

3.5.4

Educational Programs: Undergraduate: Terminal degrees of faculty

At least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate degree level, exclusive of the general education component, are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree - usually the earned doctorate or the equivalent of the terminal degree.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

Narrative

Note: Text for all linked documents below can be increased/decreased for ease of reading by pressing your keyboard's Ctrl key while rotating the mouse wheel.

At Angelo State University (ASU), at least 25 percent of the course hours in each major at the baccalaureate level are taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, or the equivalent of the terminal degree.

SUMMARY DATA AND OUTCOMES

Attached are two tables summarizing the number and percent of course hours in each baccalaureate program that were taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree during the fall 2011 and spring 2012 semesters (Terminal Degrees of Undergraduate Faculty: Percent of Course Hours Fall 2011 and Spring 2012). As shown in the tables, 25 percent or more of the course hours in every baccalaureate major for each semester were taught by faculty members holding an appropriate terminal degree. In more than half of the majors, the course hours were taught by faculty holding the appropriate terminal degree at a rate exceeding 75 percent.

DEFINITIONS, DATA SOURCES, AND METHODOLOGY

The summary tables were compiled using the definitions, data, and methodology described below.

Faculty Qualifications

The earned doctorate is the accepted terminal degree for faculty teaching in most of ASU's undergraduate programs. The only exceptions are in the disciplines of art, theatre, and film where the Master of Fine Arts is the accepted terminal degree, and in social work, where the Master of Social Work is the accepted terminal degree. In all cases, a terminal degree is considered to be appropriate to a discipline if the degree's primary field of study coincides with the name of the major or demonstrates a specific association to the discipline and/or courses taught for a particular major. For example, a faculty member with a PhD in biology clearly holds the terminal degree for teaching in the biology major. Other accepted terminal degrees for teaching courses in the biology major include microbiology, biochemistry, physiology, immunology, and zoology, as these disciplines are fundamental to the major. Similarly, faculty teaching courses in their discipline but for a major in a different discipline are also considered to be terminally degreed. An example is biology faculty teaching biology courses for the Natural Resource Management major. A list of Terminally Degreed Faculty for 2011–2012 is attached, and specific information on each

faculty member's earned degrees is available in the faculty roster provided for Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1, Faculty competence.

Baccalaureate Degree Programs/Majors

The degree programs listed on the attached table are those identified by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on the ASU Program Inventory. The THECB is the state entity with the authority to approve ASU's degree programs (Core Requirement 2.1, Degree-granting authority). The inventory lists ASU programs by their classification of instructional programs (CIP) number. On the attached tables, the same programs are listed in alphabetical order under the appropriate college and department. For those degree programs that include different options based on areas of specialization, all relevant course and faculty data are consolidated under the overarching degree program. For example, students who pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Studio Art can specialize in ceramics, graphic design, painting/drawing, printmaking, or sculpture. In the attached tables, the faculty, course, and credit-hour data for all of these areas of specialization are reflected in the data provided for the BFA in Studio Art.

Identifying the Course Hours for Each Program

The degree requirements published in the undergraduate catalog for each undergraduate program include "academic major" course requirements and "other" course requirements (ASU Undergraduate Catalog 2011–2012, pp. 54–286). Only those courses identified in the catalog as academic major requirements are included in the credit-hour calculations on the attached tables. Academic major requirements may include courses for various program options, where relevant, but do not include developmental or core courses. In most cases, the academic major requirements fall within a single discipline, but ASU also offers several interdisciplinary degree programs, in which case the academic major requirements include courses in more than one discipline. See, for example, the degree requirements for the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Food Animal Science and Marketing and BS in Natural Resource Management (ASU Undergraduate Catalog 2011–2012, p. 70 and p. 71, respectively).

For both single-discipline and interdisciplinary programs, those courses listed in the catalog as academic major requirements were counted as the *required academic-major courses* for the given program. The semester credit hours assigned to these courses account for the *total number of academic-major credit hours required for the given program* (column 5 on the attached tables).

For additional information regarding how the Office of Institutional Research and Accountability identified courses to include in the credit-hour calculations for each degree program, please see Core Requirement 2.8, Faculty.

Determining Required Academic-Major Credit Hours and Percentages

To determine the *total* number of required academic-major credit hours taught each semester in each undergraduate program (column 4 on the attached tables), the Office of Institutional Research and Accountability summed the total hours taught in all sections based on the conditions outlined above and in Core Requirement 2.8, Faculty. See, for example, the Academic-Major Credit Hours for the BS in Agricultural Science and Leadership for fall 2011.

To determine the total number of required academic-major credit hours in each program that were taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree (column 3 on the attached tables), the Office of

Institutional Research and Accountability used several sources. Information regarding appropriate terminal degrees was gleaned from faculty transcripts and other information managed by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (PVPAA), which maintains faculty employment records. All instructors of record assigned to teach at ASU must provide evidence of their highest earned degree to support their claim to be able to teach in a particular discipline. Verification of this data is conducted by the hiring department and the college dean, and copies of the data are maintained by the hiring department, the college, and the PVPAA. Electronic copies of transcripts are available to the Review Committees upon request to the Institutional Research and Accountability office. The Faculty Roster (see Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1, Faculty Competence) was used to check faculty credentials against courses taught. From those sources of information, faculty were marked as terminal or not, as shown in the Agricultural Science and Leadership example.

Faculty were deemed not terminal if they held less than the terminal degree appropriate for teaching a particular course. Depending on the scope of courses taught, a faculty member could be considered terminal for teaching some courses but not for others. This scenario occurred in a few cases. Dr. John Glassford, for example, holds a PhD in philosophy and an MA in politics. He was considered terminally degreed for the philosophy courses he teaches but not for the political science courses.

Once a determination was made regarding how many sections of required academic-major courses in each program were taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree, the total number of required academic-major credit hours taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree was summed.

To determine the *percent of required academic-major credit hours in each program that were taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree* (also in column 3 on the attached tables), the number of required academic-major credit hours in each program that were taught by faculty holding an appropriate terminal degree ($AMCH_{\text{terminal}}$) was divided by the total number of required academic-major credit hours taught for that program each semester ($AMCH_{\text{semester}}$). This quotient was then multiplied by one hundred, as follows:

$$\%AMCH_{\text{terminal}} = AMCH_{\text{terminal}}/AMCH_{\text{semester}} \times 100$$

The final percent was rounded down to the nearest whole number—for example, 36.8% was reported as 36%—to assure that the 25% minimum was reached without rounding.