State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
General-education survey

Institution Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

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Each institution of higher education has a rationale for its general-education program and has formulated a structure that implements that rationale. The following questions ask you to describe your institution's general-education rationale and structure.

1. Does your institution have an official statement of the philosophy or rationale for its general-education program?

X Yes. *(If yes, please attach a copy of it.)*
Please see "The University Core Curriculum Statement of Purpose" in the *1998-1999 University Core Curriculum – Faculty & Advisors Handbook (hereafter referred to as "Core Handbook")*, page 3.
___ No

2. Which of the following characterize general education at your institution? *(Check all that apply, and add any additional rationales that are distinct from those listed.)*

X Acquiring intellectual skills (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Creating a learning community (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1 & 6, pages 5 & 11)
X Cultivating personal fulfillment (to live "the life more abundant") (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Developing habits of mind of a liberally educated person (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Developing social and civic competencies and values (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1, 2, 3, 7; pages 5 - 8, 12)
X Integrating learning (*Core Handbook*, but accomplished by faculty in classroom)
X Learning more about oneself (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Producing an educated citizenry (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
* Providing a foundation of learning experiences to enable advanced studies
* (This is the function of our University's requirement for a major field of study. It is not the intended purpose of our *Core Handbook*.)
X Producing a versatile workforce - prepared for future career changes (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Sampling a variety of fields to enable choice of a major or future profession (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)

X Supplementing the person's concentration in a specialized field (*Core Handbook*, Areas 1-7, pages 5-14)
X Transmitting cultural heritage/s and values (*Core Handbook*, Areas 2 & 6, pages 5 & 11)
___ Other (specify)

3. Has your institution developed a set of learning goals or objectives for its general education program?

X Yes (*If yes, please attach a copy of the goals/objectives.)*
Please see *Core Handbook*, pages 5-14) Goals are established for each of the seven areas.
___ No
___ In process

4. If yes, which one of the following best describes those learning goals/objectives? They are stated:

___ Almost entirely in terms of content knowledge
___ Primarily content knowledge with some skill development
X Equally in terms of skill development and content knowledge
___ Primarily skill development with some content knowledge
___ Almost entirely in terms of skill development
___ Other (please specify) _____

5. Has your institution adopted a definition of an educated person?

X Yes (*If yes, please attach a copy of this definition.)*

(The following quote is from paragraph 2, page 3, *Core Handbook*)

- "…Educated citizens in the years ahead must be able to react creatively to cultural, racial, and gender-based diversity, and to cope effectively with problems and potentialities stemming from such developments as technological advances and environmental crises. As the rate of change accelerates, our graduates need a curriculum of liberal education that gives them both a sense of rootage in the hard-won values of the past and a feeling of competence in dealing with newly-arising challenges."
- Discussion and criteria relating to the development of an educated person can also be found on page six of the University Forum on Liberal Education Report (UFLE) in 1992 in the Statement of Purpose, page 12 Resolution 1, pages 18 – 19 – Resolution 7 and page 24 – Conclusion.

___ No
___ In process

6. If your institution has general-education learning goals/objectives that wholly or in part are stated in terms of <u>skill development</u>, please answer this question. In the left-hand column, please check only the categories that are applicable to your general-education program. List and check other categories as appropriate. In the right-hand column, list the number of credits that are required in each of the categories. Since this list is not exhaustive, please add whatever categories your institution uses for its general-education program. If these skills are taught across the curriculum and do not have specific credit requirements, please answer question number 9 in addition to this question.

Our Core Curriculum is designed to promote skill and intellectual development <u>across the curriculum</u> (see question 9). Each of the seven Areas of Study in our core curriculum requires that the student take from one to nine credit hours in that Area of Study, and most of these seven Areas require some skill development. For example, Area 4 (Scientific Reasoning and Discovery) requires that students, "… Practice problem-solving using quantification, statistical analysis, and/or data manipulation." (Goal 4 - see *Core Handbook*, page 10), but that is one of seven goals for courses in Area 4. For these reasons, it is difficult if not impossible to determine what proportion, of the credits in each course approved for Area 4, deals with each of the skill areas listed in the table below. For these reasons, we have listed the TOTAL number of credits (required minimum) in all of our required Areas of Study that deal with each of the skill areas listed below**.**

Skill Area		Area(s) of Study Having That Skill	Number of Credits Required
	Computer Technological Literacy	Beginning with the fall semester of 1998, each new freshman class will enter Virginia Tech with a computer requirement. Computer and technological literacy is part of the fabric of a Virginia Tech education.	0
X	Critical Thinking Skills	Area 1 - Goals 1 - 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 5)* Area 2 - Goals 3, 4, 8 (*see Core Handbook,pp. 5 - 6)* Area 3 - Goals 2 and 5 (*see Core Handbook, p. 8)* Area 4 - Goals 1, 3, 5, 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)* Area 5 - Goals 1 - 3 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)* Area 6 - Goal 3 (*see Core Handbook, p. 11)* Area 7 - Goals 2, 3, 4, 6 (*see Core Handbook, p.12)*	41
X	Ethical Reasoning Skills	Area 2 - Goal 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 6)* Area 7 - Goal 8 (*see Core Handbook, p. 13)*	9
X	Foreign Language Skills	To graduate from Virginia Tech, all students must attain a minimum competency equal to 6 semester hours of college level foreign or classical language. (*see 1998-1999 Undergraduate Course Catalog,* p. 41) *	0*
X	Mathematical Reasoning / Quantitative Analysis Skills	Area 4 - Goal 4 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)* Area 5 - Goals 1 - 3 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)*	9
	Library Research Skills	None	0
X	Oral Communication Skills	Area 1 - Goal 7 (*see Core Handbook, p. 5)* Area 6 - Goal 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 11)*	10
X	Writing Skills	Area 1 - Goals 1 - 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 5)*	9
X	Scientific Reasoning & Discovery	Area 4 - Goals 1 - 7 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)*	8
X	Society & Human Behavior	Area 3 - Goals 1 - 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 8)*	6
X	Ideas, Cultural Traditions &Values	Area 2 - Goals 1 - 9 (*see Core Handbook, p. 6)*	6
X	Creative & Aesthetic Experience	Area 6 - Goals 1 - 7 (*see Core Handbook, p. 11)*	1

7. If your institution has general-education learning goals/objectives that wholly or in part are stated in terms of content knowledge, please answer this question. Check the disciplinary areas that you require for your students. Since this list is not exhaustive, please add whatever categories your institution uses for its general-education program. In the left-hand column, please check only the categories that are applicable in your program. List and check other categories as appropriate. In the right-hand column, list the number of credits that are required in each of the categories. If this content is taught across the curriculum and does not have specific credit requirements, please answer question number 9 in addition to this question.

Our Core Curriculum is designed to promote content knowledge across the curriculum (see question 9). Each of the seven Areas of Study in our core curriculum requires that the student take from one to nine credit hours in that Area of Study, and most of these seven Areas require considerable content knowledge. For example, Area 7 (*Critical Issues in a Global Context*) requires that students, "Examine an issue or a group of related issues whose influence on contemporary life extends beyond the boundaries of the United States and significantly involves other societies, cultures, and geographical locations." (Goal 1 - see *Core Handbook*, page 12), and that is one of eight goals for courses in Area 7. For these reasons, it is difficult if not impossible to determine what proportion, of the credits in each course approved for Area 7, deals with types of content as opposed to skill areas. For these reasons, we have listed the TOTAL number of credits (required minimum) in all of our required Areas of Study that deal with each type of content knowledge listed below.

	Content Area	Area(s) of Study Having That Type of Context	Number of Credits Required
X	Communications	Area 1 - Goals 1 - 7 (*see Core Handbook, p. 5)* Area 2 - Goals 3, 5, 8 (*see Core Handbook pp. 5-6)* Area 3 - Goal 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 8)* Area 4 - Goal 5 (*see Core Handbook, p. 10)* Area 6 - Goals 1, 2, 4, 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 11)*	24
X	Ethics	Area 2 – Goal 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 6)* Area 7 – Goal 8 (*see Core Handbook, p. 13)*	9
X	Fine Arts	Area 1 – Goals 2, 3, 4, 6 (*see Core Handbook, p. 5)* Area 2 – Goal 4 (*see Core Handbook, p.6)* Area 6 – Goals 1, 4, 5, 7 (*see Core Handbook, p.11)*	16
X	Foreign languages	To graduate from Virginia Tech, all students must attain a minimum competency equal to 6 semester hours of college level foreign or classical language. (*see 1998-1999 Undergraduate Course Catalog*, p. 41)	6
X	History	There is no university wide "history" requirement, but history is among courses students may select to fulfill the requirements for Core Curriculum Areas 2, 3, and 7 (see *Core Handbook*, pages 5 – 8 and 12 – 14).	0

Content Area		Area(s) of Study Having That Type of Context	Number of Credits Required
X	Humanities	There is no university wide "humanities" requirement, but the humanities are strongly represented in Area 2 (see *Core Handbook*, pages 6 and 7) for which 6 credit hours are required. *	0*
X	Literature	There is no university wide "literature" requirement, but literature courses are strongly represented in Area 2 (see *Core Handbook*, pages 5 – 8) for which 6 credit hours are required. **	0**
X	Mathematics	There is no university wide "mathematics" requirement, but 6-credit hours are required in Quantitative an Symbolic Reasoning. (See Area 5, Goals 1 - 3 in *Core Handbook*, p. 10) Many departments throughout the university have specific Math sequence requirements	0
X	International Studies	There is no university wide "international studies" requirement, but all students are required to take 3 hours in Area 7 (see *Core Handbook*, pages 12 – 14). ***	0***
X	Natural sciences	There is no university wide "natural sciences" requirement, but all students are required to take 6-credit hours of lecture and 2-credit hours of laboratory in Area 4 (see *Core Handbook*, page 10.) * ***	0****
X	Social Sciences	There is no university wide "social sciences" requirement, but the social sciences are included in core curriculum Areas 2 and 3 (see *Core Handbook*, pages 5 – 9) for which 12 credit hours are required. *****	0*****
X	Technology	There is no university wide "technology" requirement, but technology, particularly computer technology, is a fundamental part of the Virginia Tech experience. Beginning with the fall semester of 1998, each new freshman class will enter Virginia Tech with a computer requirement.	0
	Other		

8. If your institution has general-education learning goals/objectives that are not covered in questions 6 or 7, please add those goals here. If the content or skills are taught across the curriculum and do not have specific credit requirements, please answer question number 9 in addition to this question.

All of the general-education learning goals and objectives are described in our seven Core Curriculum Areas of Study, and all of these have been covered in questions 6 and 7.

9. Some institutions give special emphasis in their general-education programs to certain instructional themes <u>across the curriculum.</u> Please indicate whether your institution's general education program gives special emphasis across the curriculum to the following: *(Check all that apply.)*

- X Computer literacy
- X Critical thinking
- X Ethics or ethical reasoning
- ___ Gender studies
- X Global studies / international studies
- X Multi-cultural studies
- ___ Oral communications
- X Science
- ___ Technology
- X Writing
- ___ Other (specify)

Our University Core Curriculum is specifically designed to emphasize instructional themes (we call these "Areas of Study"). Thus, many different departments offer courses in each Area.

10. What is the total number of credits required in your institution's general-education program?

36 to 41 Please see *Core Handbook*, page 16, FAQ #4.

11. Does your institution announce criteria for selecting courses for its general-education program?

- ___ No
- X Yes *(If your institution has such criteria, please attach them. If these criteria are part of the rationale provided in question 1, please direct us to that rationale.)*

· Guidelines and instructions for courses seeking inclusion in the Core Curriculum are found on pages 29 – 32 in the *Core Handbook.*
· Each of our seven Areas of Study has from three to nine "Goals for students." See *Core Handbook*, pages 5-14.

12. Briefly explain whether and how your institution has sought to ensure that students gain a <u>breadth</u> of knowledge through their general education experience. *(If this rationale is part of the rationale provided in question 1, please direct us to that rationale.)*

Please see "The University Core Curriculum Statement of Purpose" in the *Core Handbook*, page 3.

As noted in the *Core Handbook*, Virginia Tech requires that all students complete courses in seven diverse areas: Writing and Discourse; Ideas, Cultural Traditions, and Values;

Society and Human Behavior; Scientific Reasoning and Discovery; Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning; Creativity and Aesthetic Experience; and Critical Issues in a Global Context. These seven areas contain what is traditionally called the liberal arts and sciences. All Virginia Tech students, regardless of major, must complete a minimum number of courses in these areas in order to graduate.

In addition to the University Core Curriculum requirements, individual colleges also have their own requirements often involving additional Core Curriculum courses beyond those required by the university.

13. Briefly explain whether and how your institution has sought to ensure that students gain a <u>depth</u> of knowledge through their general education experience. *(If this rationale is part of the rationale provided in question 1, please direct us to that rationale.)*

Depth of study within our general education core curriculum is determined by the college in which the student is enrolled. University guidelines are given for Area 2 - Ideas, Cultural Traditions, and Values, Area 3 - Society and Human Behavior, Area 4 - Scientific Reasoning and Discovery, and Area 5 - Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning. Please see "Depth Studies Combinations" in the *Core Handbook*, page 15.

There are various ways in which "depth" is encouraged. One of the most common is in the use of prerequisite courses. As an example, the popular two-course sequence in Psychology in Area 3 requires a course in introductory psychology, followed by one of several other courses that have introductory psychology as a prerequisite. Likewise most of the science courses in Area 4 are sequential, as are many of the mathematics and related courses in Area 5.

Another way in which "depth" is strongly encouraged is that certain academic colleges have "depth studies" requirements, as described on page 15 of the *1998-99 Core Handboo*k. These require two course sequences in Areas 2, 3, 4, and 5. In addition, colleges and departments often recommend particular combinations of courses which provide similar depth.

14. Does your institution attempt to assure content or skill-development consistency across different sections of the same general education course? If yes, in what ways, for instance, does your institution or some of its units encourage or require common syllabi, examinations, texts, or assessment methods?

- Yes, Virginia Tech has specified a unified governance procedure for the systematic review of all courses (including an additional review for courses wishing to be included in the Core Curriculum). Pages 34 – 35 of the *Core Handbook* articulates the basic format that must be followed in course proposal submissions, page 34 shows the flow diagram of the course approval process, and pages 28 – 32 define the particular guidelines and instructions for courses wishing to be included in the core.
- There are many multi-section courses at Virginia Tech. These are based on a common syllabus that is the result of the course approval and governance process previously outlined. Individual faculty members may enhance the basic syllabus, but

the fundamental information is intended to remain consistent across all sections of such courses.

- It is also common to have coordinators for large enrollment/multi-section courses (such as English and the sciences), in order to guarantee a fundamental degree of coordination. Depending on the department, the coordinators may oversee and insure common syllabi adherence, textbook specifications, examination schedules and other various assessment methods. This process may vary to some degree by department and course.

15. How do you know whether students have attained the expected content and /or skill development as a result of completing your institution's general-education program? In your response, briefly describe how your institution uses general-education assessment findings in planning and evaluation, budget/ resource allocations, academic organization structures, faculty development or incentive programs, curriculum development, the co-curricular environment, and instruction. As part of your response, complete Sheet 3 of the Excel file "GE assessment.xls" which asks you to provide details on how your institution's general-education program is assessed.

The Core Curriculum assessment process, while still evolving, currently gathers both student opinion and performance data to determine to what extent students are achieving the goals of the specific area of the Core in which the course resides. Preliminary results indicate that opinion, achievement, and goals match relatively well. That is, students report achieving those area Core Curriculum goals stated by faculty as also being course goals more often than those goals not claimed by faculty for the course. (Not all Core Curriculum goals for each area are met by each course. Faculty specify explicitly which of the Core goals are met by their Core Curriculum classes, then students rate achievement of each of the area Core Curriculum goals for certain classes completed.) Student achievement tests measure level of understanding of key concepts that meet area goal requirements. Here too the results have been encouraging: achievement of area goals addressed by Core courses improves while those not addressed by individual goals generally show no improvement.

Alumni survey data likewise show strong satisfaction with achievement of Core Curriculum goals. For example, of the 1995 alumni responding to a fall, 1997 survey, 90% reported that they "agree" or "tend to agree" with the statement that, "The Core Curriculum provides an adequate, well-rounded base for student learning." Likewise, 91% agreed or tended to agree that, "The Core Curriculum should continue to be required for all undergraduate students." In regards to some of the specific Core Curriculum areas, the alumni reported achieving "to a high degree" or "to a moderate degree" appreciation of liberal arts and humanities (60%); mathematical and physical sciences (77%); biological and life sciences (63%); and music, art, drama, and other cultural areas (45%).

Professional development activities sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (CEUT), the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, the Core Curriculum Committee, and others have been provided for faculty with teaching and administrative responsibilities for Core courses. Among the activities are included:

workshops for department heads and Core Curriculum coordinators; the First Year Teachers Initiative for faculty teaching first year students; the Forum for Faculty Teaching Large Classes; and a range of CEUT programs aimed at improving undergraduate instruction generally.

16. Are all students required to take writing-intensive course/s?

___ No
_X_ Yes
If yes, how many courses (including English composition)? 3 courses (9 cr.)*
If yes, how many are upper-division courses? 1 course (3 cr.)**
If yes, how many are in the major? Variable **

***** Six credit hours (2 courses) must be selected from Freshman Writing courses, and 3 credit hours (1 course) must be selected from Writing Intensive courses. (See *Core Handbook*, page 5.)

****** **"**Writing intensive courses are offered throughout the undergraduate curriculum (major, electives, other core courses, and labs). … Students may find WI courses in their majors during their sophomore year, but it is likely that WI courses will be associated with junior and senior courses." (See *Core Handbook*, page 5).

17. What is the minimum level of mathematics required of all students?

___ Calculus
___ College-level algebra
___ Math - but no level or course specified
___ Statistics
_X_ Other (specify) _____

Area 5 of the University Core Curriculum (*Core Handbook*, pages 10 & 11) documents courses that relate to development of proficiency in Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning. Though Computer Science, Philosophy and Statistics contribute core offerings in this area, a vast majority of majors at Virginia Tech are required to take one or more of the Mathematics sequences appearing on page 11.

18. Does your institution's general-education program vary with the: *(Check as many as apply)*

___ Associate degree (A.A., A.S., A.A.S., etc.)? (How many associate's degrees have separate general education requirements? _____)
___ Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., B.F.A., etc.)? (How many bachelor's degrees have separate general education requirements? _____)

___ College/school? (How many colleges/schools have separate general education requirements? _____)
_X_ Not applicable: All students take the same general-education program.

Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 44, dated 31 January 1983, states that "…THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University …" (implement a) "… core curriculum for all undergraduates …"

19. If the number of credits varies by degree type, list the degrees, the number of credits in general education and the total credits required for each degree.

Not Applicable
The number of credits required in our University Core Curriculum does NOT vary by degree type. (See answer to question 18.)

20a. For four-year institutions: Is your institution's current general-education program designed to be: *(check only one)*

___ Evenly distributed through all four years of the curriculum.
___ Mostly in the first two years with a few courses in the last two years
_X_ Primarily in the first two years of the curriculum

Please see *Core Handbook*, page 17, FAQ #12.

20b. For four-year institutions: Does your institution require upper-division courses/study in general education?

_X_ Yes ___3___ credits Specify area(s): 3 of the 9 credits required in Area 1, Writing and Discourse, are almost all upper division courses (see *Core Handbook* pages 41 - 46)
___ Students may elect to take upper-division courses for general education
___ No

20c. For two-year institutions: Is your institution's current general-education for transfer-level programs designed to be: *(check only one)*

N/A Evenly distributed through both years of the curriculum.
N/A Mostly in the first year with a few courses in the second year
N/A Primarily in the first year of the curriculum

20d. For two-year institutions: Is your institution's current general-education for occupational-technical programs designed to be: *(check only one)*

N/A Evenly distributed through both years of the curriculum.
N/A Mostly in the first year with a few courses in the second year
N/A Primarily in the first year of the curriculum

21. Which one of the following best describes the structure of your institution's general-education program? (If more than one answer applies, mark the best description 1, the next best description 2, and so on.)

___ Common set of required courses that all students take;
_1_ Set of content-oriented areas (*e.g.*, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, etc.) with course options in each area;
_2_ Set of skills-oriented areas (*e.g.*, writing, oral communication, quantitative analysis, etc.) with course options in each area;
___ Mixture of required courses and ones that are part of the major,
___ No requirements are set
___ Other (specify) _____

These two are really very close as to which one would/should be considered as first and second in this question. Though they certainly may provide some evaluative classifications for the SCHEV review, the skill vs. content dualism is not actually employed in our criteria or discussion about general education as a qualifier in a formative sense.

22. Does your institution's general education program include any of the following special features? *(Check all that apply and add others as appropriate.)*

___ Capstone courses
___ Distance-education courses (not web based)
___ Freshman seminar
_X_ Honors courses
_X_ Independent study
___ Interdisciplinary "core" courses
___ Internships or work experience
___ Senior seminar or project
___ Service learning
_X_ Web-based courses
___ Other (specify)

23. Briefly explain how the special features that you identified in the last question contribute to your institution's general-education program.

- Honors courses are present in English and Biology on a regular basis. Some honors colloquia, whose topics vary from semester to semester, have also been encouraged to request core credit.
- Some upper level science courses have recently petitioned the Core Committee for inclusion as satisfaction for the writing intensive (upper level) component of the core requirement.
- The Center for Innovation in Learning (CIL), affectionately known at Virginia Tech as "Cyberschool," has sponsored through departmental and college grants a

development program for courses to better utilize instructional technology in the classroom and beyond. These grants have often been targeted as core courses, particularly those with large enrollments. Many of these courses have integrated web-based components and a number have evolved to the point of being offered and delivered completely on-line.

General-education programs are dynamic and change in response to new pedagogy, student characteristics, and national trends, among many other things. The next set of questions asks you to describe the ways in which your institution maintains the vitality of its general education program.

24. Who is responsible for oversight and periodic review of the general education program at your institution?

Faculty
The *Core Handbook*, page 23, #8 describes the responsibilities of the University Core Curriculum Committee. The Provost, represented by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, is responsible for oversight of the work of the committee.

25. Have specific institutional funds been provided to support the general education program?

X Yes (*If yes, briefly describe.)*

The Provost's office supports the work of the University Core Curriculum and the Core Curriculum Committee in a number of ways.

- The Provost's office sponsors annual Core Curriculum workshops targeted at the particular core area(s) under review in any given year (see review cycle *Core Handbook*, page 70).
- The Provost provides staff support for the work of the Core Curriculum Committee and subsequent governance proceedings.
- The Provost funds annual dissemination of information about the Core Curriculum in the form of two major publications; *the University Core Curriculum Handbook for Students* and *the University Core Curriculum Handbook for Faculty and Advisors*. Both of these publications have been included in this review package.
- The Provost office is planning a series of mini-publications that will report findings from the core review process to the university faculty.

___ No

26. Has your institution undertaken faculty development activities specifically in support of general education?

X Yes (*If yes, briefly describe.)*

Core Curriculum workshops have been implemented utilizing internal and external consultants/facilitators. For example, last January Dr. Karl Schilling was retained to

facilitate and assist in the development of an assessment process with a greater emphasis on learning outcomes. These workshops involve department heads, department core curriculum advisors and teaching faculty members. They are usually held during school breaks and participants are offered modest departmental stipends for participation.

___ No

27. When were the last two comprehensive reviews of general education conducted at your institution? *(Give years.)*

1. **First review completed in the Spring 1982** – In about 1979, our university formed the "Collins Committee" for the express purpose of studying our undergraduate curriculum and making recommendations for a university core curriculum. The final report of the Collins Committee was published in the spring of 1982. As a result of this institution-wide review, the Commission on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) made recommendations for *Policy Memorandum No. 44* (enclosed). This policy was approved both by University Council and the President on 17 January 1983. This new core curriculum was implemented in 1985 and revised with the installation of the semester system in 1988 (submitted to CUS during January 1992). In comparison with our present core curriculum, the curriculum initiated in 1983 was more limited in scope and was established along more traditional lines, such as those listed in question # 7 of this survey.
2. **Second review completed in the Spring 1992** – In the spring of 1990, the University Provost recommended to the CUS that a special committee be established to review and propose revisions to the core curriculum initiated in 1982. In response to that recommendation, the CUS formed the University Forum on Liberal Education (UFLE). The recommendations that resulted from their two-year study were given in the *Report of the University Forum on Liberal Education* submitted to CUS during January 1992 (enclosed). It is this study that forms the basis for our current University Core Curriculum.

28. Please outline the last review process, including how long it took from initiation to final adoption of the revised general-education program.

Our second (and last) review was initiated in the spring of 1992 (see the UFLE Report cited above).

Partial implementation of this core curriculum began with students who entered Virginia Tech during the 1992-93 academic year – these students were required to take 34 credits of core curriculum requirements in Areas 1 - 5.

Full implementation is scheduled for those students who enter during the 1999-2000 academic year. These students will be required to take 48 credits of Core Curriculum requirements in Areas 1 - 7.

A full implementation timeline is given on page 25 of the *Core Handbook*.

29. When do you expect to undertake the next comprehensive review of general education at your institution?

2002

If your institution has undertaken a comprehensive review of general education within the past ten years or is planning one in the next three years, please answer the remaining questions:

30. Who was/is primarily responsible for initiation of the review? *(Check all that apply, and double check the three most important persons/groups for each review.)*

Last review	Upcoming review*	
X**		Committee (specify group and membership) UFLE (**)
XX		Dean(s) (specify) Deans of all colleges within Virginia Tech
		External bodies (SACS, SCHEV, etc.) (specify _____)
X**	XX****	Faculty group (specify) Last Review = UFLE (**) Upcoming Review = UCCC and College Deans (****) and CUS (***)
		Members of the board of visitors/trustees
		President
XX	XX	Provost/Academic Vice President
		Strategic planning group
XX		Other (specify) College of Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee

* One of the very important features of our present core curriculum is the built in schedule for periodic review (see pages 69 – 74 in the *Core Handbook*).
** University Forum on Liberal Education (UFLE)
*** Commission on Undergraduate Studies (CUS)
**** University Core Curriculum Committee (UCCC) and Department Heads representing each of the core curriculum Study Areas.

31. Indicate whether the following were/will be important as motivating factors in the review: *(Check all that apply, and double check the three most important motivating factors for each review.)*

Last review	Upcoming review*	
X	X	Broad concerns about general education
		Changes in scholarship
		Changes in student demographics
X	X	Need to accommodate new pedagogical styles, such as more collaborative learning and greater use of technology
X	X	Need to address cultural diversity issues
XX	XX	Need to address global issues
X	XX	Need to incorporate technology skills

X	X	Need for more interdisciplinary opportunities
		Need to provide students with greater choice
		Need to provide students with less choice
XX	XX	Need to strengthen basic skills (writing, math, etc.)
X	X	Need to strengthen students' preparation for the workforce
		Perceived incoherence in the former general-education program
X	X	Other (specify) Concern about students taking core courses early in their academic tenure (most during their first two years).

* One of the very important features of our present core curriculum is the built in schedule for periodic review (see pages 69 – 74 in the *Core Handbook*).

32. Which of the following constituencies were/will be involved in the review? *(Check all that apply and double check the three most important constituencies for each review)*

Last review	**Upcoming review***	
X	X**	Administrators
	X**	Alumni
		Donors
XX	XX	Faculty
		Legislators
	X**	Governing board
		Parents
		Potential employers
XX	XX	Students
		Other (specify _____)

* One of the very important features of our present core curriculum is the built in schedule for periodic review (see pages 69 – 74 in the *Core Handbook*).

** The bodies will be fully engaged in all discussions though the faculty is ultimately responsible for the curriculum.

33. Which of the following strategies facilitate the review? *(Check all that apply and double check the three most important strategies for each review.)*

Last review	**Upcoming review***	
XX	XX	Committee deliberations
XX	XX	Open hearings
X	X	Retreats
		Participation in regional or national initiatives
X	X	Use of consultants
XX	XX	Other (specify) Faculty and student participation

* One of the very important features of our present core curriculum is the built in schedule for periodic review (see pages 69 – 74 in the *Core Handbook*).

34. Describe briefly the ways in which your institution's current general-education program changed during the last revision. For instance, did it become more or less structured, have more or less student choice, or become more or less content or skill oriented?

The general education program established following the first review (the "Collins Report") was more of a college-oriented rather than a university-wide program. It was less structured and much more limited with regard to those courses that students were required to take to fulfill their core requirements.

The core curriculum established following the last review (see *UFLE Report* and the *Handbook*) is now much more of a university-wide core curriculum. It is more structured in terms of its areas of study and goals within each area, and it contains more choice of courses across the curriculum. Many departments are now teaching courses that fulfill these core requirements, not just departments within the College of Arts and Sciences. Our present core curriculum now requires that all students be exposed to international issues and consciousness of global problems. The expanded core also acknowledges aesthetic and cultural experience as foundational to a general education.

35. We recognize that this survey cannot describe adequately and accurately each institution's general education program. Please add any other comments about your institution's general-education program that should be considered in the Council's report on this topic.

We encourage the readers of this survey to consider the tradition of general education that has been developed at Virginia Tech since 1983 and is illustrated through the survey and attached documentation.

Our strength is in the diversity of students representing almost every state and 60 countries. This diversity in a population of 21,000 undergraduates requires a core curriculum that can meet many needs while accomplishing the fundamental goal of a well educated individual. We feel confident that the core curriculum offers an important variety of choices to support our students in over 80 available programs of study.

Choice within structure and guidance through advising are the hallmark of our general education program. Advisors and disciplinary curricula guide the choices of our students and the faculty governance system provides the structure and modification through assessment needed to maintain the vitality of the core.

We have created a "University " Core Curriculum to which all departments have opportunities to contribute. This involvement fosters appropriate ownership of the curriculum by the faculty and their respective colleges. We are ever attempting to improve the core curriculum through assessment and re-direction of resources to improve the total education of our student at Virginia Tech.