Instructions for Proposing or Revising Courses for the University Core Curriculum Program

The core curriculum is an educational experience common to all undergraduates of Ball State University. Each course in the core should contribute to the realization of the following vision, as described in the Preamble of the framework document *Ball State University Core Curriculum for the 21st Century* (UCC – 21): *"Graduates of Ball State University are individuals who realize their intellectual potential, who seek to add breadth and depth to their perspectives, and who maintain their physical well-being. Graduates of the university command extensive knowledge and a mature repertoire of cognitive, practical, and technological skills. They exhibit integrity and responsible action in their social, professional, and civic lives. They respect the histories, cultures, and needs of others. They inform their decisions through critical, creative, and scientific reasoning, and they discern the consequences of their decisions and actions at the local, national, and global levels. They acknowledge responsibility for environmental well-being and for the civic engagement that a diverse democracy requires."* Proposals for UCC courses should make clear how the proposed course will contribute to the attainment of this vision.

I. PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS OR REVISIONS FOR COURSES TO THE UCC PROGRAM

    A.   Only academic units may propose or revise courses for the UCC program.

    B.   Interdepartmental course proposals or revisions must be approved by each sponsoring academic unit.

    C.   Any academic unit considering submitting a proposal or revision for a UCC course should consult with their UCC college representative as they develop their proposal or revision to address any of the following issues:

        1.   Translation of UCC learning outcomes into the context of their course
        2.   Definition of appropriate measures of assessment
        3.   Identification of possible demurral problems
        4.   Rationale for inclusion in the UCC program

    D.   A sponsoring academic unit will submit the proposal or revision via Watermark Curriculum Strategy (formerly SmartCatalog) to route through the workflow for review. The proposal or revision will route to the College Curriculum Committee and College Dean for review and recommendation, according to that college's procedures. The proposal or revision will also be reviewed by the Office of the Registrar before it is forwarded to the UCC Subcommittee for review and recommendation. You may consider adding your UCC college representative as a collaborator on this proposal or revision as this will allow them to identify concerns quickly. The UCC Course Proposal/Revision Cover Sheet <u>and</u> primary syllabus must be submitted through Watermark Curriculum Strategy for all course proposals and revisions.

    E.   The UCC Subcommittee will forward its recommendation for the roster of courses to the Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC). The UCC Subcommittee approves individual course proposals and revisions and compiles all the proposed changes to the University Core Curriculum to present to UEC at the end of the academic year. The UEC approves the updated core as a whole for implementation the following academic year.

F.   Reminders: Within Watermark Curriculum Strategy, use the system's New Course Form if the course is new to the University (i.e. it has not yet been listed in the catalog). Use the system's Revised or Drop Course Form for an existing course (i.e. it is currently listed in the catalog) if it is being proposed as an addition to the UCC or if it is already part of the UCC and a change is being proposed to the course title, number, description, credit hours, tier, SLOs, cognitive skills, and/or prerequisites. Within the Watermark Curriculum Strategy (aka SmartCatalog) form, answer "yes" to the question "Is this an approved or proposed University Core Curriculum course?" to ensure the proposal routes to the UCC Subcommittee. The UCC Course Proposal/Revision Cover Sheet and primary syllabus must be attached at the bottom of the system's form.

G.   If the UCC Subcommittee suggests changes to the proposal or revision, it will be returned to the original submitter who must then lock the proposal or revision, make adjustments, save, and return the changes through Watermark Curriculum Strategy. The proposal or revision will route back to the UCC Subcommittee.

II. FORMAT FOR UCC FOUNDATION, TIER 1, TIER 2 OR TIER 3 COURSE PROPOSALS AND REVISIONS:

A UCC course proposal or revision consists of the documentation described below. These items should be attached to the Watermark Curriculum Strategy New Course Form or Revised or Drop Course Form. Please note that even if the course has been previously approved, a full proposal that reflects the changes to replace the existing syllabus on file will be needed.

A. UCC Course Proposal/Revision Cover Sheet

B. UCC Primary Syllabus (also may be the Departmental Syllabus of Record)

A primary syllabus (historically known as a master syllabus) must be submitted with all UCC course proposals and revisions. The format of this syllabus is described below.

1. Course description (same as catalog description)

2. Rationale for Inclusion of Course in UCC

Provide a rationale that will indicate in detail the ways in which the course will enable students to achieve the learning outcomes of the UCC Program. This should include a description of how the course content focuses on major ideas in the discipline that provide a useful context for attaining UCC student learning outcomes. See additional instructions for writing rationale statements that are specific to the type of course you are proposing in the Appendices of this document.

3. List of Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Course learning outcomes or objectives must be described in terms of observable, assessable student performances (e.g., written, oral, visual).

- Outcomes that state students should be able to identify, recognize, relate, and predict are often associated with student learning outcomes that may be assessed using objective (e.g., multiple-choice) question formats.
- Outcomes that state students should be able to use, explain, apply, calculate, relate knowledge from several areas are associated with student learning outcomes that

should be assessed using problems, open-ended exam question formats or various forms of student projects, papers, or presentations.

- Outcome statements should not use verbs such as appreciate, value, be aware of, or understand unless these objectives are accompanied by specific descriptions of observable/assessable student behaviors that demonstrate students have attained the desired learning outcome.

4. Course Content Outline and Format

List the major topics that will be addressed in the course. These should focus on major ideas within the discipline. Describe the planned format of instruction, including the various pedagogical methods that will be used to teach the course topics. If applicable, address how the course may be adapted for online sections.

C. Course Assessment

Describe the methods that will be used to evaluate student progress in the course. These methods should require that students demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge and cognitive skills that demonstrate the UCC transformations to scenarios, situations, or problems not previously presented by the instructor. The proposal or revision must indicate assessment activities for EACH of the transformations appropriate to the level of the proposed course (i.e., Tier 1, 2, or 3).

	Tier 1 Fine Arts, Humanities, Natural Sciences or Social Sciences	**Tier 2**Fine Arts/Design, Humanities, Natural Sciences or Social Sciences	**Tier 3** Experience
Select Cognitive Skills for these Transformations *(see Appendix A for the list of cognitive skills)*	- Experience to Information and/or - Information to Knowledge	- Knowledge to Judgment	- Judgment to Action

Assessing students for these transformations can involve multiple types of assessment, which might include:

- Objective exams (e.g. multiple-choice, true/false)
- Essay exam questions (e.g. interpret, analyze, explain, compare and contrast)
- Short reaction or reflection papers
- Oral group or individual presentations
- Data analysis (lab reports, graph summaries, etc.)
- Research papers (for smaller classes)
- Service learning journals or progress reports
- Capstone, student teaching, clinical work, internship, studio, field work (for Tier 3)

It is expected that UCC courses should include a substantial emphasis on student learning outcomes that reflect the cognitive transformations described in the UCC framework document. Hence, assessments of student learning outcomes will demonstrate that the UCC transformations have been achieved. Consequently, assessments of learning outcomes associated with the UCC transformations will have substantial weight in determining student grades.

UCC courses should be periodically assessed by the department/school to determine if they are effectively contributing to the goals and objectives of the core curriculum. This will require a commitment from instructors to regularly collect and analyze data that document the proportion of students who successfully demonstrate mastery of knowledge and cognitive skills associated with UCC transformations. Faculty members who commit to teaching in the core also commit to submitting a UCC assessment report by **Oct. 15** each year following the guidelines outlined on the VPAA website. Please also note on your syllabus that you will submit UCC assessment reports by Oct. 15 each year as a reminder for those teaching the course in the future. See Appendix C for more details.

In this section of the course proposal or revision, describe the types of assessment data that will be collected to document the degree to which students successfully attain the learning outcomes identified in the course rationale and objectives. Also describe how these data will be summarized and reported to the department, the college and the VPAA Office. Examples of future assessment documents might include exam questions, assignments, examples of student work, etc.

The proposal or revision should include a chart showing how this course will be assessed for meeting the UCC cognitive skills associated with the appropriate tier. It is suggested that SLOs be aligned with 3-5 UCC cognitive skills and assessed. Example:

Example of Assessment Matrix to Include in Proposal or Revision			
Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)	**UCC Cognitive Skills Appropriate for the Tier and Aligned with Course SLOs**	**UCC Transformation**	**Planned Assessments**
Analyze the context of texts and how they are composed for different audience & purposes	Students are alert to the importance of context (Tier 1)	Experience to Information (E to I)	For this skill, a random sample of 10% of all rhetorical analysis papers from multiple sections of the course will be assessed.
SLO:			For this skill, assess …
SLO:			For this skill, assess …
SLO:			For this skill, assess …
Planned Assessment Schedule: By Oct. 15 each year, the department will submit to the VPAA Office an assessment report reflecting how well students are meeting the cognitive skills.			

D. Faculty Qualifications for Domain Courses

HLC Assumed Practice B stipulates that faculty teaching general education courses hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. When a department proposes a UCC course for a domain in which that department is not traditionally considered to belong, the course proposal must include a statement of the qualifications (credentials and/or experience) of the faculty members who will teach the course, following the Ball State Faculty Qualifications Policy outlined on the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs website. Additionally, the proposal shall include a commitment by the department to continue to have on faculty members with similar qualifications without depending

exclusively on one faculty member. Course assessment documentation must include a list of all faculty who have taught such courses during the period of assessment when a UCC course domain falls outside the areas traditionally covered by the department.

E. Writing Designation (if applicable)
   If this course is proposed for a W designation:

- Include at least one Student Learning Outcome, in the Primary Syllabus, that addresses writing (see Appendix B.1).

- Identify the percentage of the student's final grade that will be determined based on writing assignments; this may be a "range" (for example, 50-70%), but must be *at least* 20%.

- Explain the aspects of the course, teaching strategies, and/or assignments/activities that will attend to writing **processes**—drafting, peer and/or teacher feedback, self-reflection, and revision—and not just assessment of writing.

   NOTE: Courses proposed for the Writing Designation ONLY (with no UCC Tier/Domain designation) do NOT require a UCC Primary Syllabus. Submit only a UCC Course Proposal/Revision Cover Sheet with the departmental primary syllabus; that syllabus should include an explanation of how the course will meet the requirements of a w-course (above).

F. Credit by Exam (if applicable)
   If this course will have a credit-by-exam option, please explain how credit will be awarded.

G. Supplemental Rationale or Other Statement
   The UCC Subcommittee will consider course proposals or revisions that deviate from one or more of the specific criteria set forth in this document. A course proposal or revision that deviates from one or more of the criteria must include a supplemental rationale that explains the reasons for the deviations. This rationale statement must also outline how the alternative proposed or revised course will meet the goals of the UCC, as stated in the framework document ***Ball State University Core Curriculum for the 21st Century*** approved by the University Senate and Board of Trustees. In this circumstance, the UCC course proposal or revision may include any additional information that the proposing department or faculty member believes necessary.

H. Recommendations for Syllabus

- Faculty should acknowledge in the syllabus that this course is part of the University Core Curriculum (UCC).
- Faculty should include in the syllabus a description about how the UCC core relates to students' overall experience at BSU.

   Example:

   This course is part of the University Core Curriculum (UCC). The UCC enables students to:
- *realize their intellectual potential*
- *add breadth and depth to their educational experience*
- *increase their personal well-being*

- *participate actively in their communities*

Ball State recognizes its responsibility to ensure that students are conversant with ways of knowing, with criteria for judgment, and with types of information outside their majors. To succeed in the 21st Century, where work often requires a group effort by experts from multiple disciplines, graduates will need to form, lead, or be members of problem-solving, brainstorming, or decision-making teams in a wide variety of professional settings. Thus, the UCC requires students to engage disciplines outside the domains of knowledge in which their majors reside, to develop skills in written and oral communication, to become mathematically, scientifically, and historically literate, and to understand issues in the areas of physical wellness and personal finance.

I. Changes to the Course After Approval by the UCC Sub-Committee

Any change to an existing UCC course requires submission of the current primary syllabus. The UCC Subcommittee will review any changes to UCC courses in the interest of consistency and record-keeping.

Minor changes require the *review* of a full UCC primary syllabus, and the committee may suggest other changes to the document based on current practices. These changes will be friendly amendments; approval will be based solely on the items under review. If the UCC Subcommittee suggests changes or amendments to the proposal or revision, it will be returned to the original submitter who must then lock the proposal or revision, make adjustments, save, and return the changes through Watermark Curriculum Strategy. The proposal or revision will then route back to the UCC Subcommittee. The UCC chair will need to approve everything in Watermark Curriculum Strategy before changes can be implemented.

More substantive revisions will require full committee *approval* of the UCC revisions, as noted in Table 1.

Courses being dropped from the UCC do not require submission of a primary syllabus.

Table 1
Revisions to Existing UCC Courses

Change Made After UCC Sub-Committee Approval	Curriculum Strategy Submission: UCC Sub-Committee Review Only	Curriculum Strategy Submission: UCC Sub-Committee Full Approval Required
Course Title	X	
Course Description		X
Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)		X
Credit Hours	X	
UCC Tier		X
UCC Transformation		X
UCC Domain		X
Cognitive Skills Assessed		X
Prerequisite(s)	X	
Drop (no UCC syllabus required)	X	

Appendix A: UCC Cognitive Skills Associated with Foundations, Tier 1, 2, and 3 Transformations

Tiers	Transformations	Cognitive Skills
Foundations **E** to **I** and/or **I** to **K** *Written Comm. (6 cr.)* *Oral Comm. (3 cr.)* *Mathematics (3 cr.)* *History (3 cr.)* *Physical Wellness (2 cr.)* *Personal Finance (1 cr.)* & **Tier 1** **E** to **I** and/or **I** to **K** *Domains:* *Fine Arts* *Humanities* *Natural Sciences* *Social Sciences*	**Experience to Information (E to I)** To transform experience into information, Ball State graduates are intentional learners who:	• accurately observe and measure elements of the natural and social worlds • are alert to the importance of context • explore diverse ways of knowing • develop strategies for reflecting on experience
	Information to Knowledge (I to K) To transform information into knowledge, Ball State graduates are informed, flexible thinkers who:	• analyze data to reveal existing patterns of information and to create new patterns • understand the various ways that information is incorporated into branches of knowledge • work independently as well as collaboratively to generate knowledge • develop an intellectual framework with which to synthesize information from multiple sources • adapt their intellectual framework to accommodate new information • develop the art of communication—oral, visual, and written--in more than one language (natural/symbolic)
Tier 2 **K** to **J** *Domains:* *Humanities* *Fine Arts/Design* *Natural Sciences* *Social Sciences*	**Knowledge to Judgment (K to J)** To transform knowledge into judgment, Ball State graduates are critical and creative thinkers who:	• use multiple sources of information and knowledge in forming judgments • evaluate strengths and weaknesses of arguments and actions • understand the ethical implications of possessing and using knowledge • take an inquiring stance toward the world while appreciating the contributions of tradition • consider and understand others' values as well as their own • value diversity in the social and natural world • develop effective decision-making strategies based on an awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses • understand how their actions affect the complex, interrelated systems that compose our environment
Tier 3 **J** to **A** *Students complete capstone courses or immersion experiences (e.g., internship, clinical work, student teaching, field work, study abroad, etc.) No UCC credit hours.*	**Judgment to Action (J to A)** To transform judgment into action, Ball State graduates are responsible learners who:	• recognize the responsibilities of an educated person to self, family, community, country, and the world • accept the responsibility to act on their principles • adapt to change • work with others to overcome obstacles to communication, building consensus for action • communicate effectively in oral, visual, and written modes, and in more than one language (natural/symbolic) • adopt habits of mind for continuous inquiry about themselves, others, and the world • act responsibly given the dangers to and the fragility of the natural environment • make and act on a commitment to health and wellness

Appendix B: Guidance on Writing Intensive (W) Courses

W courses may be included in a Tier or may be listed only as W courses. All W courses must include a goal related to writing that will be regularly assessed. The results will be reported on core curriculum assessment reports.

This appendix provides additional guidance for departments developing writing intensive (**W**) courses. This guidance is based on national practice for writing-intensive courses and is intended to serve as a reference. Variation from this guidance will not necessarily lead to rejection of a UCC **W** designation.

1. **State Outcomes for Written Communication** *(feel free to select from one of these outcomes, if desired)*

   The Indiana College Core (formerly STGEC) outcomes for *Written Communication* are listed below. These may serve as a guide when creating course student learning outcomes (SLOs) for writing-intensive (**W**) courses.

   1.1. Produce texts that use appropriate formats, genre conventions, and documentation styles while controlling tone, syntax, grammar, and spelling.

   1.2. Demonstrate an understanding of writing as a social process that includes multiple drafts, collaboration, and reflection.

   1.3. Read critically, summarize, apply, analyze, and synthesize information and concepts in written and visual texts as the basis for developing original ideas and claims.

   1.4. Demonstrate an understanding of writing assignments as a series of tasks including identifying and evaluating useful and reliable outside sources.

   1.5. Develop, assert, and support a focused thesis with appropriate reasoning and adequate evidence.

   1.6. Compose texts that exhibit appropriate rhetorical choices, which include attention to audience, purpose, context, genre, and convention.

   1.7. Demonstrate proficiency in reading, evaluating, analyzing, and using material collected from electronic sources (such as visual, electronic, library databases, Internet sources, other official databases, federal government databases, reputable blogs, wikis, etc.).

2. **National Guidelines for Writing-Intensive Courses (National Council for Teachers of English – NCTE)**

   a. *Class Size*

   The NCTE recommends that writing-intensive courses be capped at 20 students, given the considerable time necessary for formative writing assessment. Departments should take this into consideration when developing new courses with the **W** designation.

   b. *Assessment*
   Writing, including drafts and informal writing, should make up a significant portion of the student grade. While 20% is the minimum to qualify as a **W** course at Ball State, national norms suggest around 70% of the course grade be based on writing.

Ideally, the assessment plan for a **W** course will include assessment of at least one course outcome specific to writing. Any assessment of writing should take into consideration the disciplinary norms of the field of study. Grammar and mechanics should *not* be the primary criteria for writing assessment.

c. Writing Process

Writing-intensive (**W**) courses should engage students in the writing process. A proposal for a **W** course should include formative writing feedback. Students should be encouraged to submit drafts of their writing and should receive peer and/or instructor feedback before that writing is submitted for a final grade.

For more information on writing intensive courses, here are a few resources:

- Conference on College Composition and Communication Position Statement on Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing
- The National Writing Census
- NSSE Report on Experiences with Writing
- Farris, C. & Smith, R. "Writing-Intensive Courses: Tools for Curricular Change"
- Townsend, M. "Writing Intensive Courses & WAC"

Appendix C: Annual UCC Assessment Guidelines

Faculty members who commit to teaching a course in the core also commit to submitting a UCC assessment report by Oct. 15 each year. Assessment is rooted in a philosophy of continual improvement of our learning environment. Annual assessment of student learning in the tiered University Core Curriculum (UCC) is an essential component of the General Education program at Ball State.

The UCC learning outcomes are referred to as cognitive skills. These cognitive skills are aligned with the Indiana College Core (formerly STGEC).

The annual UCC assessment report should contain four parts:

Part 1 - Course SLOs aligned with UCC Cognitive Skills

Part 2 - Assessment Methods: Describe activities used to assess the UCC cognitive skills outlined in #1. This could be one mile-marker assignment that covers all of the cognitive skills or it could be a separate assignment for each cognitive skill. Describe the sample. What is the expected performance outcome? Describe any other details related to the assessment methods/activities.

Part 3 - Results: What was the sample size? Using the rubric designed to assess the UCC cognitive skills, indicate the number and percentage of students in your sample in each of the following levels for each UCC cognitive skill: 4 = Accomplished; 3 = Competent; 2 = Developing; 1 = Beginning. Describe the results. Was the expected performance outcome met? Include comparisons with previous assessment cycles, if possible, and note trends within this cycle and/or over time. What did you learn?

Part 4 - Use of Results to Improve: Describe how the results were shared with other faculty. Describe any plans for improvements to future instructional methods, course content, syllabus or assessment activities/processes in this course as a result of assessment data.

Each UCC course instructor should submit an annual assessment report reflecting how well students are meeting the cognitive skills. Instructors teaching core courses with multiple sections may submit one report with data from multiple sections. Annual UCC course assessment reports should be uploaded to the VPAA website by **Oct. 15** each year. Submit annual reports to this site: Upload UCC Assessment Report Here.

Tutorials are available to assist with completion of the annual UCC assessment report:

- History and Purpose of UCC Assessment
- Instructions and Rubrics for UCC Assessment
- UCC Tiers, Transformation, Cognitive Skills
- Downloadable Rubrics, Templates and Examples
- Template for Foundations, Tier 1 & Tier 2 Assessment Report
- Template for Tier 3 Assessment Report
- Guidance on Assessment of Writing Intensive (W-designated) Core Courses
- Upload UCC Assessment Report Here
- BSU Assessment Toolkit
- DOSL Continuity of Instruction Community - Assessment Resources