

Academic Policies and Procedures

Basic Education Requirements

The University strives to enroll exceptionally well-prepared, highly motivated students and to produce self-reliant graduates who will become leaders in both their chosen professions and their communities. The University must not only equip its graduates with occupational skills, but also educate them broadly enough to enable them to adapt to and cope with the accelerated process of change occurring in business, professional, and social institutions today. Students must be exposed to a broad spectrum of arts and science so that they may be educated beyond vocational requirements and thus be prepared for responsible citizenship in an increasingly complex world.

All graduates of the University are expected to:

- communicate clearly and accurately, defend an idea on the basis of evidence, draw conclusions, and evaluate the arguments of others
- have a critical understanding of the society in which we live and the ways it has evolved through time
- be able to analyze ethical issues and their possible resolutions
- understand facets of science and the ways in which knowledge of the universe is gained and applied
- understand aspects of mathematics and apply quantitative skills to problem solving
- have a critical understanding of how human cultures are expressed in literature, philosophy, or language
- participate in and/or critically analyze some area of the visual and performing arts
- participate in the process of inquiry through research, creative endeavors, or related activities

To help students in all majors acquire the traits of an educated person, the general faculty of the University has adopted the Core Curriculum outlined below. All students, regardless of major, must complete the Core Curriculum prior to earning an undergraduate degree.

Often, courses required by the student's degree program may be used concurrently to fulfill one or more of the Core Curriculum requirements listed below. When possible, students should select Core Curriculum courses that also satisfy specific requirements of their intended degrees. For more information, students should consult their advisors and the degree requirements given in the college/school sections of this catalog.

Core Curriculum

All students pursuing an undergraduate degree at the University must complete the 42-hour statewide Core Curriculum. The core component area requirements are consistent with statewide Core Curriculum guidelines; the area of the statewide core component area that each requirement meets is given in parentheses in the table below. A single course may not be counted toward more than one core component area.

Courses used to fulfill Core Curriculum requirements must be taken for a letter grade; the minimum acceptable grade is D-. Individual degree plans may not require a higher minimum standard for Core Curriculum courses in general. However individual degree plans may set a higher minimum grade standard for Core Curriculum courses that are also required in the major field or are required as prerequisites for courses in the major.

Core Component Area	Semester Credit Hours
First-Year Signature Course (Texas Core Code 090) Course should be taken during the student's first year enrolled at the University.	3
English Composition and Core Writing Flag (Texas Core Code 010)	6
Humanities (Texas Core Code 040)	3
American and Texas Government (Texas Core Code 070)	6
U.S. History (Texas Core Code 060)	6
Social and Behavioral Sciences (Texas Core Code 080)	3
Mathematics (Texas Core Code 020)	3
Natural Science and Technology, Part I (Texas Core Code 030)	6
Natural Science and Technology, Part II (Texas Core Code 093)	3
Visual and Performing Arts (Texas Core Code 050)	3
Total number of semester credit hours	42

The Undergraduate College monitors the Core Curriculum and its courses to ensure that they meet the guidelines set by the general faculty and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. For the complete list of courses that have been approved to count for each core component area for all students at The University of Texas at Austin, students should consult the current [General Information Catalog](#) or see the Undergraduate College [website](#). Students should consult the [Course Schedule](#) in order to see the Core Curriculum course offerings in any given semester.

Completion of Core Component Area Requirements

State law requires that courses fulfilling a core component area (including the institutionally designated option) at one Texas public institution must transfer and substitute for the receiving institution's requirements. However, this only applies to courses taken prior to matriculation to The University of Texas at Austin. While a student holds degree-seeking status at the University, courses taken to fulfill core component area requirements must be chosen from The University of Texas at Austin's Core Curriculum course list published in the [General Information Catalog](#) for the current academic year, regardless of where they are taken. Students may petition to substitute transferred coursework for specific core component area requirements.

Completion of the Core Curriculum at Texas Public Institutions

All students pursuing an undergraduate degree at the University must complete the 42-hour statewide Core Curriculum. Entering students are only considered Core Complete if they have submitted a transcript from an accredited Texas public institution of higher education that:

- indicates the student was awarded an academic associate's or bachelor's degree at that institution or
- marks the student Core Complete based on coursework completed prior to matriculation to The University of Texas at Austin.

Undergraduate degree-seeking students who do not meet the criteria above are considered Core Complete upon completion of coursework that satisfies all core component area requirements in their UT Austin degree audit.

Students Previously Awarded Bachelor's Degrees at non-Texas or Private Institutions

Students pursuing an undergraduate degree who have submitted a transcript from an accredited private or out of state institution that indicates the student was awarded a bachelor's degree prior to matriculation to UT Austin are not required to complete additional coursework to complete the Core Curriculum and will be marked with a core status of "waived" in the UT Austin degree audit. However individual degree plans may require specified Core Curriculum courses in the major field or Core Curriculum courses that are required as prerequisites for courses in the major.

Core status of "waived" is used for UT Austin degree audit purposes only as it relates to undergraduate degree completion, does not appear on the UT Austin official transcript, nor does it transfer outside of UT Austin.

Signature Courses

The Signature Courses at The University of Texas at Austin (Undergraduate Studies 302 and 303) introduce students to college-level learning through a myriad of topics taught by distinguished faculty members in unique learning environments. In this rigorous intellectual experience, students develop advanced academic skills in research, writing, speaking, and discussion through an approach that is both interdisciplinary and contemporary. These classes range from the arts and humanities to the hard sciences, and every class has unique components that help students throughout their college career and beyond. All students are required to complete a Signature Course to fulfill university Core Curriculum requirements. Transfer students have the option to register for [Transfer Signature Courses](#).

The Signature Courses:

- put new students in contact with top faculty from across the University;
- help guide students as they strive to become better writers, speakers, and problem solvers;
- assist students in using research methods and critical thinking skills that are necessary to perform well in all of their other courses;
- familiarize students with the gems of the University;
- engage students in a university-wide academic event.

More information about Signature Courses is available at <http://undergradcollege.utexas.edu/sig>.

Additional Basic Education Requirements

Skills and Experience Flags

The Skills and Experience Flags are a unique and innovative feature of all undergraduate degrees at The University of Texas at Austin. The Flags are specifically designed to provide the enriched education that all students will need to become effective future leaders in our society and a constantly evolving workplace. To this end, in the process of fulfilling the Core Curriculum, major, and other degree requirements, all undergraduate students are required to complete courses with content in the following six Flag areas:

- Writing: three flagged courses beyond Rhetoric and Writing 306 or its equivalent
- Quantitative reasoning: one flagged course
- Global cultures: one flagged course
- Cultural diversity in the United States: one flagged course

- Ethics: one flagged course
- Independent inquiry: one flagged course

Courses used to fulfill Flag requirements must be taken for a letter grade unless the flagged course is only offered on a pass/fail basis; the minimum acceptable grade is *D-*. Individual degree plans may not require a higher minimum standard for flagged courses in general. However, individual degree plans may set a higher minimum grade standard for flagged courses that are also required in the major field or are required as prerequisites for courses in the major.

Courses with sufficient content in these areas will be identified in the [Course Schedule](#) by the appropriate Flags. The Undergraduate College monitors flagged courses to ensure that they meet the guidelines set by the general faculty. When a course is approved to carry more than one Flag, enrolled students may use all of those Flags to fulfill degree requirements, except that the Global Cultures Flag and the Cultural Diversity in the United States Flag must be earned in separate courses.

While all undergraduate degree programs require the Flags, some are still in the process of implementing the third Writing Flag requirement. Students who choose to graduate according to the requirements of the [2024–2026 Undergraduate Catalog](#) should consult their advisors and the degree requirements listed in the schools/colleges sections of this catalog to determine which of the Flag requirements apply to them and how to integrate them into their degree plans.

Because Flags are a unique feature of a University of Texas at Austin degree, they are designed to be completed in residence. Students may submit substitution petitions through the Undergraduate College for the following types of courses to satisfy Flag requirements once they have been accepted for University of Texas at Austin credit:

- courses taken for a letter grade as part of a study abroad program
- courses taken for a letter grade through Texas Extended Campus
- in-residence courses taken for a letter grade
- transfer courses from other colleges or universities taken for a letter grade prior to the student's first semester enrolled at The University of Texas at Austin

The following types of courses or credit are rarely eligible for Flag substitution:

- dual credit courses, or courses taken prior to high school graduation
- credit-by-exam courses, including courses for which Advanced Placement, A levels, or International Baccalaureate credit is earned
- any course of less than three weeks (fewer than 21 days)
- transfer courses from other colleges or universities taken during or after the student's first semester enrolled at The University of Texas at Austin (with the exception of study abroad courses)

In all cases, Flag substitution petitions will be evaluated to determine whether the course taken satisfies the Flag criteria and interpretation at a level of rigor expected for courses at The University of Texas at Austin.

Foreign Language

In addition to the Core Curriculum requirements above, undergraduates are expected to have completed two years in a single foreign language in high school. Students without at least two years of high school foreign language coursework in the same foreign language must earn credit for the beginning level proficiency course or sequence in a foreign language; this credit does not count toward the student's degree. For the description of beginning level proficiency in a specific foreign language, please see <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/undergraduate-students/majors-minors/foreign-language-requirements.html>. Students should consult their advisors and the degree requirements listed in the colleges/

schools sections of this catalog to determine whether additional foreign language requirements apply to them.