

Feedback Report

UCA Core Council Assessment sub-committee

January 2019

Re: Review of LD Core Responsible Living Course Offerings

Thank you for providing the information requested by the sub-committee. The assessment sub-committee is diligently reviewing all courses in the Lower Division Core Responsible Living area to assure that our students are receiving a shared, common experience across the university as regards this Core competency. Your participation is greatly appreciated in this endeavor. The sub-committee would like to provide you with this feedback report documenting our recommendations. If you have questions, concerns, or comments please direct them to the Director of the UCA Core, Jake Held (jmhheld@uca.edu)

Course Prefix and Number: FINA 2330

Course Title: Personal Finance

Syllabus: Any syllabus for a course in the UCA Core must include language indicating the course's relative position within the UCA Core. The required boilerplate language can be located here: <http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/publications-information/>

The syllabus with which the committee was provided was less than clear in terms of the course's place within, and alignment to, the UCA Core. For example, course goals or objectives were not explicitly connected to the Core outcomes to which it ought to align. The syllabus, thus, failed to clearly indicate the place FINA 2330 occupies in the UCA Core, and how it serves its role as a Lower Division Responsible Living course. Such language is essential in both demonstrating the connection between course content and Core programmatic requirements. In addition, such language is crucial for communicating to students how their coursework is tied to their general education at UCA, and how their general education at UCA is programmatically coherent, oriented around the four learning competencies, of which responsible living is one.

Lower Division Core standards: Does a majority (greater than 50%) of the course content directly align to the Core outcomes for the goal under which the course assesses? (NB: This is calculated by considering course objectives, readings, lecture/discussion, and assignments as indicated by the course syllabus and provided course materials.)

FINA 2330 is categorized under Goal B (Well-Being) of the Responsible Living category. The outcomes for Goal B are:

Issue Recognition: Recognition of various issues that affect well-being and their interconnections in complex contexts. The interconnections of issues in complex contexts refers to the obvious and subtle connections between/among the sub-parts or situational conditions of a scenario that bring two or more dilemmas/issues into the problem (e.g., relationship of health screenings to increased health care costs).

Analysis of Knowledge: the ability to extend discipline based knowledge to decision making and/or develop a recommended course of action based on discipline specific knowledge.

Impact of Decisions: The consequences—positive or negative—of decisions on the well-being of self, others, society and/or environment(s).

The full rubric can be located here: <http://uca.edu/core/assessment/>

As a lower division Core course, this course ought to provide students with the foundational skills necessary to begin developing the skills indicated under the rubric. In order to provide such an experience it is necessary that students be consistently exposed to these ideas and offered multiple opportunities to develop these skills. The sub-committee found that overall FINA 2330 as presented failed to align to and promote the learning outcomes of responsible living Goal B (well-being).

On the whole, the committee did not see evidence that a majority (greater than 50%) of the course content of FINA 2330 aligns to or addresses the three learning outcomes of Goal B (Well-being). Outcome 3 (Impact of Decisions) explicitly references assessing decisions in terms of well-being (of self, others, society and/or environment(s)). However, none of the materials we were provided indicated that students were asked, invited, or prompted to substantively contemplate their financial decisions in terms of well-being or any normative, valuational framework. *Students were not asked about the value or purpose of wealth acquisition or money management, and instead merely asked to demonstrate the technique of increasing wealth, but not the “Why” of doing so.* Thus, there was little (if any) connection between personal finance and personal well-being or flourishing, a fundamental component of the responsible living competency.

In addition, the assignment provided to the sub-committee as the chosen assignment for Core assessment was listed as *optional*. This is unacceptable. If this course is a part of the UCA Core program, then it must commit to and participate in the assessment practices of the program. Making the assessment artifact optional does not do this. It fails to guarantee that sufficient and representative data will be provided to relevant stakeholders. The chosen assessment assignment must be required and well-designed to align to Core outcomes.

Committee Recommendation: Given that FINA 2330 as presented failed to align the Core outcomes under which it is designated, and additionally, failed to require and thus provide a reliable assessment tool, the assessment sub-committee of the UCA Core Council recommends to the Core Council that: 1) FINA 2330 be asked to pursue one of two options: a) FINA 2330 submit revised materials addressing all concerns of the sub-committee as addressed above with specific attention being paid to those recommendations enumerated below, thus offering an assurance argument as to consistency of its content and delivery with respect to responsible living Goal B (well-being), as well as participation in Core assessment activities or b) submit the required paperwork to remove FINA 2330 from the UCA Core should the requirements necessary to meet Core outcomes be considered too cumbersome.

Specific recommendations:

1. Greater than 50% of course content needs to explicitly align to the outcomes under responsible living goal B (well-being). Use the table in Curriculum Attachment A here: <http://uca.edu/core/forms/> as a guide. In addition, provide course materials such as copies of assignments, quizzes, tests, writing assignment prompts, and/or detailed syllabus.
2. The selected artifact for Core assessment purposes must be well designed to align to the responsible living goal B Core outcomes AND be a required assignment in the course.
3. Revise the course syllabus to demonstrate how the course aligns to and addresses the Core outcomes under which it assesses. Also include required UCA Core language as noted above.
4. All sections of FINA 2330, regardless of instructor, must offer a consistent experience in terms of responsible living Goal B outcomes.
5. In order to better understand Core requirements and respond to the sub-committee's requests it is recommended that EFIRM consult with a member of the sub-committee in regards to this report before, or while, revising its submission. Your college representative on the sub-committee is Stephanie Watson.

Should EFIRM choose to submit revised materials for FINA 2330, those materials should be submitted to the UCA Core Director. The course materials will be evaluated by the UCA Core Council curriculum review sub-committee. The sub-committee will review the materials and make a recommendation to the UCA Core Council as to whether or not they are adequate in addressing the concerns noted above. Should the sub-committee affirm that they are adequate and the Core Council affirm that assessment, no further action will be necessary. Should, however, the sub-committee deem the revised materials to be insufficient and the Core Council affirm this evaluation, or the sub-committee deem the materials sufficient yet the UCA Core Council reject this assessment, the Core Council's decision will be guiding. In the event of either of these previous two outcomes, EFIRM will have one semester to revisit the issues and revise the course materials. The same process will then be followed with the decision of the Core Council regarding FINA 2330's position in the UCA LD Core being final.

If EFIRM should fail to act on this recommendation by the close of Spring 2019, FINA 2330 will be placed on probationary status for Fall 2019. If no progress is made in rectifying matters by the close of Fall 2019, The UCA Core Council will initiate a proposal to remove FINA 2330 the LD Core beginning Spring 2020.