



Ensuring Broad and General Training at the Doctoral Level: Alternatives to a Core Curriculum

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The logo for the University of North Texas (UNT) is displayed in green. It features the letters "UNT" in a large, bold, serif font. Below "UNT", the words "UNIVERSITY OF" are written in a smaller, sans-serif font, and "NORTH * TEXAS" is written in a larger, bold, sans-serif font, with a small star symbol between "NORTH" and "TEXAS".

UNT Outline

- What is our position
- History
- Implementation of this alternative
- Directions for future dialog with CoA

- Questions



Half of what you are taught will
in 10 years be shown to be
wrong. And the trouble is, none
of your teachers know which
half.

Sydney Burwell, MD, Dean of the Harvard Medical School



Our Position

Broad and General Training at the
Doctoral Level can be accomplished by
diverse processes

Committee on General Education

- General Education should consist of
 - a common body of knowledge that all students should master, or
 - exposure to “ways of knowing” that could substitute for the knowledge itself (when the field cannot agree on a common body of knowledge)

History of the Core Curriculum in Psychology

- 1918 Ludwig Geissler
 - Standardized education in psychology
- 1933 American Psychological Association
 - Standards for Doctoral Degree in Psychology
- 1947 American Psychological Association
 - Identifying essential training standards for clinical psychology
- 1949 Boulder Conference

Conclusions

- Roe et al., 1959
 - There is a common core
 - We should not specify what this is lest we in any way discourage imaginative innovations in graduate training

Ways of Knowing in Psychology

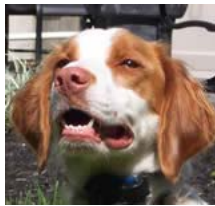
- Biological bases of behavior
 - Social bases of behavior
 - Cognitive/Affective bases of behavior
 - Human Development
 - Quantitative Methods
-
- Most psychologists agree that these “ways of knowing” are important, but there is little agreement as to the content of these areas

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What are the acceptable "ways of knowing"

- **Predoctoral preparation**
 - Examples of Medicine and Law
 - Need a "pre-Psychology" curriculum which includes training and/or selection for both knowledge and personal characteristics necessary to become a "clinical" psychologist

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UNT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS What are the acceptable "ways of knowing"

- **Menu Driven Coursework**
 - One or more courses in several topic areas
 - Courses are typically indepth
 - Taken as a whole, they provide a broad, solid foundation

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- **Biological Bases of Behavior**
 - Pharmacology
 - Behavioral Neuroscience
 - Psychoneuroimmunology
- **Cognitive/Affective Bases of Behavior**
 - Cognition
 - Human Learning
 - Memory

UNT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS What are the acceptable "ways of knowing"

- **Competency Portfolio**
 - Demonstration of competency (at the doctoral level) through documentation of the methods and outcomes by which the student is exposed to the current body of knowledge
- **Examples**
 - Directed readings
 - Coursework
 - Mentored Laboratory Experiences

UNT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS What are the acceptable "ways of knowing"

- **Comprehensive Examination**
 - Demonstration of minimum coursework or independent study
 - Mastery of concepts at the graduate level
 - Documentation that all students have similar basic exposure to the scientific foundations of psychology

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Why have these methods disappeared?

- Accreditation is primarily a curriculum review with little attention paid to admissions criteria or verifiable program outcomes.
- Survey course syllabi are easier to get CoA to accept than alternatives.
- No one is checking to see if the survey courses are "at the doctoral level."

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What is needed?

- CoA must address issues of student qualifications and the role that these play on the types of courses provided by programs.
- CoA must agree that alternatives to a core curriculum are acceptable.
- Programs must be told what alternatives CoA will accept in lieu of core courses.
- The field (CoA as the leader) must identify verifiable outcome measures and these outcomes must be used to evaluate the extent with which students have sufficient broad and general training.

Summary

- What is our position
- History
- Implementation of this alternative
- Directions for future dialog with CoA

- Any Questions?