teach them). Also, section sizes should ideally be kept small enough to facilitate seminar-style discussion.

**Recommend items for consideration at the governance retreat**

SoCC has no specific recommendations for the governance retreat, but it would be nice to clarify that we will likely meet (during committee break-out sessions) with CAPC, since several of our members are on both committees and cannot be in two places at once. This has informally been our practice at recent retreats.

**Appendix: Committee Operating Procedures 2016-17**

1. The Subcommittee on the Core Curriculum (SoCC) is governed by the Senate bylaws in participating in the shared governance of Georgia College & State University. The members are accountable to the constituents they serve and function as a team to benefit these constituents
  - Reviews Area B Section proposals, notifies submitters of revisions required or approvals, and disseminates paperwork to Curriculum Affairs Policy Committee (CAPC, which goes from there to the Provost’s Office)
  - Reviews other Core Courses, assessment matters, and general core issues as needed
  - Reviews motions and resolutions submitted for University Senate consideration
  - Is responsible for the maintenance and dissemination of meeting minutes

- Ensures that governance documents are up-to-date and accessible (including statutes, bylaws, handbooks, and calendars), and
2. The SoCC members work cooperatively as a team for the good of the University, the University Senate, and the Committee. To realize this objective, members should
    - Attend and participate in all scheduled meetings,
    - Communicate respectfully, openly, and candidly with each other,
    - Review all materials under consideration at each meeting in advance of the meeting
  3. Any objections to decisions made by SoCC will be arbitrated by CAPC
    - Those objecting to a decision by SoCC may submit a written appeal to CAPC. They must do so within ten business days after the SoCC decision. At least three faculty must sign the appeal.
  4. Committee Officer Responsibilities
    - Chair (Presiding Officer)
      - Drafts, in consultation with the committee, the tentative agenda for committee meetings
      - Distributes each tentative agenda to the committee via email prior to the committee meeting
      - Will be contacted by committee members extending regrets prior to a scheduled committee meeting
      - Presides at committee meetings
      - Enters committee motions proposed for University Senate consideration into the online motion database
      - Advertises committee meeting times and meeting agenda to the university community
      - Presents SoCC report to University Senate at scheduled University Senate meetings (or prepares report for CAPC Presiding Officer to read at Senate meetings)
      - Others as defined/assigned by the committee
    - Vice-Chair (Presiding Officer Elect)
      - Assumes all duties and responsibilities of the chair in the absence of the chair
      - Others as defined/assigned by the committee
    - Secretary
      - Be contacted by committee members extending regrets prior to a scheduled committee meeting
      - Drafts, in consultation with the committee, the minutes for committee meetings
      - Posts committee minutes in a manner consistent with University Senate protocol after the minutes have been reviewed by the committee – including any amendments made as a result of the review
      - Others as defined/assigned by the committee
  5. Communication
    - Communicate via the [socc@list.gcsu.edu](mailto:socc@list.gcsu.edu) email list to communicate approval or share constructive suggestions
    - Notify the subcommittee chair and secretary to extend regrets prior to scheduled committee meetings.
  6. Duration of Meetings
    - Committee meetings shall be no more than sixty (60) minutes in duration unless otherwise agreed to by a motion to extend the meeting duration
  7. Agenda
    - Agenda items will be prioritized by time-sensitivity and not necessarily reflect their relative importance.
    - The tentative agenda is distributed to the committee members, by the SoCC Chair as early in the week of a meeting as possible and is finalized in consultation with the other members of SoCC.

- Drafts of supporting documentation for agenda items are provided to the committee members, and standing committee chairs when appropriate, prior to the meeting whenever possible to encourage and facilitate review prior to the meeting.
8. Deliberation and Parliamentary Authority
- Deliberation is informal until there is a motion for committee consideration in which case Robert's Rules apply.
  - The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the SoCC Subcommittee in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the University Senate Bylaws, these operating procedures and any special rules of order SoCC may adopt.
9. Quorum & Voting
- A majority of the committee membership shall constitute a quorum.
  - Unless otherwise determined by the committee in advance of the vote, a majority vote is necessary for committee approval.
  - In all committee votes, the voting threshold is applied to the number of voting members present at the time of the vote assuming the presence of quorum.
10. Minutes
- SoCC members review the initial draft of the minutes of SoCC meetings prior to distribution to the University Senate.
  - The SoCC secretary shall prepare a draft of the minutes of each committee meeting and may request guidance from the committee during a meeting to inform the preparation of this draft.
  - This draft of the minutes is circulated to the committee for review prior to posting.
  - If suggested revisions are offered, the revised minutes are again distributed to the committee for review.
  - The minutes are posted as soon as possible after the review process concludes.
  - Except for the minutes of the final meeting of the academic year, the approval of the previous meeting minutes is an item on the agenda of each SoCC meeting.
11. Amendment of these operating procedures
- These committee operating procedures may be amended by a majority vote at any scheduled subcommittee meeting provided that committee members receive written notification in advance of the meeting at which the proposed revision(s) is/are considered. Any such revision(s) that are approved are effective immediately following the committee vote.

## **Appendix ~ Proposal Review Procedures**

Significant effort was devoted to establishing a process for proposal review and communication with the Georgia College community about the procedures. This process is outlined below.

- At the beginning of the academic year, update <http://intranet.gcsu.edu/socc> with committee membership, representation and the meeting schedule.
- Review application forms for consistency and upload to the intranet site
- Send an email message to department chairs, deans and through FrontPage requesting course submissions that included a link to the intranet site. Examples:  
<https://frontpage.gcsu.edu/announcement/reminder-propose-course-core-curriculum>  
<https://frontpage.gcsu.edu/announcement/subcommittee-core-curriculum-call-proposals>
- Train the committee on proposal review procedures, including how to be a "lead reviewer"

- Proposals are submitted by the Associate Provost’s Office after initial review by the Chair and the Dean of the appropriate department/college
- Upon receipt of a proposal, send the “submission receipt notification” via email
- Assign the proposal for review by sending an email to the committee asking for (or assigning) a lead reviewer
- Notify the proposing faculty member and his/her chair of the name of the lead reviewer as well as the meeting time, date, and location when the proposal will be reviewed by the whole committee (and invite them to attend)
- If the proposal is approved, the Chair of SoCC signs the proposal, sends “approval notification” and “requested signature” via email to the CAPC chair, who then forwards these to the Provost for final approval.
- The proposal is uploaded to our SoCC intranet site – this is done by our web master, Brandon Samples.

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### **Submission Receipt Notification**

To: Proposer

CC: Chair, Dean, Leader Reviewer

Subject: SoCC Proposal Submission has been received and assigned for review

This message confirms that the attached proposal, [TITLE] has been received by the Subcommittee on Core Curriculum (SoCC). The proposal has been assigned a leader reviewer (named), who will contact you with any suggested revisions. Please be aware that our rubric for reviewing these proposals is available at our website. Your proposal is scheduled for review on [DATE, PLACE] and you (and/or your chair) are welcome to attend this meeting. [LEAD Reviewer] will serve as your contact for the proposal review. I encourage you to review the materials posted at [intranet.gcsu.edu/socc](http://intranet.gcsu.edu/socc) for more details regarding the process.

The approval form you submitted will now be routed through the following steps:

- (1) The proposal has been assigned to a lead reviewer, who will review the documentation you provided and score your proposal according to the course approval rubric.
- (2) Your reviewer may contact you to request additional information or clarification.
- (3) Your reviewer will lead the discussion before the subcommittee on {DATE}, but all SoCC members may have questions or comments for you at that meeting.

You are welcome (but not required) to attend SoCC meetings, which occur at [TIME] in [PLACE]. I encourage you to review the materials posted at [intranet.gcsu.edu/socc](http://intranet.gcsu.edu/socc) for more details regarding the process including copies of the Course Approval Rubrics.

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### **Review Assignment Notification**

To:SOCC

CC: LEAD PROPOSAL REVIEWER

Members of SoCC,

This message is to confirm that the attached proposal has been received for review by SoCC. Please let me know if you wish to take the lead on reviewing this proposal. If no volunteer comes forward in 48 hours, I will assign the proposal to one of you. The lead reviewer will initiate contact with proposers if any revisions are deemed

necessary (according to our rubric and procedures). If you have questions regarding the proposal, please direct them to me or the lead reviewer.

As a reminder, our process has been modified - the process is outlined below.

- (1) Upon receipt of a proposal, the SoCC chair will ask for volunteers to serve as lead reviewer, or will assign a lead reviewer if there are no volunteers. The lead reviewer should be in contact with the proposer if any revisions or clarifications are deemed necessary.
- (2) The lead reviewer will review the proposal using the course approval rubric (on our website). During the review he/she may decide to request a revision of the proposal or a face-to-face meeting prior to prepare the proposal for final SoCC review.
- (3) The lead reviewer is coordinate with the chair of SoCC about when the proposal will be brought forward for full review and vote. While time for review may vary depending on the proposal, teams should make every effort to complete the review within two weeks of receiving the proposal.

All members of SoCC are responsible for reviewing the proposal prior to the committee review using the course approval rubric if applicable.

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### **Approval Notification**

To: Proposer

CC: Chair, Dean's Office, Provost's Office, SoCC, Matthew Buchanan, Chair of CAPC

SUBJECT: SoCC: Your [GC1Y/GC2Y] section has been approved

ATTACHMENT: Complete application including the SoCC Chair's signature.

Dear Professor [NAME],

I am pleased to inform you that your section proposal, [NAME], has been recommended for approval by the Subcommittee on Core Curriculum (SoCC) for inclusion in Area B of the core curriculum as a section of [GC1Y: Critical Thinking OR GC2Y: Global Persepctives].

What are the next steps in the process?

The approval form you submitted will now be routed through the following steps:

1. The Chair of SoCC will sign the form and route it to the Chair of CAPC as an information item.
2. The Chair of CAPC will sign the form and route it to the Office of the Provost. **CAPC CHAIR Please sign the attached PDF and forward it to the Provost's office.**
3. The Provost will provide final approval for the course section by signing the form. Records for core curriculum courses, sections and overlays approved by SoCC are kept in the Office of the Provost.
4. A copy of your proposal will be added to the SoCC website, which is made available to all Georgia College faculty.

**At this point it would be advisable to begin working with the Office of the Registrar to begin the process for scheduling the course or section.**

Please also note that all faculty teaching courses in the core are expected to contribute assessment data for their courses as described in the Core Assessment Plan. Details about the requirements for your course are available at <http://assessment.gcsu.edu/thecore>.

Please don't hesitate to contact me by email ([mary.magoulick@gcsu.edu](mailto:mary.magoulick@gcsu.edu)) or phone (3177) should you have any questions about the process.

Congratulations,

Mary Magoulick (Chair of SoCC)

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### **Approval Receipt Notification**

TO: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Committee Chair (name)

CC: Registrar (Kay Anderson), Associate Provost (name)

Please find attached the core curriculum approval form for the following courses. I have signed the forms, indicating that approval by SoCC for inclusion in the core curriculum.

- Titles of sections

Once CAPC has acknowledged receipt of the form, please sign and deliver to the Office of the Provost for final approval. The following information has been shared with the applicant regarding the approval process.

The approval form you submitted will now be routed through the following steps:

- (1) The Chair of SoCC will sign the form and route it to the Chair of CAPC as an information item.
- (2) The Chair of CAPC will sign the form and route it to the Office of the Provost.
- (3) The Provost will provide final approval for the course section by signing the form. Records for core curriculum courses, sections and overlays approved by SoCC are kept in the Office of the Provost.
- (4) A copy of your proposal will be added to the SoCC [D2L course](#), which is made available to all Georgia College faculty.

At this point it would be advisable to begin working with the Office of the Registrar to begin the process for scheduling the course or section.