

**3.5.1** The institution identifies college-level general education competencies and the extent to which students have attained them. **(General education competencies)**

**Compliance**

The general education/core curriculum at UST was created using guidelines developed by Dr. Dominic Aquila, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, and the faculty leadership team, and approved by the Curriculum Committee in March 2010 (minutes). The resulting document "Proposal for Core Reform" was approved by a majority vote of the entire faculty in April 2010. Included is the College-level General Education Competencies template.

The following collegiate-level general education/core curriculum goals and competencies (approved by the UST board in April 2010) flow directly from the approved core reform proposal and form the basis for a comprehensive Catholic education grounded in the liberal arts.

<b>Competency Area: Pursuit of Knowledge</b>	
Goal 1	To promote the pursuit of knowledge both for its own sake and to form habits of mind through which knowledge can mature into wisdom and understanding can stimulate the contemplation of truth, goodness, and beauty.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. draw the distinction between things known for practical purposes only and things known simply for the good of understanding the truth.</li> <li>2. justify and explain how knowledge of truth in itself perfects a person.</li> <li>3. identify at least one ultimate cause and show how knowing this cause gives insight into human existence.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Educate the Whole Person</b>	
Goal 2	To educate the whole person - academically, socially, and spiritually - in order to prepare students for meaningful lives and inspire them to continuous learning that confronts essential and enduring questions about the meaning and conduct of human life.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. draw the distinction between things known for practical purposes only and things known simply for the good of understanding the truth.</li> <li>2. justify and explain how knowledge of truth in itself perfects a person.</li> <li>3. identify at least one ultimate cause and show how knowing this cause gives insight into human existence.</li> <li>4. explain clearly and succinctly why, in the Catholic Tradition, loving God will lead to happiness while pursuing the attainment of mere creatures will not.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Faith and Reason</b>	
Goal 3	To encourage an ongoing dialogue between faith and reason and the encounter between culture and the Gospel as ways of integrating knowledge, achieving an organic vision of reality, and deepening an understanding of God and His revelation in the person of Jesus Christ as mediated through Scripture and the Church.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. articulate and defend the necessarily harmonious relationship between ethical truths known through reason and moral truth as contained in divine revelation.</li> <li>2. integrate knowledge about nature, the human person, and God known through reason with knowledge about nature, the human person, and God known through revelation.</li> <li>3. express and illustrate how grace builds on and perfects nature.</li> <li>4. express the integral relationship between Catholic dogma, the sacraments, and moral truth.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Dignity of the Human Person</b>	
Goal 4	To affirm the dignity of the human person as the source of social justice, respect for human rights, and regard for the proper interests of communities.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. uphold the dignity of the human person.</li> <li>2. demonstrate an understanding of the dignity of the human person as the source of social justice.</li> <li>3. demonstrate respect for human rights and the proper interests of communities consistent with a commitment to the dignity of the human person.</li> <li>4. reflect on the proper interests of communities.</li> </ol>

Goal 5	To develop competence in critical thinking, critical reading, effective writing, and oral communication in necessary relation to the skills of gathering, interpreting, synthesizing, and presenting information with integrity and clarity.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. demonstrate ability to reason critically.</li> <li>2. demonstrate ability to read critically.</li> <li>3. write a paper that meets the standards for academic communication.</li> <li>4. present a speech or other example of oral communication that meets the standards for academic communication.</li> <li>5. gather, interpret, synthesize, and present information in written form meeting the standards of academic communication.</li> <li>6. gather, interpret, synthesize, and present information in oral form meeting the standards of academic communication.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: History</b>	
Goal 6	To understand the bearing of the past on the present and the future and to appreciate the historical character of human inquiry in exploring the principal philosophical, religious, political, literary, and aesthetic traditions of Western and world culture.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. discuss the principal philosophical, religious, political, literary, and aesthetic traditions of Western and world culture.</li> <li>2. make connections between the past and present through analysis of primary sources and assessment of their contemporary relevance.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Art and Literature</b>	
Goal 7	To cultivate a critical appreciation of art and literature that arouses wonder and forms the imagination in its engagement with the enduring cultural and spiritual values inherent in great works of human creativity.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. critique and appreciate art and literature with awareness of both the inherent aesthetic and historic-cultural qualities that apply.</li> <li>2. display interest in and appreciation for great works of art and literature.</li> <li>3. display an active imagination in response to the world and to works of art and literature.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Quantitative Reasoning, and Natural and Social Sciences</b>	
Goal 8	To develop aptitude in quantitative reasoning together with knowledge of the methodology of the natural and social sciences in order to foster appreciation of scientific thinking for understanding nature and human behavior.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify what data are necessary in the analysis of scientific and/or business scenarios and use those data to derive appropriate conclusions in such scenarios based upon accepted norms.</li> <li>2. approach a natural and/or social science scenario using the appropriate methodology and will state the research question and data necessary to complete an analysis of the scenario based upon accepted norms of the science.</li> <li>3. evaluate the usefulness of scientific thinking in their understanding of their experiences of natural phenomenon and human behavior.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Ethics</b>	
Goal 9	To inculcate ethical thinking in judging conduct and reflecting on the moral implications of developments in science, technology, business, and society in order to promote making decisions on the basis of transcendent moral values.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. apply ethical standards in judging conduct.</li> <li>2. identify the moral and/or ethical aspects of developments in science, technology, business, and society consistent with a Catholic perspective.</li> <li>3. Students will understand and appreciate how transcendent moral values would inform decisions in professional and personal life.</li> </ol>
<b>Competency Area: Diversity and Service</b>	
Goal 10	To nurture the study and appreciation of other languages and/or cultures as a means of promoting charity, understanding, and respect for the diversity of cultural forms, religious beliefs, and social practices.
Competencies	Students will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students will value other languages and cultures as a means of promoting charity, understanding, and respect from the diversity of cultural forms, religious beliefs, and social practices.</li> <li>2. Students will understand the importance of a commitment.</li> </ol>

## **Competencies are College Level**

The Core Curriculum Review Committee (CCRC) is a faculty committee charged with oversight of the core curriculum and the selection of courses to be included in the core. The CCRC maintains a curriculum map that specifically aligns the courses with the goals and competencies. The Curriculum Committee (a separate committee of faculty) approved the original goals and competencies, and is charged with approving any changes. The goals and competencies are reviewed and approved by two separate committees of college faculty, charged with selecting the particular courses that may be used to satisfy the Core Curriculum requirement. They also ensure that the courses are aligned with the Core Curriculum Goals. The Curriculum Committee is a faculty committee that vets the courses to ensure they are college-level.

Additionally, the competencies above are validated as being college-level by the following recommendations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the development of college-level competencies, "The basic intellectual competencies discussed in this document -- reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and computer literacy -- should inform the components of any core curriculum. Moreover, a core curriculum should contain courses that provide multiple perspectives about the individual and the world in which he or she lives; that stimulate a capacity to discuss and reflect upon individual, political, and social aspects of life so students understand ways in which to exercise responsible citizenship; and that enable students to integrate knowledge and understand the interrelationships of the disciplines."

Also, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) recommended the following outcomes at the recent SACSCOC 2013 Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World through the study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, languages and the arts
2. Intellectual and practical skills, including: inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving
3. Personal and Social Responsibility including civic knowledge and engagement, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, foundations and skills for lifelong learning
4. Integrative and Applied Learning

## **Based on a Coherent Rationale**

The general education/core curriculum at UST was created using these guidelines. The resulting proposal for core reform was approved by a majority vote of the entire faculty in April 2010. The document prescribed subject areas for courses, but not specific course titles. It required developing intentional linkages between philosophy and theology, and developing a synthesis course. The Core Curriculum Review Committee (CCRC):

1. Determined specific courses that would satisfy the core and meet general education requirements. In April 2013, the CCRC submitted a core curriculum list of courses to the Curriculum Committee, which was approved in April 2013.
2. Developed and implemented intentional linkages between Theology and Philosophy. A task force developed a proposal that prescribed re-sequencing the Philosophy and Theology courses. This was passed by the Curriculum Committee in October 2013.
3. Developed synthesis courses. The CCRC developed guidelines for the development of synthesis courses, and developed the Synthesis course, which is not considered general education.

### **Assessing the Core Curriculum at UST**

Student attainment of college-level competencies has been assessed by a number of methods overseen by the Core Curriculum Review Committee, and the faculty who teach general education/core curriculum courses. The Office of Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness supports assessment efforts, including data collection and archiving.