

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)  
Regarding LAC Course Submission Process  
11/14/06

The following is a guide to common questions regarding the Liberal Arts Curriculum. It is meant to be a compilation of the sentiments expressed at the LAPC meetings and answers provided to faculty queries; it does not represent formal policy.

**Why does the Liberal Arts Program Committee (LAPC) and Curriculum Committee (CC) recommend electronic rather than paper submission?**

The intention of the committees was to ease the difficulty of using typed forms and to facilitate integration of course information with the Banner system. Previous versions of the forms required handwriting or typing responses, making minor editing and changes very difficult. The Committees sought to make on-line course submission a vehicle to facilitate editing, allow spell-checking, reduce errors, and transfer course information easily to the University catalog and Registrar's database. *The LAPC will accept electronic (xml, pdf, Word) or paper documents until the electronic submission process is fully operational.*

**How can the submission materials be accessed?**

The Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (LAC) information about course submission is available on the LAPC web site at: <http://www.easternct.edu/depts/lapc/courseinfo.htm>. On this site is general information about the course submission process. Faculty may submit narrative descriptions of how their courses will achieve the goals of the LAC or use *pdf* forms for on-line submission and electronic signatures or MS Word copies of the forms which can be downloaded at <http://www.easternct.edu/depts/lapc/LACforms.htm>. These forms may be completed manually (typed or handwritten) or submitted via email or printed and submitted in hard copy. The LAPC encourages the use of electronic submission.

Curriculum Committee forms are located at [www.easternct.edu/depts/curric\\_cmte](http://www.easternct.edu/depts/curric_cmte) and linked to the LAPC forms page.

**When should we submit course applications?**

We are preparing for implementation of the LAC in fall 2007. Courses must be ready for first year student registration by March 1. The LAPC is requesting that all Tier I courses be submitted for our review by January 15, 2007.

**How should course proposals be submitted?**

For faculty submitting courses using Adobe Reader and Standard:

1. Provide narrative answers to the appropriate Curriculum Committee (CC) forms using a Word document or go to the LAPC forms page and open the appropriate LAC category form.
2. If attaching a Word document narrative LAC application to CC forms add this attachment to the CC form when it is sent to the department chair; or
3. If you use the LAC Adobe forms, enter your responses in the form (or cut and paste from a draft Word version of the form), print the document, and send this with the course syllabus and CC forms to your department chair using the “Send to Chair” button on the form. (You will have a copy of the text document in your sent email folder.)
4. Chairs then will review, departments approve, and chairs will submit the course to the Dean by posting the forms and documents to the Dean’s box in Outlook.
5. The course application will then be reviewed by the LAPC and the CC.

To submit the course application using the electronic Word version of the CC forms and a narrative LAC application.

1. Send the CC forms and LAC narrative application document as attachments in an email to your department chair.
2. Your chair will post these documents to the Dean’s box in Outlook.
3. The Dean completes the review and notifies chairs of approval.
4. The Dean will post the approved courses in the LAPC box in Outlook.

To submit the course application using the electronic version of the LAC Word forms.

1. Send the document and CC forms via email to your department chair.
2. Your chair will post these documents to the Dean’s box in Outlook.
3. The Dean completes the review and notifies chairs of approval.
4. The Dean will post the approved courses in the LAPC box in Outlook.

For those faculty and departments using paper copies, following the Dean’s review, please send the documents to Cheryl Le Beau, Secretary, Arts and Sciences, Webb Hall, Room 259.

### **What if I have questions about the course submission process?**

Questions about the LAC course submission process can be directed to our email at [liberalarts@easternct.edu](mailto:liberalarts@easternct.edu) (a distribution list of committee members) or the committee chair at [martinm@easternct.edu](mailto:martinm@easternct.edu). Questions regarding the Curriculum Committee forms should be directed to the chair of that committee at [wolfrj@easternct.edu](mailto:wolfrj@easternct.edu).

### **How will I know if my course has been approved for submission into the LAC?**

Courses to be included in the LAC must be approved by the LAPC and the Curriculum Committee. Formal notification will be received from the Curriculum Committee when your course is approved by both committees.

**Is there an expectation that every section of the course will be exactly the same?**

No. We do not expect each section of a course to be taught in the same way, or use the same materials, activities, or content. The diversity of approaches and unique expertise of faculty, actually demand that each section be distinctive. There will be common learning outcomes for students, but how we help our students achieve these is not the same. Our teaching is an expression of us - our individuality and expertise in the construction of the course, as well as our knowledge about effective teaching practice in our areas. It is a process of creativity and knowledge -- and cannot be dictated. The content, the style, the focus, the approach -- all may be radically different. There could be nothing more dull and uninspiring than to dictate total uniformity in courses!

**Should every course address the learning outcomes for the category and the tier?**

Our expectation is that each course will place at least some emphasis on achieving the LAC category student learning outcomes. The LAPC hopes that each of the tier learning outcomes will be addressed in some way. We reviewed many universities' methods for achieving common core outcomes, and found that when courses were allowed into the core that only selected certain outcomes, the results were inconsistent curricula that were difficult to manage and less likely to produce the student learning outcomes. The policies that would result from the method of selecting only certain learning outcomes, would result in courses introduced later in the approval process to be required to achieve the under-addressed outcomes, producing inequities and elaborate review processes.

Although this has not been tested yet, the LAPC is unlikely to approve a course for which all learning outcomes are viewed as of minimal importance. Such a course would not fulfill the purposes of a liberal arts core course. This does not mean that every outcome will necessarily be strongly emphasized, but rather that each will have some attention.

**What shall I do if the emphasis for specific outcomes varies by the faculty member? Will every outcome be reduced to the lowest common denominator?**

We recognize that there is great variation in the methods and content of course sections. There is no attempt to create uniformity in these. There is however, an expectation that every section seeks to achieve particular student learning outcomes. The emphasis placed on each is a matter for faculty determination and departmental deliberation. Courses are submitted by departments for the LAC. There are multiple methods that can be used to determine the emphasis placed on these outcomes. A consensus of faculty may be reached or a range of emphases may be stated. Individual faculty may choose to emphasize some outcomes more than their departments certify.

**Why does the LAPC request information about course activities and evaluation methods?**

The LAPC (formerly the GEPC) has a charge and responsibility to Eastern based on Senate Bill SBA 90/91-1:

The General Education Program Committee shall be concerned with the program, procedures, and policies relating to the program of general education of students at Eastern. These concerns include leadership of the program, approval and oversight of courses to serve general education, and the categorization of courses with the program.

ECSU also has clearly defined standards set by our accrediting body, The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and laws of the State of Connecticut to identify learning outcomes and assess the success of general education.

The Connecticut statutes state:

**Section 10a-34-15. Curriculum and Instruction.**

(a) General requirement. The curriculum for each program shall consist of a carefully planned and published sequence of related courses and other appropriate instructional activities that effectively address the stated objectives of the program. The curriculum shall provide evidence of (1) well-defined instructional outcomes; (2) systematic planning by faculty; (3) selection and use of varied types of learning materials and experiences; and (4) use of viable evaluation instruments and procedures.

The LAPC seeks (as does the Curriculum Committee) information about how courses are offered and students evaluated to insure our responsible stewardship of this program. From our research related to the approval of courses for general education programs nationally, these questions reflect the minimum of information sought.

**What is the purpose of asking about assessment methods? How will this information be used?**

In order to insure that the LAC program is meeting our identified goals and to promote continuous improvement in the curriculum the LAPC is seeking information about course activities and assessment mechanisms. There is no intention that specific courses or sections of courses will be singularly evaluated once they are entered into the core curriculum (although we do expect that courses will be reassessed as to their fit in the LAC through a routine assessment process). We do expect that faculty and departments will attempt to assess the stated learning outcomes to permit continual improvement in student achievement of these objectives. The LAPC does not assess faculty. The LAPC

seeks to understand how groups of faculty assess the learning outcomes within categories and within tiers so that the LAPC can assess the Liberal Arts Curriculum as a whole and its components using commonly employed methods of assessment.