



CORE 42 Frequently Asked Questions

Below are questions and concerns MDHE staff has frequently heard regarding the CORE 42. By no means is this an exhaustive list of questions, and neither are the answers the last word on the subject. More questions will arise as the CORE 42 is implemented. We'll do our best to address your concerns, but many of these questions will be decided through conversations within the larger academic community.

1. What is the CORE 42?

The Core Curriculum (Core 42) is a framework for general education based upon a statement of the content, component (Knowledge Areas), and objectives of the core curriculum and included courses, and which all Missouri public higher education institutions have agreed to adopt. Upon a student's successful completion of the CORE 42 at any community college or public institution of higher education, that block of courses will be transferred to any other public institution of higher education in the state and shall be substituted for the receiving institution's general education requirement. Institution registrars will develop a process for clearly identifying on a student's transcript when they have completed the CORE 42. Students will receive credit for having completed the general education requirement at the sending institution and will not be required to take any additional lower-division general education courses at the receiving institution.

For students who transfer before completing CORE 42 curriculum at the sending institution, they shall receive credit from the receiving institution for each of the courses identified as part of the CORE 42 (identified with "MOTR" prefix). The credit received for any individual course with a MOTR prefix shall not only fulfill the specific discipline-area within the CORE 42 framework, but will also fulfill any other requirements or pre-requisites that the course satisfies. For example, if a student were to take a psychology course with a MOTR prefix at the sending institution that also fulfills a major or pre-requisite requirement at the receiving institution, the sending institution's course will also meet those same requirements.

2. How was the CORE 42 developed?

SB 997 directed the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to develop a core curriculum with the assistance of an advisory committee comprised primarily of faculty. The Core Curriculum Advisory Committee (CCAC) included representatives from each public college and university.

The CCAC and MDHE staff developed a framework for the CORE 42 and identified courses to be considered as part of the core curriculum. Faculty Discipline Groups (FDGs), comprised of faculty from specific disciplines, reviewed course descriptions from each institution to determine which courses met the objectives of the CORE 42 course.

Throughout the process, the CCAC and MDHE staff engaged other faculty, chief academic officers, registrars and transfer coordinators, and chief executive officers.

3. Do Honors courses transfer?

Honors courses should transfer and fulfill requirements of the CORE 42. The decision to accept an Honors course as an Honors course will be at the discretion of the receiving institution.

4. SB 997 refers to “native” students and students enrolled in professional degree programs, both of whom are exempt from the provisions of the CORE 42. How will that work?

Native students are defined as students who have enrolled and attended only one institution and do not intend to transfer to another institution. For purposes of the CORE 42, students who earned dual credit while in high school will be considered native students. Per SB 997, the provisions of CORE 42 do not apply to native students.

Because of licensure or accreditation constraints, professional degree programs often have specific general education requirements. Students enrolled in such programs will take the recommended curriculum for their area of study.

As the CORE 42 is implemented, MDHE staff and the CCAC will work to develop clear pathways for students, including those enrolled in professional programs.

5. What does “at least 42 credit hours” mean?

As many of the courses included in the CORE 42 Framework are of varying credit hour lengths, it is nearly impossible to develop a course outline where the credits obtained equal exactly 42 credit hours. The “forty-two credit hour block” referred to in SB 997 is taken directly from the department’s previous transfer policy that has been in effect since the mid-1990s. The previous policy did not delineate specific courses to be included in the framework, resulting in an infinite number of courses students could use to fulfill the requirements. By requiring the department to identify specific courses for equivalence, it created an additional task for managing courses of varying credit hour length (e.g. foreign language and sciences). The spirit of the law is to facilitate the seamless transfer of general education between institutions and reducing the need for students to “retake” coursework already completed at the sending institution.

6. What about students caught in the pipeline or the transitional phase of the core curriculum?

Credits accepted in transfer before August 1, 2018, will be determined by the receiving institution. Credits accepted August 1, 2018 and after will fall under the Core Curriculum Transfer Act.

7. How are specific institutional requirements such as a PE credit requirement or an International credit requirement handled with the core curriculum?

Specific institutional requirements are not included in the core curriculum. The only way specific institutional requirements would be able to be included in the core curriculum is if a class in the MTOR course library would work for the requirement.

8. How will appeals or disputes be handled?

The Committee on Transfer and Articulation is currently developing a detailed process for appeals, but the statute provides a clear framework. Per Senate Bill 997, if an institution of higher education does not accept course credit earned by a student at another public institution of higher education, that institution shall give written notice to the student and the other institution that the transfer of the course credit is denied. If the transfer dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student or the institution at which the credit was earned within forty-five days after the date the student received written notice of the denial, the institution that denies the transfer of the course credit shall notify the commissioner of higher education of its denial and the reasons for the denial. The commissioner of higher education or his or her designee shall make the final determination about a dispute concerning the transfer of course credit and give written notice of the determination as to the involved student and institutions.

9. I'm a student. What do I do if an institution won't accept my courses in transfer?

The Core Curriculum is designed to work seamlessly between public institutions of higher education. If the receiving institution does not accept your courses in transfer, that institution must notify you and the sending institution that the transfer request has been denied. After this, the two institutions must work with you to settle any transfer disputes.

If the transfer dispute is not solved in a satisfactory manner, the receiving institution must notify the commissioner of higher education—within 45 days after the student received written notification that the transfer request was denied—must notify the commissioner that the request was denied and the reasons it was denied.

While this process will be used to settle disputes, MDHE will also be able to collect data on the kinds of disputes that occur, and to get a better idea of transfer practices in general; MDHE will use this data to identify bottlenecks and barriers to transfer and use this information to inform policy on transfer and articulation moving forward.

10. Will new courses be added to the CORE 42? How will that happen?

Yes. While a specific process has not been established, new courses can be suggested by institutions, followed by a review similar to what the Core Curriculum Advisory Committee (CCAC) has done throughout the initial round of course approvals. Faculty Discipline Groups (FDGs) will be utilized to evaluate courses to ensure they meet certain competencies and outcomes; institutional courses that meet these requirements will be approved and added to the core curriculum transfer library.

11. How do the new Math Pathways fit in the Core Curriculum?

The Math Pathways courses—Mathematical Reasoning & Modeling, Statistical Reasoning, Pre-Calculus Algebra, and Pre-Calculus—will fulfil the math requirement in the CORE 42.

12. A course at my institution has a different number of credit hours than the receiving institution? How will credit hour differences be handled in the CORE 42?

In some disciplines, particularly the sciences and foreign language, there are courses with three, four, and five credit hours proposed for equivalent transfer among institutions.

The Natural Sciences workgroup of the CCAC recommends 4 credit hours for all laboratory-based, lower-division general education MOTR science courses. This will require some institutions to adjust the credit hours assigned to laboratory-based, lower-division general education MOTR science courses.

The Humanities & Fine Arts workgroup of the CCAC recommends all MOTR foreign language courses carry 3 hours of transfer credit, with any additional credits hours applying as general credit toward the 42-hour minimum. There have been concerns raised about this approach, which the CCAC has not had a chance to resolve.

When a student fulfills the Core Curriculum at their sending institution, they will receive full credit at the receiving institution, regardless of the number of credit hours in equivalent classes at the receiving institution.

The Core Curriculum Advisory Committee will continue to study this issue, and will make recommendations for the standardization of credit hours in specific MOTR courses. Because this process needs further study, and significant time for implementation, standardized credit hours will not be required by the fall of 2018.

13. A student completed 12 credits in Humanities & Fine Arts, but the requirement is at least 9 credit hours. What happens to the other three credits?

Students have to complete a minimum of credits in each Knowledge Area. Credits earned beyond the minimum count toward the 42-hour minimum.