

Core Review: Protocol for Focus Group Sessions

- Students will be given a brief introduction to the session by explaining what we are interested in knowing. (Paragraph below will be read to students)
 - Thanks for your agreement to participate in our focus group sessions today. The Core Curriculum is currently being reviewed; therefore, it is extremely important that we get the student perspectives about what you know about it, what kind of experiences you've had regarding the core requirements, and about your learning experiences in core courses.
- Students will be assured that all responses are kept confidential and no individual will be identified by their responses. (See paragraph below)
 - This session will be tape-recorded to make sure that we transcribe the responses accurately. You will not be identified on the tape so you may give your honest opinions. Your responses will be very helpful for improving many aspects of the Core Curriculum, so we appreciate your participation in this assessment. We will make sure that everyone present has an opportunity to give an answer to each of our questions.

- Questions:

1. In a sentence, what is USM's Core Curriculum?

2. What do you think is the purpose of the Core?

3. How have you learned about the Core during your academic experience here?

- a. Did an academic advisor explain the Core requirements to you and how to fulfill them?
 - b. Have any of your syllabi for any Core courses you've taken give you information about the objectives of the core letters?
 - c. Have any of your professors who taught Core courses you've taken ever talked in class about the Core and the objectives for the core letters?
 - d. Have you read the pages in the USM undergraduate catalog that describe the Core curriculum?
 - e. Have you talked with other classmates or friends that attend USM about the Core curriculum?
4. What is your overall assessment of the Core Curriculum as a component of your educational experience at USM?
- a. By fulfilling the core requirements, has it primarily helped or hindered your educational experience?
 - b. Do any of the current core requirements strike you as particularly useful or particularly unreasonable?
 - c. Are there any core courses that you're glad you took and would not have otherwise taken?
5. If you could make one change in the Core, what would it be?

