

# Curricular Complexity Heuristic

DEPARTMENT:

PROGRAM:

SUBMITTED BY:

Questions to consider as program curriculum is reviewed: **the answers in red represent sample answer(s) to spur thinking.**

## Prerequisite Courses

1. Are there prerequisites or co-requisites for courses in your program?
  - There are several introductory courses that act as main gateways into the program, but after these initial courses there are not many prerequisites
  - The one exception is that most of our upper division courses require upper division status, but we usually waive that requirement for anyone who is interested
  - There are several courses at the senior level that require instructor approval
2. What is the evidence that the prerequisites/co-requisites are needed?
  - We have found that without the two intro courses students have trouble engaging with the content, since the foundational courses provide the basic terminology and theory.
  - For the upper division requirement, that has been in place as long as I can remember, but I do not know the reason for institution initially. I suppose occasionally there has been a first year student who struggled in an upper division course
3. Are any of the prerequisite courses considered “weed out” courses? Why is this approach used? (Ideally the quality and rigor of a program should come from the major courses)  
**We require X course because we find that students who score an A or B in this course have a high likelihood of completing the program.**
4. Do any of the required foundational courses have prerequisite requirements in other departments?  
**I’m not sure. We do have a couple of classes from X Department that are 26xx and 37xx classes.**
5. Are all the prerequisite courses incorporated into the program and four-year plan?  
**All but one; we presume that the student has entered the program prepared for the curriculum**
6. Are exceptions allowed for any of the courses? If so, what percentage of students receive exceptions?  
**For the upper division requirement, I’d say we get around 20 exceptions a term**

## Complexity and DFW Rates

7. Are students in your program generally able to enroll and pass their courses?  
**I’d say once students are in all major courses, the students are generally able to enroll and pass. There are two really tough classes where a good proportion struggle (X & Y courses)**
8. If you consider courses with higher DFW rates, which of these courses serve key positions in your curriculum? (e.g., high delay, blocking, or centrality factors)  
**2605, Introduction to Statistics is often a class that students struggle with, but we have partnered with the Reesh Center to provide additional tutoring support**

9. Do any of the courses in your program serve a foundational or prerequisite role in other programs on campus? Do any of these courses serve key positions in their curriculum?  
Several of our general education classes are required by other programs on campus. For some of these programs, our courses are challenging

#### **Non-Direct Admit Programs**

10. How complex is your program? How complex is your program if the “pre” program is included?  
If I were to think in low/medium/high, I would say our program, once admitted, is of medium complexity. If you were to include the pre-program, since many of those classes pre-reqs to major courses, it would be high complexity.
11. What approximate percentage of students who declare a pre-major in your program are accepted?  
Approximately 75% of pre-majors are accepted into the program
12. What happens to students who are not accepted into your program? What are their alternate pathways?  
They are advised on other possible pathways that can utilize courses already taken

#### **Curricular Complexity Reflection—this section should be completed based on your thoughts and responses to the questions above.**

13. How complex is your program? (not looking for a number, but rather a general low, medium, high assessment)
14. Which courses in your program have the highest delay factor?
15. Which courses in your program have highest blocking factor?
16. Considering your answers for the questions above, are there any opportunities to revise curriculum in a way that could reduce program complexity? Why or why not?