State of the School of Undergraduate Studies
School of Undergraduate Studies

We oversee the components of a college education that are shared by all undergraduates at the university.

The mission of the school includes responsibility for sustaining a dynamic common curriculum and enriching the undergraduate experience through innovative advising, career counseling, academic assistance, learning communities, interdisciplinary programs, and undergraduate research.
School of Undergraduate Studies

• Core Curriculum
• Academic Support
• Academic initiatives
• Initial home
Why a Signature Course?

The first year transition was harder than I expected. My Signature Course pulled me from the monotony of ordinary classes that was clouding my educational experience, and reintroduced me to the refreshingly extraordinary side of education that makes a class unforgettable.

*Meagan Cook*
*Spies, Espionage, and Treason*

There are times that I sit back and wonder what my life would look like if I had never taken this class, if I had gone through college pursuing salary rather than joy, if I had not been taught that the most learning happens when you engage in meaningful conversations with your peers.

*Lindsey Platt*
*How to Change the World*

I had to collaborate with classmates on a project, write an observatory piece on a work of art, complete a research paper, and create a PowerPoint presentation that involved public speaking. All of the skills I learned from this single UGS course have proved vital thus far in my college experience.

*Shelby Johnson*
*The Pope’s City*
School of Undergraduate Studies
by the numbers
Core curriculum

SIGNATURE COURSE ENROLLMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>5,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>8,591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>9,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>10,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>10,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core curriculum

SIGNATURE COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classes</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The chart shows the number of signature courses offered each year from 2009–10 to 2013–14.
Core curriculum

SIGNATURE COURSES WRITING ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% of Student Writing Meeting or Exceeding Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% OF STUDENT WRITING MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS
Core curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>COURSE FLAGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>1,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>1,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>1,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>2,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>2,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core curriculum

The diagram illustrates the increase in the number of seats taken for the core curriculum over the years 2009–10 to 2013–14. The number of seats taken has risen from 52,000 in 2009–10 to 145,000 in 2013–14, showing a steady increase each year.
Academic support

![First-Year Interest Groups](chart)

- **2009–10**: 2,923
- **2010–11**: 2,997
- **2011–12**: 2,923
- **2012–13**: 3,750
- **2013–14**: 4,500

**FIG Students**
Academic support

FIRST-YEAR INTEREST GROUPS

FIG COHORTS

- 2009–10: 158
- 2010–11: 177
- 2011–12: 183
- 2012–13: 270
- 2013–14: 290
Academic initiatives

BRIDGING DISCIPLINES PROGRAMS STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009–10</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010–11</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–12</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–13</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–14</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial home
Why UGS?

“The School of Undergraduate Studies provides the tools for a successful college experience and gives you a road map for navigating your future. With guidance from UGS staff, I was able to maximize my opportunities and steer towards a major in the McCombs School of Business.”

Dillon West
Major: Finance

“Undergraduate Studies gave me a chance to analyze several majors. I liked not having to jump into something when I first started college. Once I took a course in neurophysiology, I decided to declare neurobiology as my major because I was fascinated with the nervous system.”

Caleb Jones
Major: Neurobiology

“UGS allowed me to make an informed and intelligent decision about my major. Without UGS, it’s likely that I would have changed my major and interests multiple times and wasted an unfortunate amount of time that could have been better utilized.”

Emily Williams
Major: International Relations and Global Studies
Goals for 2014

• Maximize implementation of flags for the 14-16 catalog

• Focus on pioneering better academic assessment in all our programs. Benchmark our performance and set achievable goals for adding value to the academic preparation of all undergraduates

• Create a new type of student support program within the Discovery Scholars
Goals for 2014
Maximize implementation of flags for the 2014-16 catalog

The UGS Advisory Committee voted in 2012 that all undergraduate degree programs require all flags beginning in the 14-16 catalog.

- 6 colleges/schools fully implemented all of the flags
- 4 colleges/schools have implemented all except the 3rd writing flag
Goals for 2014
Maximize implementation of flags for the 2014-16 catalog

The UGS Advisory Committee voted in 2012 that all undergraduate degree programs require all flags beginning in the 14-16 catalog.

• Only Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences have not yet required all of the flags. I will be working with both to figure out how best to implement the remaining flags in the 2016-18 catalog.
Goals for 2014
Maximize implementation of flags for the 2014-16 catalog

We now have sufficient capacity for the entire campus to implement the requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013-14 SEATS TAKEN</th>
<th>REQUIREMENT AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17,738</td>
<td>Cultural Diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,164</td>
<td>Global Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16,473</td>
<td>Ethics and Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,634</td>
<td>Independent Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47,189</td>
<td>Quantitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,356</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goals for 2014
Focus on pioneering better academic assessment in all our programs. Benchmark our performance and set achievable goals for adding value to the academic preparation of all undergraduates.

- Continue comprehensive assessment of Signature Courses, focusing on communication/writing. This resulted in high praise from the most recent SACS institutional review team.
- Assess implementation of the Ethics and Leadership flag in GOV 312L.
- Launch assessment of core curriculum, reviewing two core areas each year beginning 2014-15.
Goals for 2014
Create a new type of student support program within the Discovery Scholars

New way of managing student support that combines our best resources

- Each Discovery Scholar works with the same team members all year: Discovery Scholars coach, Vick Center academic advisor and career counselor, and Sanger Center learning specialist
- Team meets regularly to share info and compare notes on each student
Goals for 2015

• Flags required in every degree plan, with exception of 3rd writing flag

• Continue to expand academic assessment efforts in all programs, with focus on full assessment of core curriculum

• Create a new Transfer Year Experience program

• Change how we communicate with students. More frequent, more focused, and via phone and tablet
Reflections on my first year in UGS

The vision of Bill Power's Task Force on Curricular Reform, a reimagined core curriculum, is being realized. Signature courses, Flags, and FIGS are adding significant and documented value to the academic experiences of all undergraduates.

As UT's infrastructure for academic change, the School of Undergraduate Studies stands ready to implement new ideas generated by sources like the provost's Campus Conversations with faculty.