

**Academic Programs Committee Preliminary Report on the Field of Study Curricula**  
**Members: Senators Lavigne (chair), Ramkumar (Secretary), Bayne, Buelinckx, Louis, Wang and Zook**

The committee was charged with reviewing the impact of the State's Field of Studies Program on TTU's undergraduate degree programs and to formulate a response, if necessary. Today's report covers what we have learned and we plan to propose a response at the final meeting of the year.

We heard from Vice-Provost Genevieve Durham-DeCesaro as well as representatives from Engineering, Economics, Theatre, Anthropology, and Business. Vice-Provost Durham-DeCesaro further informed us of the situation of Social Work's BA.

The main broad point of contention with the FoS program remains the lack of faculty control over our degree programs, a point that has been hobbled by the fact that SACS has dropped its protest of the program which was primarily concerned with this issue.

There are three main aspects of the FoS program that present various problems for TTU programs:

1. Students who transfer in with a completed FoS curriculum cannot be required to take ANY lower level courses as part of the major work;
2. Most of the FoS curricula include many more hours of lower level coursework in the field than do the actual degree programs at 4-year institutions;
3. While each FoS curriculum is required to be reviewed regularly, there is, de facto, no review process.

In general, these aspects of the FoS program would seem likely to have two distinct practical effects on TTU's undergraduate programs.

- First, programs with more requirements will likely have to make compromises in the quality of the degree of those transferring in with a completed FoS. The reason being that there is no room within these degree programs for electives, which is how programs with fewer requirements will handle the FoS courses that don't line up directly with courses in their degree programs. A particular problem here lies in the sequencing of courses within a given program. For example, the FoS curriculum in biology includes organic chemistry at the 2000 level, whereas we require that course at the 3000 level. It is our understanding that FoS students can't be required to take the 3000 level course on the same topic.
- The second, broad problem area effects programs tied to specific professional association's standards. For example, Social Work will have a hard time incorporating the FoS into its degree program for this reason, partly because their professional requirements are regularly updated.

Some potential responses might include: drafting a resolution denouncing and/or critiquing the FoS program on these and/or other grounds, perhaps in line with the published sentiments of

other 4-year institutions in Texas; collecting some more hard data on the negative effects these programs will have on the quality of FoS transfer students' degrees; and exploring the needs of programs (especially those whose accreditation rely on regularly updated course content, etc.) for a robust review process of these curricula.