

4.2.3 Undergraduate Curriculum

Introduction

Each of the University's six colleges is actively engaged in undergraduate education with curricula appropriate to the mission and goals of the institution. Undergraduates may choose from a full complement of programs in the liberal arts and sciences and specific professional programs in business, education, engineering, and health sciences. The University's General Education Program spans several colleges, ensuring that students are exposed to a variety of academic disciplines and world cultures and that they learn to think and write critically.

The University's colleges maintain appropriate standards in the creation and approval of curricula with faculty and administrative oversight at every stage of the process. The University's Honors College maintains a separate curriculum and review process. Department and program entrance requirements and institutional transfer agreements ensure that curricula are related to students' abilities and levels of achievement.

Presentation of Findings

Department and program requirements are stated in the University Catalog in the following sections:

- Academic Information (for Undergraduates), p. 35
- Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees, p. 44
- Colleges, Schools, and Departments of Instruction, p. 65

4.2.3/1 of 16
Curriculum
Related to
Educational
Purpose

Curriculum
Related to Student
Ability

Across the University, curricula are structured so students follow a recommended sequence of study, beginning with general education in the first two years of study. Many departments and programs have specific entrance requirements, such as minimum grade point averages or portfolio presentations, that students must meet before declaring a major. Prerequisites within majors ensure that students follow an appropriate course sequence. In addition, many departments and programs have created capstone courses that measure students' cumulative achievements before they are graduated. Academically gifted students are encouraged to apply to the University's Honors College, where smaller, more intensively focused general education classes are taught.

The 1998-1999 Senior Student Satisfaction Survey revealed that 75% of students were satisfied with the University's general education program. Moreover, 81% of students were satisfied with the curriculum of their major program and 62% were satisfied with course availability.

Curriculum
Related to
Resources

New department and program curricula are thoroughly reviewed in regard to the University's commitment of instructional resources. Only rarely are such curricula approved if they involve new faculty lines, however. New and existing curricula are evaluated at least every five years as part of the Academic Program Review. Individual deans may reallocate resources to more successful programs or to promising new initiatives based upon the review. These include program offerings in Weekend College, the TELETECHNET Program, or the University's regional centers. Via the University's Faculty Innovator Grant program and the Teaching Across Borders Initiative, individual instructors have strengthened both existing and newly created courses. The University's

Center for Learning Technologies holds workshops and provides technical support for faculty using digital technology in the classroom. Special instructional resources are allocated on a course-by-course basis in the TELETECHNET Program. The University's curricula are directly related to its resources.

**4.2.3/2 of 16
Curriculum
Established,
Reviewed, and
Evaluated**

The University's curriculum is evaluated, reviewed, and established through a clearly defined sequential process. Each department and program has a standing committee whose faculty representatives write, revise, review, and evaluate the undergraduate curriculum. These committees initiate the appropriate paperwork, including the curricular change forms and the activation/deactivation forms. Their recommendations are in turn reviewed by the department or program chair, who sends the proposal to the college curriculum committee. Each college's curriculum committee is composed of representatives from each department and program. The representatives carefully scrutinize incoming proposals so as to avoid unnecessary duplication. Subsequently, college curriculum committee recommendations for general education and new program proposals are reviewed by the appropriate dean and sent to Committee A (Undergraduate Education) of the Faculty Senate for further review. Committee A is composed of representatives from all of the University's colleges. Once the committee has made its decision, the proposal is sent to the floor of the entire Senate for debate and approval. The Senate's recommendation is then forwarded to the provost and vice-president for academic affairs, who makes the final decision. The University's Board of Visitors approves new degrees and programs, but not individual courses or curricular changes. Information about undergraduate curricula is found in the Faculty Handbook (pp. 216-219) and in the Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual.

Each department and program reviews the undergraduate curriculum at least biennially in preparation for the next issue of the University *Catalog*. The University complies with this guideline.

**4.2.3/3 of 16
Responsibility for
Program
Coordination and
Curriculum
Development and
Review**

The department chair and faculty are responsible for curriculum within departments. Program coordinators are selected from the full-time faculty by the department chair or, in the case of a freestanding program, by the dean, with an eye toward the faculty member's expertise in a given field of study. In many cases, the department chair serves as program coordinator. An examination of the Catalog shows the individual coordinators of programs (pp. 65-209).

**4.2.3/4 of 16
Faculty
Credentials**

A listing of faculty and their credentials appears in the University Catalog (pp. 297-309). Full-time faculty are required to hold the terminal degree in their field as stated in the Faculty Handbook under the section heading Policy and Procedures Concerning Academic Rank and Promotion in Rank. Appropriate vitae and transcripts are required as part of the faculty hiring process, and they are kept on file in the dean's office of each college. In each major, there is at least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials who has a primary teaching assignment. This information may be found in the faculty teaching load reports that each program or department generates in the fall and spring semesters.

**4.2.3/5 of 16
Governing Board
Responsibility**

The University's Board of Visitors is charged with approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of programs, departments, divisions and colleges; and

distance-learning programs. The Board's role in undergraduate curriculum is defined in the Board of Visitors Manual (bylaws, Section 3.02).

**4.2.3/6 of 16
Administration/
Faculty
Responsibility in
Developing,
Implementing, and
Monitoring
Academic
Programs**

The administration and faculty are responsible for the creation and development of degrees and programs recommended to the Board of Visitors. They are also responsible for implementing, monitoring, and assessing the general curriculum policy and the degrees and programs approved by the Board. The administration and faculty carefully monitor curricular proposals at the department/program, college, and university levels. Assessments of established degrees and programs are conducted annually by department through the University's Office of Assessment. Academic Program Reviews are conducted every five years.

The responsibilities of the administration and the faculty regarding the undergraduate curriculum are discussed in the Faculty Handbook (pp. 216-219) and the Faculty Senate bylaws (section IV, A). The University complies with this guideline.

**4.2.3/7 of 16
Coordination of
Policy and
Programmatic and
Curricular
Changes**

The coordination of programmatic and curricular changes is the domain of the program coordinator, or in his/her absence, the department chair. Program coordinators and department chairs are listed in the University Catalog at the head of each program or department. All programs or concentrations have at least one full-time faculty member whose primary teaching assignment is in that area. Among other responsibilities, the program coordinator oversees changes to the program's curriculum, keeps the program's curriculum sheets up to date, and schedules and staffs the program's courses.

**4.2.3/8 of 16
Proliferation of
Course Offerings
and Degree
Programs**

Duplication of course offerings is actively discouraged at every level of the approval process, but it is the specific province of each college's curriculum committee, Committee A of the Faculty Senate, and the Office of Academic Affairs. A formal process is in place to review degrees, programs, and courses to control unnecessary additions or duplications.

**4.2.3/9 of 17
Development
of New
Educational
Programs**

The development of new educational programs is considered only after the institution has completed a needs assessment and has identified resources to support these programs. Needs assessments are created by the faculty using data from the community-at-large collected by the University's Office of Assessment. Step-by-step information about the development of new educational programs – from their initiation by the faculty to their final approval by the State Council for Higher Education of Virginia – may be found in the Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual (appendix 2).

**4.2.3/10 of 16
Review of
New
Educational
Programs**

Reviews of new educational programs are conducted at each of the department/program, college, and university levels by the appropriate curriculum committees, Committee A of the Faculty Senate, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Board of Visitors. At the state level, new educational programs are subject to review by the State Council for Higher Education of Virginia. Detailed information may be found in Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual (appendices 10, 11).

**4.2.3/11 of 16
Transfer
Agreements**

As a four-year institution, the University provides its students with the full range of coursework required to complete their baccalaureate degrees. Transfer agreements between the Virginia Community College System and the University are clearly stated in the University's Transfer Guide. Transfer policies governing all other institutions and policies specific to certain University departments or programs are provided in the

Catalog (pp. 18-19). There are no specific guidelines regarding the transfer of students from the University to other institutions. Transfer agreements with selected international institutions are kept on file in the Office of Academic Affairs. The Office of Admissions in consultation with departments and programs evaluates periodically the policies contained in the Transfer Guide to ensure an equitable and efficient transfer of students.

**4.2.3/12 of 16
Developing and
Reviewing Articulation
Agreements**

The University has developed strong articulation agreements with the Virginia Community College System and has adopted a transfer module to ease students' transition to the four-year institution. For example, students holding certain associate's degrees from community colleges in the commonwealth automatically satisfy the University's general education requirements (*Catalog*, p. 44). Articulation agreements are stated in the Transfer Guide (pp. 19-20) and the *Catalog* (p. 37). The transfer module appears in the Transfer Guide (p. 35). Either the assistant director for admissions for transfer and military affairs or the associate director for distance learning reviews articulation agreements with community colleges outside of Virginia on a case-by-case basis.

**4.2.3/13 of 16
Advanced
Coursework in Two-
Plus-Two Programs**

This is covered under articulation agreements (sections 4.2.3/11 and 4.2.3/13).

**4.2.3/14 of 16
Program
Partnerships with
Secondary Schools**

The University has no program partnerships with specific secondary schools. However, the Senior Admissions Program allows qualified secondary school students to enroll at the University during their senior year. The Senior Semester Program allows qualified students to take one or two courses at the University during their senior year. Senior Summer Programs allow qualified students to take one or two courses at the University in the summer preceding their senior year. Lastly, the Senior Telecourse Program allows students to take one or two TELETECHNET courses each semester of their senior year. Information about these programs may be found in the *Catalog* (p. 17). Credit is awarded at the collegiate level in all such programs. However, the credit is awarded directly by Old Dominion University, not by secondary schools, and students meet all

**4.2.3/15-16 of 16
Evaluation of
Secondary School
Partnerships**

Since the University has no such partnerships, these criteria do not apply.

In sum, the University's curricula are directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution, the ability of the students admitted, and available financial and instructional resources. Further, the curricula are established, reviewed, and evaluated according to a clearly defined process with the appropriate engagement of the faculty, the administration, and the Board of Visitors. Responsibility for program coordination is assigned to faculty academically qualified in the field of study, and all programs have at least one full-time faculty member who has appropriate credentials and a primary teaching assignment in the major. Unwarranted proliferation of courses and degree programs is kept in check during the curricular review process. Needs assessments precede the development of new educational programs. Transfer agreements between the University and other institutions are clearly stated and regularly reviewed.

Conclusion

The University is in compliance with sections 4.2.3/1-14. Sections 4.2.3/15-17 are not applicable.

Recommendations

None

Suggestions

A University-wide policy should be developed on the appointment of program coordinators, and the University Catalog should make it clear when a program coordinator is the department/school chair. This does not appear to be a problem with larger programs, but smaller programs tend not to have assigned coordinators; nor is there compensation for those not officially appointed.

Program coordinators should be given release time and/or remuneration for carrying out their assigned responsibilities related to the undergraduate curriculum.

Transfer agreements with international institutions should be printed in appropriate University publications, especially those targeted toward international students.

**Must Statement Compliance Table
4.2.3 Undergraduate Curriculum**

Must Statement	Compliance Statement	Supporting Documentation <u>Exhibit Numbering Key:</u> Criteria#/MustStatement#:Exhibit
4.2.3/1 of 16. Curriculum must be directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates or degrees awarded; to the ability and preparation of the students admitted; and to the financial and instructional resources of the institution.	Compliance	4.2.3/01:01 Catalog, Academic Information [for Undergraduates], p. 35 4.2.3/01:02 Catalog, Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees, p. 44 4.2.3/01:03 Catalog, College, Schools, and Departments of Instruction, p. 65 4.2.3/01:04 Senior Assessment 4.2.3/01:05 Academic Program Reviews
4.2.3/2 of 16. The institution must have a clearly defined process by which the curriculum is established, reviewed and evaluated. This process must recognize the various roles of the faculty, the administration and the governing board.	Compliance	4.2.3/02:01 Faculty Handbook, pp. 216-219. 4.2.3/02:02 Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual.

4.2.3/3 of 16. For each major in a degree program, the institution must assign responsibility for the program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field.	Compliance	4.2.3/03:01 Catalog, Colleges, Schools, and Departments of Instruction, pp. 65-209.
4.2.3/4 of 16. At least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials, as described in Section 4.8.2, must have primary teaching assignment in the major. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major, the above requirements apply to a curricular area or a concentration.	Compliance	4.2.3/04:01 Catalog, Faculty, pp. 297-309. 4.2.3/04:02 Faculty Handbook, Policy and Procedures Concerning Academic Rank and Promotion in Rank, p. 21
4.2.3/5 of 16. The governing boards must be responsible for approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools or colleges through which the curriculum is administered; and the extent to which the institution should offer distance learning programs.	Compliance	4.2.3/05:01 Board of Visitors manual, bylaws, Section 3.02
4.2.3/6 of 16. The administration and faculty must be responsible for the development of academic programs recommended to the governing board.	Compliance	4.2.3/06:01 University Assessment and Improvement Indicators 4.2.3/06:02 Academic Program Reviews 4.2.3/06:03 Faculty Handbook, Curricular Information, pp. 216-219 4.2.3/06:04 Faculty Senate bylaws, Section IV, A
4.2.3/7 of 16. They are also responsible for implementing and monitoring the general curriculum policy and the academic programs approved by the board. There should be an institution-wide process to coordinate programmatic and curricular changes.	Compliance	4.2.3/07:01 Catalog, Departments and Programs
4.2.3/8 of 16. The institution should avoid the unwarranted proliferation of course offerings and degree programs.	Compliance	4.2.3/08:01 Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual
4.2.3/9 of 16. The development of new educational programs should be considered only after the institution has completed a needs assessment and has identified resources to support the programs.	Compliance	4.2.3/09:01 Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual, Appendix 2
4.2.3/10 of 16. The institution should review new educational programs.	Compliance	4.2.3/10:01 Curriculum Development and Change Policies and Procedures Manual, Appendices 10 and 11

4.2.3/11 of 16. Curriculum intended to provide basic preparation for students who will subsequently transfer to another institution must be designed to consider the institutions to which these students transfer.	Compliance	4.2.3/11:01 Transfer Guide 4.2.3/11:02 Catalog, pp. 18-19 4.2.3/11:03 International Transfer Agreements
4.2.3/12 of 16. Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions should work cooperatively to develop articulation agreements. The agreements should be evaluated periodically to insure an equitable and efficient transfer of students.	Compliance	4.2.3/12:01 Catalog, General Education, p. 44 4.2.3/12:02 Transfer Guide, pp. 19-20; p. 37; p. 35
4.2.3/13 of 16. Inverted, two plus two and similar programs must include an adequate amount of advanced coursework in the subject field.	Compliance	4.2.3/13:01 Transfer Guide 4.2.3/13:02 Catalog, pp. 18-19 4.2.3/13:03 International Transfer Agreements
4.2.3/14 of 16. Institutions which enter into programmatic partnerships with secondary schools which result in the award of college credit, such as technical and dual enrollment programs, must ensure that the credit awarded is at the collegiate level and is in compliance with the <i>Criteria</i> and with Section IV in particular.	Not applicable	4.2.3/14:01 Catalog, Senior Admissions Program, Senior Semester Program, Senior Telecourse Program, p. 17
4.2.3/15 of 16. Partnerships must be evaluated regularly by the participating institution of higher education.	Not applicable	
4.2.3/16 of 16. The participating institution must assume full responsibility for the academic quality and integrity of partnerships as measured by the <i>Criteria</i> .	Not applicable	