

Responses to the Faculty Survey – April 2015

The General Education Review Committee identified several areas of concern (listed in alphabetical order, below).

	1 st most significant		2 nd most significant		3 rd most significant		4 th most significant	
Area of Concern	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CORE Budget	40	34.5%	34	29.3%	25	21.6%	22	19.0%
Implementation	41	35.3%	25	21.6%	24	20.7%	24	20.7%
Hour Reduction	20	17.2%	25	21.6%	30	25.9%	40	34.5%
Transferability	15	12.9%	32	27.6%	37	31.9%	30	25.9%
Total	116	100%	116	100%	116	100%	116	100%

- CORE Budget - The budget for the CORE has been reduced in order to meet university operating budget. Operating CORE within budget is an item that needs to be addressed.
- Curriculum implementation - The implementation of CORE represented a shift from menu-driven to integrative courses. But CORE's implementation has come at the expense of some disciplines (i.e., History), has never implemented others (i.e., foreign languages), and added a non-disciplinary category (cross-cultural). These curricular matters should be addressed.
- Hour Reduction/Student Debt - The cost for higher education continues to skyrocket; ACU is no exception. Reducing the number of hours for a degree, thus reducing the overall cost and student debt upon graduation should be addressed.
- Transferability - Since the implementation of CORE, the number of transfer students has decreased while the overall number of hours entering students bring in has increased. The ability to reconcile transfer issues should be addressed.

The next questions asked faculty to respond to two statements regarding the current general education outcomes, those voted on in 2007.

- ACU graduates should be able to demonstrate this outcome.
- I am confident that courses in ACU's general education menus help realize this outcome.

Outcome 1. Strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills—achieved and demonstrated through learning in a range of fields, settings, and media, and through advanced studies in one or more areas of concentration.

Outcome 2. Deep understanding of and hands-on experience with the inquiry practices of disciplines that explore the natural, socio-cultural, aesthetic, and religious (or theological or spiritual) realms—achieved and demonstrated through studies that build conceptual knowledge by engaging learners in concepts and modes of inquiry that are basic to the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, and Christian faith (or theology).

Outcome 3. Intercultural knowledge, integrative thinking, and collaborative problem-solving skills—achieved and demonstrated in a variety of collaborative contexts (classroom, community-based, international, and online) that prepare students both for democratic citizenship and for work.

Outcome 4. A proactive sense of responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices—achieved and demonstrated through forms of learning that connect knowledge, skills, values, and public action, and through reflection on students’ own roles and responsibilities in social and civic contexts.

Outcome 5. Habits of mind that foster integrative thinking and the ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one setting to another—achieved and demonstrated through advanced research and/or creative projects in which students take the primary responsibility for framing questions, carrying out analysis, and producing work of substantial complexity and quality.

	Outcome 1		Outcome 2		Outcome 3		Outcome 4		Outcome 5	
Response	Graduates Demonstrate	Gen Ed Courses Realize	Graduates Demonstrate	Gen Ed Courses Realize	Graduates Demonstrate	Gen Ed Courses Realize	Graduates Demonstrate	Gen Ed Courses Realize	Graduates Demonstrate	Gen Ed Courses Realize
Strongly Agree	81	17	60	9	13	62	14	44	64	9
Agree	29	51	45	45	56	40	51	54	36	47
Disagree	0	35	3	44	28	7	32	10	8	38
Strongly Disagree	1	8	0	10	11	0	7	1	0	12
Total	111	111	108	108	108	109	104	109	108	106

I would support focusing the 3-hour “general education elective” course to come from a menu of courses that emphasize historical literacy (note: the menu’s objectives would be developed in consultation with the Department of History and Global Studies).

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	24	21.6%
Agree	52	46.8%
Disagree	26	23.4%
Strongly Disagree	9	8.1%
Total	111	100%

I would support expanding the objectives of the Communication menu (currently met by the COMS 211 course) to include a wider selection of communication classes (note: the menu’s objectives would be developed in consultation with the Department of Communication and Sociology).

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	33	29.7%
Agree	46	41.4%
Disagree	19	17.1%
Strongly Disagree	15	13.5%
Total	113	100%

It is possible to teach CORE 210 and BCOR classes with a single teacher and still meet the course objectives, including interdisciplinary thinking.

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly Agree	20	18.0%
Agree	44	39.6%
Disagree	32	28.8%
Strongly Disagree	14	12.6%
Total	110	100%

The university currently requires 128 hours for its baccalaureate degrees. Which of the following best represents your view of those hours?

Response	Count	Percentage
Keep them at 128	47	42.7%
Eliminate three hours, leaving 125	26	23.6%
Eliminate six hours, leaving 122	19	17.2%
Eliminate eight hours, leaving 120	18	16.3%
Total	110	100%

Should the University reduce the number of CORE hours?

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	84	74.3%
No	29	25.7%
Total	113	100%

The Gen Ed Review Committee recommends reducing the number of CORE hours. Which of the following scenarios represents the best way to implement this reduction?

Response	Count	Percentage
Eliminate CORE 110 (Cornerstone); keeping CORE 210 and BCOR.	16	15.7%
Eliminate CORE 210; keeping Cornerstone and BCOR.	12	11.8%
Eliminate BCOR; keeping Cornerstone and CORE 210.	36	35.3%
Make CORE 110, 210, and BCOR each a 2-credit course.	10	9.8%
<i>"Other" Responses</i>		
Eliminate all of CORE	17	16.7%
Eliminate 2 hours of Kinesiology (PEAC)	3	2.9%
Eliminate CORE 210 and BCOR; keep Cornerstone	2	2.0%
Eliminate Cornerstone and CORE 210; make BCOR bible	1	1.0%
Eliminate COMS 211; enfold learning outcomes in CORE 210	1	1.0%
Make no cuts	1	1.0%
Keep CORE; reduce Literature course	1	1.0%
Make CORE optional within menus	1	1.0%
Make BCOR a dept course in faith/discipline	1	1.0%
	102	100%

If BCOR were eliminated, what would be the best use of the three hour reduction?

Response	Count	Percentage
Nothing; reduce the overall hours of an ACU degree to 125.	57	53.3%
Replace hours with a Bible course (resulting in no net reduction of hours).	16	15.0%
Add a majors-level course that integrates faith and discipline (resulting in no net reduction of hours).	16	15.0%
Develop assessable outcomes for current majors-level courses that integrates faith and the discipline (resulting in a reduction of 3 hours).	10	9.3%
<i>"Other" Responses</i>		
Don't eliminate BCOR	2	1.9%
Give it to liberal arts (history, fine arts, etc.)	2	1.9%
Eliminate Cornerstone/BCOR - replace with digital creativity	1	0.9%
Eliminate all CORE	1	0.9%
Give it unstipulated to Majors	1	0.9%
Do not cut Bible	1	0.9%
Total	107	100%

How much of CORE should continue if it is not resourced at levels appropriate to execute its objectives?

Response	Count	Percentage
All of it - we should reprioritize other academic initiatives to accomplish CORE.	17	15.3%
Only to the degree for which funds can be allocated.	40	36.0%
None of it - we should use saved funds to meet other academic initiatives.	54	48.6%
Total	111	100%

Free Response Answers to the Faculty Survey – April 2015
alphabetized by the first word of the response – each dot represents a different response

- ""CORE is unfunded"" only seems to be half of the articulation of the entire problem. I think accounting needs to be adjusted to reflect the reality, which is that funds are in part drawn -either by exchange of hours, or partial salary lines, or departmental or college short-funding certain lines- from other areas to fund CORE. The foreign language component of the new CORE curriculum is the only major component never implemented. The ""cultural awareness"" menu was overlaid the three hours carved out for languages, with the idea that, when PE were cut down by an hour, and electives moved up to three, the ""World Languages and Cultural Awareness"" hours would go to six, and would be designated for World Languages. This seems to be completely forgotten.

Reducing the hours to graduation has never been the real issue for prospective students. The most important issue is being able to reasonably plan on graduating in four years, followed by how much can be transferred in. Block tuition has pretty much eliminated concerns about specific number of hours being bought. CORE classes have definitely impacted transferability, but only represent around 6% of total credits needed to graduate. The remaining 94% are mostly transferrable.

The comparable institutions with 120 hours to graduate are mainly state schools that do not even offer Bible, much less require it for graduation. If that is included in the comparison, we actually are down to 113 hours to graduate, plus the additional Bible requirements (which I do not advocate reducing). This alone is sufficient reason to keep the 128 hours."

- 1-I am strongly opposed to raiding CAS and CBS to fund CORE. ALL of our students take CORE classes. Money should not be taken from only these two sources. COBA and CEHS students are also required to take CORE courses-- these colleges should be included in reduction of their budgets to fund CORE, or the money needs to come from another source. I don't understand the administration's lack of support for CORE classes.

2- The UGEC should carefully consider if their plan for reducing CORE will actually save the university money. For instance, I think the best option is to reduce each course to 2 hours (110, 210 and 310). However, I'm not sure how many FTEs that will actually save because of the issues with 2 credit hour classes. I think it would be a huge mistake to reduce CORE courses without making a net effect on the budget, so please consider this. If you don't help the bottom line, we will continue to have the same conversation next year.

3- Another possible option to consider (in an effort to save \$): reduce each CORE course to 2 credit hours (so our overall number goes down by 3 hrs to 125), each course meets for 1/2 of the semester (first half or second half- this would likely require getting creative with the class lengths), and each CORE teacher would teach both parts of the semester. So the first 1/2 they would teach one 2 credit hour course, and the second 1/2 they would teach another 2 credit hour course. This would reduce the manpower required to cover CORE. (I would consider this as 4 hours toward a faculty member's load, but either require the CORE teachers to do 13 hours total, or have some other arrangement that would result in fewer people needed to fill those positions.)

4- We haven't had a conversation about other ways to reduce the 128 hour degree. Instead of the options listed above (reducing CORE), I would rather do something like reduce the activity class requirement for our graduates. If we are choosing between having our students read Plato or learn how to ski, I would chose Plato, and I think many of our faculty would agree. I think we should continue to offer these types of courses for electives, but I don't value physical education over the education our students get in CORE classes.

- As I compare schools for my children to attend, I would want to look at what the school offers to set it apart. For me, a Christian university, like ACU, would offer a difference in each class' approach because of its mission and faculty. I don't think it is necessary to have a load of classes that are non-transferable and add to the number of hours to graduate other than a menu of say three classes of Bible or Christian-based courses. The Core classes have not met my expectations and both of my kids have gone through them and did not feel the value in them (except for one my daughter took while in Oxford).
- CORE has failed to achieve goals we as a faculty were told it would achieve. Whether that is through a failure of design, funding, or other causes does not matter. Students complain regularly about these courses. We keep hearing that the budget situation is not improving nor expected to improve in the near future so cut CORE and use the saved funds to balance the budget. It is time to stop this experiment and either return to a menu driven system or reduce the hours required to graduate.
- Core is not benefiting my students. Give me/them back 9 hours of course work that they can use to build upon their professional knowledge. Core basically sets our students in STEM and Professional fields back over half a semester compared to any other school. Core only keeps faculty hired and does nothing to get students hired!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This is 2015, science math, and computer skills are what pays the bills not touchy feely.
- Core was a grand, visionary experiment that did not pan out. Kudos to us for trying it. Please put it out of its misery.
- CORE was, perhaps, a nice idea that has gone very wrong due to administrative incompetence and waffling. Go back to courses that everyone recognizes as actual academic disciplines.
- Cornerstone (CORE 110) is a fabulous intro to college course that functions to introduce interdisciplinary thinking and exposes students to many professors across campus. I support keeping it but believe we should eliminate the remaining 6 hours of CORE (2 classes: CORE 210 and BCOR).

On a related note, we desperately need to remain within our budget. Paying for two teachers in CORE 210 and BCOR is good pedagogically but not fiscally. I believe this issue could be resolved by eliminating these two courses.

In light of the above comments, I do support reducing the total number of required hours (by 6 hours) in order to remain competitive in the Texas higher education marketplace.

- Cornerstone is an important aspect of Gen Ed, if for no other reason than it builds community among incoming students. For any of the CORE (which I believe is important), maybe we should explore making it more specific, especially CORE 210, in the method, location, times that it is offered. There is a lot of flexibility potential with this course instead of just a typical 3 hour course throughout an entire semester.

Reduction of hours, while not popular, is probably a necessity to keep us competitive in this changing market.

- Drop all core classes.

- Elective courses seem to be disappearing as the total hours to graduate continues to go down. Why develop any other courses that are labeled as elective?

Why do we have to be so regulated by what the state schools do? I know we are competing for students, but I don't think having to take an extra 8 hours is going to make a student decide to not attend ACU.

- Faculty are such funny people. We vote for CORE and are shocked when raise pools are low. We are OFFENDED by the claim that these things are connected, that one item in the budget affects another item in the budget - that every item in the budget competes with every other item.
- Freshman do need an introductory course to college to assist in building community for those students. But, the info that we are teaching in the CORE classes really should already be going on in other courses.
- I am not a History faculty member, but I am embarrassed that this department has been treated so poorly, and, more than that, that our students are graduating with a diminished sense of history. Upon this possibility being voiced, Dwayne VR said in a meeting I attended pre-vote, "We will actually need to hire MORE History teachers if we vote for this Core program." He was wrong. Nobody ever apologized for this travesty of academia that, frankly, has been a train wreck.

Beyond this comment, I would like to say that we should all learn a lesson from this. When the faculty say to our provost, "We don't see how this could be carried out with the numbers and costs you are projecting," the administration should listen and heed this, rather than implying that faculty are ignorant of mathematics for suggesting it. MANY faculty members of my circles spoke up about costs, lack of sufficient classrooms, perceived difficulty of faculty load, etc., and were effectively dismissed with a wave of the hand. I think a mea culpa would go a LONG WAY with faculty regarding this whole mess.

Thank you.

- I am obviously a strong advocate of the CORE and hope that we can find a way to continue to fund it. I have been heavily involved in its implementation and have taught in it for the past five years. My first hand experience allows me to see its great value to our students.
- I am very disappointed by the current level of history and fine arts that ACU students receive. The purpose of a liberal arts education is to help students become well rounded individuals. A fine arts course in college is possibly the only place students without an artistic background receive that kind of information. Such a course opens a door that many students don't even know exists, so currently very few students actually consider sampling something foreign to them. Also, without required history courses, our students are leaving the university not having a sense of what has happened before their lifetime, and they only see the world in which they currently live.
- I believe that CORE is accomplishing its purposes, and I believe we should not make substantive changes to this program. It is clearly a distinctive and important feature of an ACU education.
- I came to the university after CORE had been voted in. Many faculty members I've asked are unclear about the content and objectives of CORE classes, so I don't feel like I have a full picture of what these classes do. I think it's problematic that at least a portion of the faculty don't know what's in our gen ed classes. I'd welcome opportunities to learn about whatever portion of CORE survives.

- I currently don't teach CORE courses and unfortunately don't know a great deal about the current courses. I know the program has been under intense scrutiny and has improved, but the original taint is hard to brush away without more information.

I am a liberal arts person at heart but believe we must respond to the increasing transfers hours of students and declining total degree hours among some state university programs. I'm torn between wanting to ensure an adequately high academic bar and marketplace demands; in the end, I'm not hopeful that we can fight the environment.

Also, it doesn't make sense to me to lower the hours required for a degree while not adjusting the structure (hours and price) of block. Lowering the degree hours while maintaining block does nothing to help students and debt. Thank you for your hard work on CORE.

- I feel very strongly that the university should fund the programs it initiates. It should not expect programs to continue at a deficit or to pull resources from other programs to make up for lack of financial planning. We have a history of starting programs and not resourcing them, and then hoping that the program will have become so important that something else can be cut to fund the newer initiative. This practice has been pointed out repeatedly by the staff and faculty, yet it still continues. We need to send the message that such habits are not acceptable. No more bricks without straw.
- I found the last budget question confusing, so I'm not quite certain what I indicated.
- I strongly feel that if a Core course is cut, BCOR should be the course to go. In a GenEd menu course like a Core course, it makes more sense--and gives students a broader and more interdisciplinary experience--to emphasize courses taught by faculty from ALL of our disciplines, rather than privileging teaching by Bible faculty. All faculty at ACU teach to form Christ-centered students, and all of us work hard to integrate faith and learning. Frankly, I find the suggestion that students require further specific instruction by specifically Bible faculty--in addition to the already large load of Bible courses students are required to take--to be an offensive slight to the effort of the rest of the faculty.
- I think ACU needs to get to the 120 degree to compete with state schools. However, at 120 hours, it would be difficult to keep ACU faculty at present levels due to the amount of hours incoming freshmen are bringing from High School dual credit. I have not been overly impressed with the core classes as a whole nor do I hear much positive about core from the students. The core program is not a budget line and it saps money from CAS creating severe budget woes for the large CAS college. That is not fair.
- I think CORE courses are unique and can provide faculty and students with opportunities that cannot be replicated within a particular discipline [silo effects]. Could CORE courses be offered as part of a menu where students would receive 3 hrs credit toward the degree BUT check off two courses -- opening up an additional elective in the student's degree plan.

EX: BCOR gives the student credit for a Humanities/Social Science AND upper division Bible on the required GenEd menu-- this opens an additional elective for the student to use toward a minor.

- I value CORE because I value the liberal arts. Currently, these courses offer students an integrated, liberal arts education. If CORE must be reduced for budgetary reasons (though I would argue that the administration has chosen to make CORE a budgetary problem by refusing to provide any budget for a program approved by the

faculty), the liberal arts curriculum as a whole should not be reduced. The hours should be maintained and filled with a history, fine arts, or philosophy requirement. It would be a weaker G.E. curriculum because it would lack the distinctive, integrated experience that the CORE provides, but it would be far better than reducing an already thin G.E. curriculum.

- I wasn't sure what the first question meant.

I think kinesiology classes should be cut as much as possible. While health and wellness is important, academic courses should not be given up for running, etc.

I think maybe cutting a science requirement might be something to consider. The science faculty are already stretched to cover the courses they need to teach.

- I would've like to have a "no opinion" or "don't know" category to choose for some items. I don't have all of the needed information to offer a valid opinion on several of these items. I imagine that many faculty would not.
- I'm very concerned with the messages we are getting from the administration, both in substance and in style.

Concerning substance, I think the core courses are very good and very important. They should not be cut simply because they are the most vulnerable and no department owns them (and therefore is unlikely to stand up for them).

Among the good things that Core courses accomplish:

1. They teach the liberal arts. The liberal arts help people learn to think, learn to empathize, learn to address complexity: as study after study, article after article points out. Many of our students read no Plato at ACU but for the portion they read in Core 210; no work by CS Lewis if not Surprised by Joy in BCOR 310.
2. We voted as a faculty to trade off history and Fine Arts for Core. To cut Core now is to cut history and fine arts. In Core classes, students learn the history of thought, history of Islam, and history of Christianity. They also experience classical music, church music, theater, and visual arts.
3. The Core classes teach thinking and writing. It is of especial importance, now that students are bringing in more English credits—especially “dual credit” courses, many of which are of poor quality—to give the students writing experiences outside of English courses. The Core classes teach research and writing—of utmost importance to any college student, and especially for ACU, where undergraduate research is a special focus. Many students have presented research done (or at least begun) in a Core class at the Undergraduate Research Festival and other venues.
4. BCOR especially gives the university a chance to touch all students one last time with some common material that we think is very important for them to know before they leave us. So far, we have decided as a group that thinking one more time about Christianity is important, looking at some of the issues that Christianity and Culture used to address, as well as Islam. If in the future we decide that some other topic is very important, we can incorporate that into the BCOR class (or other Core courses).

Concerning the manner in which this issue has been presented to us: Of course we have all heard the arguments that the Core classes are responsible for budget issues. I submit that it is not the Core courses that cause budget gaps, but decisions by the administration not to fund Core that has caused the gaps. If the administration, for some reason, decided not to fund the wages and salaries of the faculty and staff who work in the library, I guess we'd be here saying, “Why is the library never meeting budget? What can we cut to meet the budget gap the library is causing?” I also feel strongly that the selective non-funding of the Core budget is very problematic on the grounds of ethics and shared governance. It is not right for the administration to cause a de facto change in curriculum by strategically cutting funding to a certain area of the curriculum. The faculty owns the curriculum, and the faculty should not be forced to accept a change in curriculum due to budgeting strategies that they have

no control over, nor should they be browbeaten or threatened into accepting changes in the curriculum from the administration.

The way the information about budgets and Core has been presented to the faculty is very selective, very incomplete, and very skewed. We are shown—time and time again—gaps in the budget of CAS and CBS, and showed the non-transfer of Core money—because no money was allocated to Core to pay for Core’s needs. The real picture is far more complex than just a few carefully selected numbers from two or three small budgets. Anyone who has ever run a household budget knows that money can be moved from one column to another when it needs to be. If I am constantly overrunning my food budget for my household, I can try to buy more carefully. If that doesn’t work, maybe I need to take some money out of my entertainment budget or my utilities budget and put it in the food budget.

There are budget problems, perhaps, at ACU. On the other hand, we hear often about how large the endowment has grown and how well the endowment is performing. We are told—“Don’t complain about the hair salon; that is a moneymaker.” We are urged to vote for new grad programs and to support our expanded offerings in Dallas because those things are going to make money. For the first time in recent memory—or perhaps ever, depending who you ask—we are going to have four classes in a row over 950. Surely that will help our revenue. Can’t we try to use some of this new revenue to support our academic programs?

But no, now that we cannot blame poor recruiting and small freshman for budget problems, we have a new phrase we all learned two years ago in pre-session: “discount rate.” Oh, the discount rate is killing us. Now the discount rate has always been with us, but it does seem that universities are having to offer steeper discounts—but those are steeper discounts on greatly increased tuition, of course. And it seems odd to me that we were introduced to the phrase “discount rate” precisely as we entered Division 1 sports. Everyone knows we have to offer more sports scholarships in D-1. For example, instead of 36 football scholarships, it’s 63. And instead of 8 baseball scholarships, it’s 11.7 or something. If you add all these scholarships up, you find we have to offer 58.9 more scholarships in D1 than we did in D2. 58.9 scholarships over and above the ones we offered in D2. And if you take 58.9 times the cost of a year’s tuition at ACU—\$30, 780—do you know what that adds up to? Might that be enough to fund Core for a year? 1,812,000. One million, 812 thousand. (If you divide that by 4, you get 450,000 per cohort—more than enough to fund CORE.)

I’m not saying this to pit academics against athletics, it’s just an example that has information available to us to say that there are decisions a university makes that affects its budget. The dues we pay to the Southland conference, the 58.9 more scholarships we have to fund—these are all decisions the administration made that impact the budget. And what do we do when there is a funding problem? When we are 350,000 short in funding the Core?

We immediately cut academic programs so we can cut faculty. Make no mistake—as a faculty we fully understand that the idea of cutting hours out of our degree program is precisely to cut faculty and thereby save money. This is not good. Budget problems should not always be dumped at the feet of the faculty, and faculty should not be assigned the task of deciding which baby to chop in two to solve a budget crisis. Our mission cannot be accomplished without a good curriculum and excellent faculty. The idea that budget problems can only be solved by cutting academic programs and cutting faculty is flawed, and I reject it.

- If ACU is serious about its mission it needs to put its money where its mouth is. BCOR should be maintained and enhanced.
- If the Administration wanted to back the Core, it would have done so. If it has not done its job, then I think that it needs to accept its responsibility and fund the Core. Too many curricular changes have been made in order to partially off-set the Core—which is a good idea and one that is worth completing. It seems that you are playing one Dept against others instead of uniting us all in a common goal. That, to me, is poor Administration.

- If the number of CORE hours is reduced, I believe it makes much more sense to cut a whole course than to drop one hour from each of the required three courses. I don't have a strong opinion about which course is removed from the menu, but I chose 210 because I know less about it than Cornerstone and BCOR.

Of course, if CORE is causing us to lose money as an institution, then I believe it must be cut.

- In addition to History, other social science disciplines took a major hit following the implementation of the integrated core. It is not coincidental, that both Sociology and Family Studies have been reduced to one full-time faculty even though the competencies of each discipline are highly relevant to the student learning outcomes of CORE.
- it does not appear that sufficient thought has been given to the reduction of administrative costs relative to the academic budget. An elimination of two or three administrator's salaries would go a long way in reducing the CORE deficit.

When the CORE was proposed by the administration, funding was promised to the faculty.

- It is unfair that CORE funding, initially promised, has been eliminated. It is also unfair to ask the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Biblical Studies to bear the deficit.

I don't believe that administration should be allowed to cut funding to an entire university department without a faculty vote. The fact that we are discussing this now, after the funding has been cut, and are considering that an important factor in our decision reflects the shrinking influence faculty have in making academic decisions. This is very troubling.

This survey is very poorly written. It is difficult to understand, makes many assumptions and asks leading questions. This is deceptive and gives the impression that the university is only seeking the information they want to hear, rather than collecting actual opinions and data.

- Many of our budget shortfalls are not a result of CORE but ill-advised expansion into Nursing and Engineering. If we had not done those, we would have enough for CORE. Since when does nursing and engineering fit with a liberal arts approach. The same could be argued for keeping Ag and Environment...not a liberal arts focus.

This philosophical argument, however, solves no problems. Consequently, I would drop Cornerstone or replace BCOR with a philosophy-theology focused Capstone course. All Capstones should include integrating faith and the discipline in the major.

- My rankings are the consequence of the discussion at the faculty only meeting. I believe we should keep our hours at 125-128 and the cost is not higher given block tuition.
- My survey responses should be taken with a grain of salt since I am not involved in Gen Ed at all, and I am relatively new to the school. Also, maybe this is already being done, but one suggestion would be to develop focus groups with a cross-section of students to see what their thoughts are on some of these topics as well.

- Not only do I think we should keep the Core of the Core, but I think we should address the foreign language component, which we have neglected to implement, despite a full faculty vote to do so. IF we do (and I disagree that we must) cut out 6 hours from our graduation requirements (such as the Gen Ed elective and one Bible), then I would strongly recommend we put in a foreign language requirement, resulting in no overall reduction of hours. Why? As a private Christian liberal arts college, we MUST offer more than public universities, which offer at least 120 non-Bible-curricular hours; we would, however, only offer 105 hours (if you don't count the Bible hours) of curricular education (and we only offer 113 now (when you subtract the Bible hours).

If we cut Core classes, we must add back in History and Fine Arts requirements, which were eliminated at Core's implementation, resulting in both a) no gain for the University and b) quite a mess, especially given that Core has proven itself valuable as a delivery system to 100% of our students and is SACS-sanctioned.

Core MUST be funded with a separate line item. It is unreasonable and unethical to "pit" departments against each other regarding the Core requirement. Just as Gen Ed should have no say over another department's budget, neither should it/they have any say over Gen Ed's budget, nor have to make hard decisions about what does and doesn't get funded. Also, it is patently untrue to say that Gen Ed brings in no money; even with a discounted tuition rate, when 100% of the students take the three Core classes, (two classes for transfer students), there is a huge amount of money generated. The fact that tuition dollars disappear into some general budget does not make it true that there is no money or funding.

We have too many administrators, each of whom receive massive salaries compared to the average faculty person. I, for example, make around \$42,000, but I teach between 150 and 200 students EACH SEMESTER. In other words, we faculty are NOT the problem financially around here. In fact, we are very important, second only to our *raison d'être*, the students; we are, however, constantly threatened with more cuts (side rant: and what? teach even more students? The students would be ripped off, which could result in a reduction of students. I would think seriously about whether to send my child here if there weren't adequate, or even abundant, faculty resources available for my student) larger classes. Another truly degrading /demoralizing comment that we faculty hear a great deal is this: "Each additional student we admit doesn't add ANY money to the budget, based on the tuition discount." Then, you know what? How about we don't admit more students, and have a manageable load of students to teach, fewer people needed to administrate (recruit, provide financial aid counseling, etc.) those students? If your thought is "That's ridiculous," then I would suggest stopping the rhetoric of "Each additional student brings in nothing." That devalues both the students (why should we recruit you, if you're just another tuition-discounted-student who brings nothing to the University?) and the faculty who work even harder when they have larger and larger classes and all that greater load entails. I'd like the administration to admit that students and faculty are, in fact, hugely (I argue of course the most) important pieces of the University. While we need additional support staff, such as some legal advice and recruiting, etc., the responsibility of this school is to educate Christian leaders of tomorrow.

I think it's important for us to remember why we started Core in the first place, because I'm noticing there are some distressing trends. One goal was to mix together students from all disciplines in Core classes; however, with the Honors Core classes, the City Square classes, and the completely-against-the-mandate new Learning Community that Education is piloting, we are not doing what we said we want to do. Also, there is a trend to become a job-preparing factory, rather than a liberal arts university; there is much evidence that teaching students to think, to contribute to their communities once they leave college, and to be participants in the kingdom is far more valuable than, say, merely taking classes that are designed for some job. Students will learn the job ON the job (or they can go to a tech school); they learn to be good, educated people here.

Recruiting must do a better job of pointing out the mission of the university and some of the requisite mindsets/tasks one must do to fit in well here. Ex: the need and reasons for attending Chapel must be more

clearly stated in recruiting and sign-up materials; and behavioral expectations (such as PDA and language) should be addressed, not assumed. I have, for example, a practicing Wiccan in one of my classes; while she is welcome and is not treated poorly, I have to wonder, is ACU really the best fit for her? (examples abound)

While athletics provides some benefit to the school in terms of donor dollars and esteem, since so many more student athletes, who are often completely or mostly-completely funded, are required to meet our D-1 requirements, I have to ask, "Is D-1 worth it?" Just think about ONE trip that the football team takes, say, to Troy, Alabama for a game: airline tickets for over 60 athletes and a boatload of coaches, meals for each of those people (and not cheap meals either), and two nights in a hotel. Meanwhile, it would apparently take only something like \$350,000 to fund the ENTIRE GEN ED budget for a year, which services 100% of the school, has been voted on by the faculty and is necessary for SACS accreditation, and brings in large tuition money, as well as advancing students to their degrees. Our priorities are messed up.

It is immoral for the administration to knock the legs out from any faculty-approved curricular decision, simply because they hold the pursestrings and refuse to fund a Department. Therefore, the administration is not meeting its commitment by withholding funding for the Core, a SACS-approved, three-course component of a degree from ACU (which is, after all, our primary goal for our students). If I were the Board of Trustees, I would seriously consider firing the administrators who are doing this extortion, as they are endangering necessary accreditation and Gen Ed requirements.

Please stop the language of "Which Core class/es would you drop in order for us to meet the budget?" "How do you feel about Core classes harming your budget?" That's like asking "When did you stop beating your wife?" Perhaps the answer is Does Not Apply or Please rephrase the question.

Cliff Barbarick is worth his weight in gold. He is organized, smart, and an advocate for Gen Ed, especially of course Cornerstone. He is doing a stellar job of changing perceptions of the Core around campus and to/with students.

It is baffling that Stephanie Smith, who basically single-handedly ran Gen Ed since Nancy Shankle's departure, was fired and replaced by people who are doing other departments' jobs and don't seem to know answers when you call and ask them.

- On the final question: none of the above. We should re-purpose dollars from other areas of the university (specifically, athletics) in order to FINALLY fund Core at the level at which it was promised.
- Please rename as Core is very confusing with the name core for gen Ed.
- Re: CORE – CORE was a worthy experiment that I supported, but it has not accomplished its goals, perhaps because it was never funded or delivered as promised. Regardless, its perpetuation has kept other academic entities from accomplishing their goals by draining funds from the College of Arts & Sciences and College of Biblical Studies. It's time to end the experiment.

Re: Hours – Reducing the total number of hours in the majority of our degrees will make us more competitive and still allow for programs that truly need them to have a few more hours. Faculty don't like to talk about academic decisions in a marketing context, but refusing to do so is naive. And those who want to protect CORE hours to save jobs are failing to consider the number of jobs to be lost if we are not competitive in the marketplace.

Re: Bible/BCOR — We long ago shifted away from textual studies, reducing that requirement from 12 to 9

hours, but keeping BCOR and the BIBL elective requirement. My personal preference would be to keep nine hours of text and the elective but drop BCOR, relying on the disciplines to effectively contextualize the Christian walk. We insult the faculty as a whole when we imply that eliminating BCOR makes us "less distinctive." While the other Church of Christ affiliated universities will throw that around in the recruiting process, our primary competitors will not. We've long been told that our primary competitors are Baylor, Tech, A&M and more recently TCU. A 12-hour Bible requirement is certainly distinctive among that cohort. More important, the application of Christian principles within the disciplines is highly distinctive.

- Reduction in the number of hours required for a degree to about 120 hours is advocated for public institutions of higher education. However, degrees from these schools do not require any Bible courses, so they are better able to reduce the number of hours in a degree. If we reduce the number of hours and do not reduce the number of Bible courses and/or the number of English courses, then the major will be weakened in comparison to public schools. (I can see the necessity of English in terms of the use of the language for all degrees; however, I do not see the necessity of a literature course for science degrees, even those who are certifying to teach in a science field.)
- Summary:
 - Stay at 128 hours (120 may be the SACS min but it's not enough to prepare a student for life and the workforce)
 - Require Bible courses maybe 12-18 total credits (personally, I like a year of OT a year of NT and a year of upper division specifics courses for 18 credits)
 - Remove all CORE and replace with a small selection of courses from each primary discipline (maybe like the "Intro to" course that every major discipline probably already offers). A Math, a soc/psych/ course a world/western civ or poly sci or US history, a grammar and a lit course, a couple science courses, and a personal improvement/lifelong learning course (like personal finance, how to live in the real world how to deal with emergencies, a first-aid/emerg procedures course, etc). That's 24 Gen ed, plus 18 Bible or 42 hours total non-major or minor courses. add 6 credits of unrestricted electives (which double as oops courses). 42 major hours plus 18 minor hours = 128 hours total.
 - Every course we teach should be integrating faith and learning. To the degree that is not happening, we need to focus on improving that.
- The "new" CORE has been a disaster from the beginning, in part, because it was never funded as planned. It puts a burden on departments that cannot afford to provide a faculty member to teach a CORE class but are being "asked" to and expected to sacrifice for the CORE. This is happening when budgets are tight to begin with. I feel the "old" core was much simpler and friendlier to transfers.
- The core model is a strong one, if executed as originally conceived—jointly taught with a small class size. If the university is unwilling to fund the core at this level, then we would be better served by returning to a conventional gen-ed model. If we drop the co-teaching aspect of the core classes while retaining the too-large-for-genuine-discussion class size, all we will have achieved will be requiring that students take courses taught by people teaching outside of their fields.

Typo on the answers for outcome 3 question.

- The CORE should be re-imagined to train students with competencies in digital creativity and communication tools as a basis for their education in the information of the different disciplines via Gen Ed and Majors courses. A new focus on the design (poetics) and marketing (rhetoric) of knowledge would lead to greater university investment in the digital tools of creativity and analysis (e.g., Adobe Creative Cloud and Marketing Cloud) as the

most needed cross-curricular competencies. A concomitant reinvestment in the departments to teach the "core" texts and techniques of the academic disciplines would then allow students to leverage these new insights with these communication and analysis tools, which are quickly transforming the way students access and advance knowledge. In other words, put the praxis before the theoría, so that students can experience (!) the creation of new knowledge in a digital world.

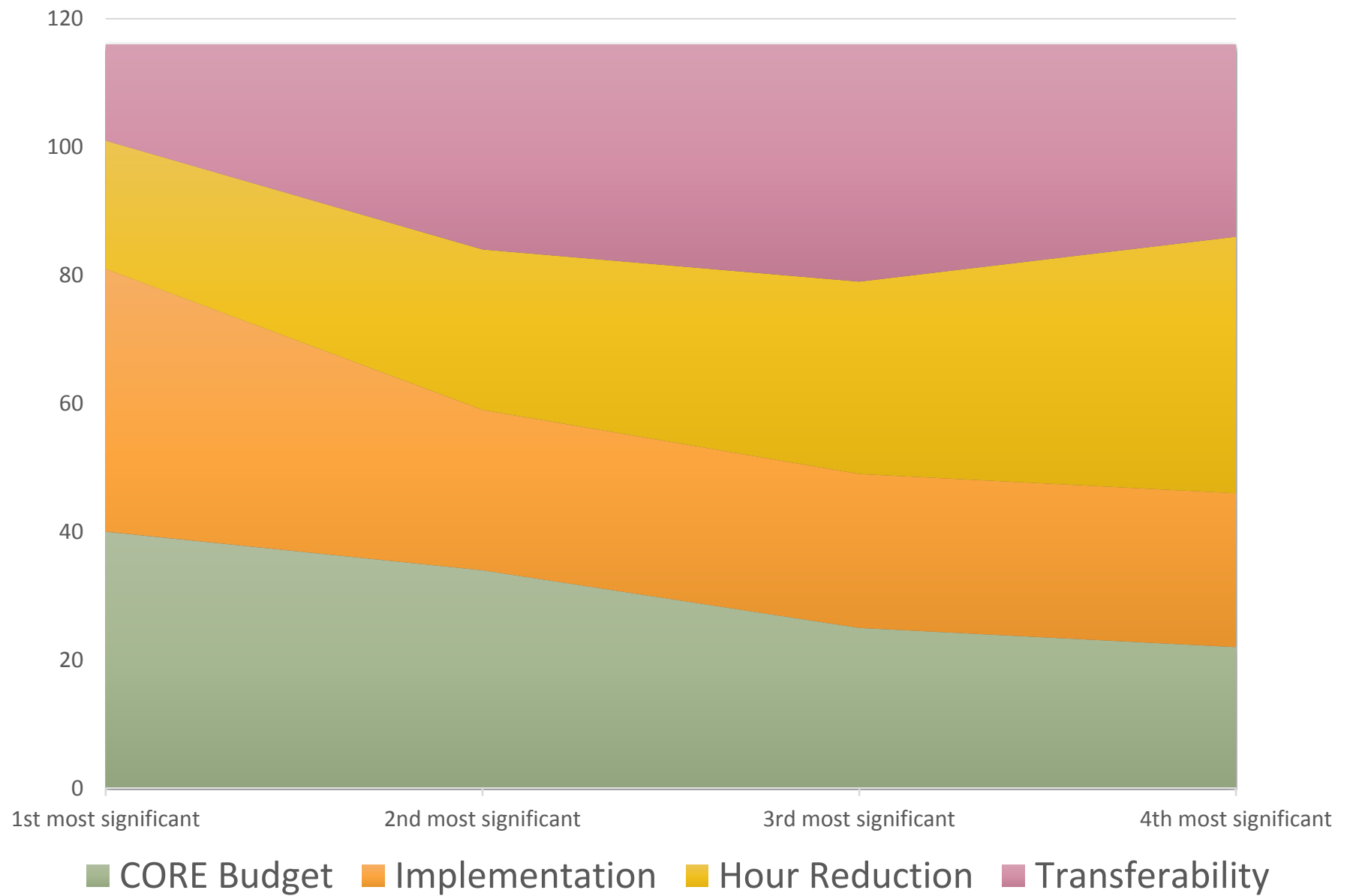
- The CORE was an initiative promoted by the former provost and supported primarily by faculty members who are no longer at the university. It was apparent to me at the time that it would not be a sustainable model, and I'm persuaded that rather than increasing rigor, it has diminished it. It's not just that it's not fully funded; it's that it simply won't work at ACU. We are half liberal arts/half professional preparation, and we need to accept that. The CORE as implemented and even designed is unpopular with students and ineffective as pedagogy.
- The CORE, most of all the way it was implemented, has been a disaster, and the academic success is dubious at best. To make the hires we have made, the numerous hires, and not have adequate funding for those hires, is irresponsible. And then to expect the departments, not the administration, to fix the problem by losing faculty lines, especially when those faculty lines are not lines that were hired for the core, is punitive, and further demonstrates poor management and planning. This problem needs to be addressed and fixed at the administrative level. The departments should not have to take it in the teeth to fix what was a failure of administrative planning and implementation.
- The fifteen hour Bible requirement fulfilled now using BCOR is an essential component to ACU's identity and heritage. Other solutions are possible rather than reducing Bible to 12 hours. ACU cannot do it all so it does have to make hard choices. Since the Bible requirement is central to identity and contributes to what makes ACU stand out, the sacrifices must come from other areas that are more commonly found in the academic world. My answers above may seem contradictory. Reduce hours but not from CORE. For example, exercise science is not a common requirement and does not contribute to ACU's heritage or identity. I believe it can be accomplished through letting different academic units shape their first year requirements. Foreign language might be required in some majors but not others. One department may have a bigger English requirement than another department. Etc...
- The larger and decisive issue is the identity of the University. Do we want to be a superior, Christian liberal arts college? Unless that is answered affirmatively, the CORE is not important.
- The only acceptable way to reduce hours is through CORE. Compared to the 120 hour state schools, who don't have Bible courses, we would have a 105 hour degree. This significantly waters down our degree.
- The outcome statements above mix too many content areas and learning approaches that I found it difficult to evaluate and answer the survey questions. It is also possible that some of these outcomes are accomplished through major coursework rather than general education. I would suggest caution in how you interpret the results related to the outcome questions.
- The outcome statements are overly broad and inclusive. Of course they are all important and we do or could do them very well, but as stated who knows what they mean or who could disagree? They include everything so are useful for nothing.

The problem is the outcome that is that there is an outcome missing all together. That "Outcome 6" is

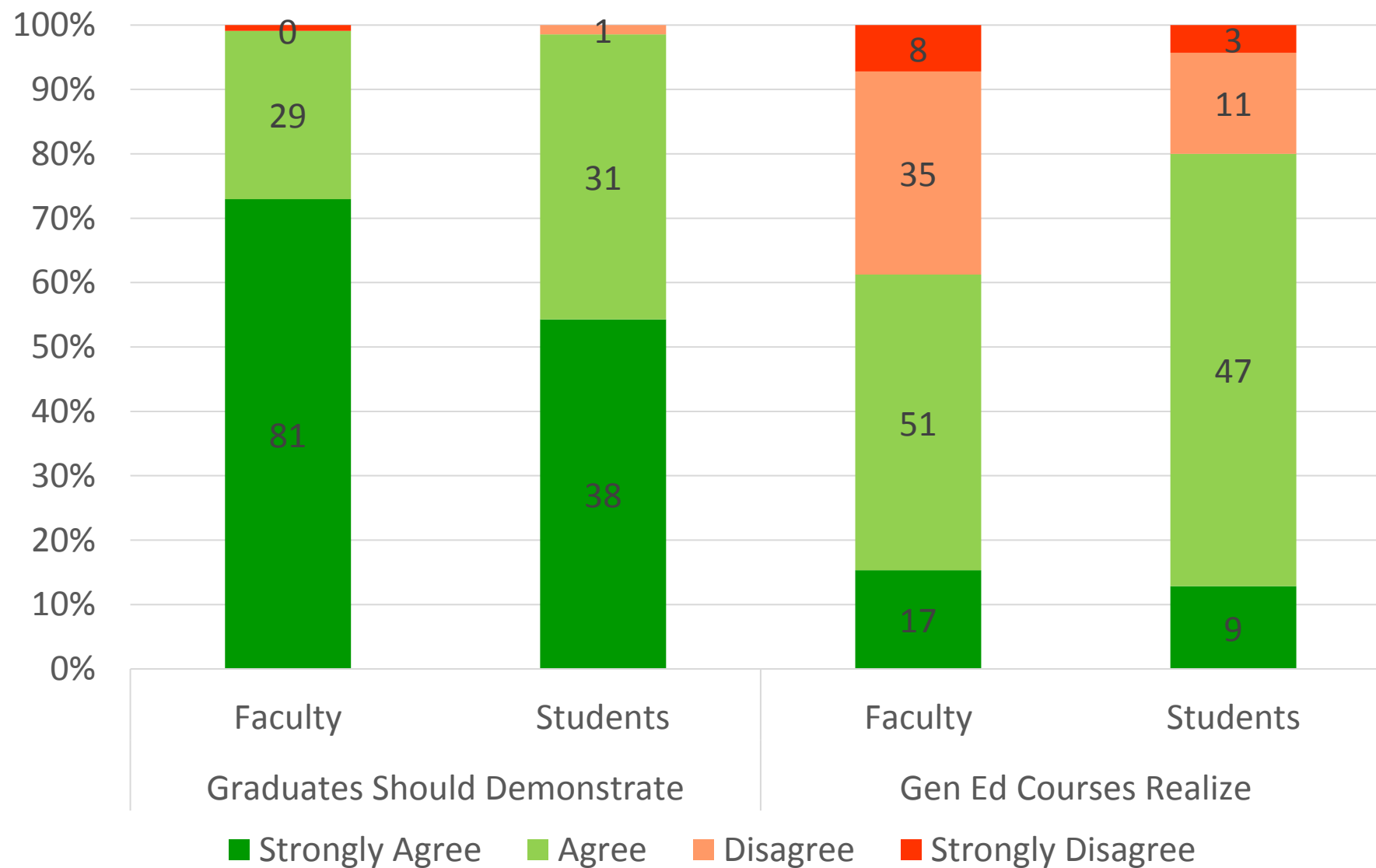
"Preparing students to make the best use of their educational investment by teaching them evidence-based strategies and techniques for learning and self management." Such strategies and techniques will be valuable across all types of learning in the University and valuable in the workplace as well. The need for this teaching extends across all ability levels.

- The outcomes are important, but interrelatedness of these into major classes would best meet student needs. Seeing how these outcomes pertain to students' disciplines is important.
- The university NEEDS to fund CORE to the level it originally said that it would. CORE implementation was a university initiative, the university needs to fund it.
- This survey is poorly constructed and does not clearly separate the issues of budget deficits, degree hours reduction, and the structure of core. These are separate issues and should not be lumped together.
- This survey is very difficult to complete. I believe that the CORE program was forced on the faculty by an administration that desperately wanted it and retired the first year after it was passed. Then the current administration has chosen to remove funding. If we don't fund it, then we should not force the individual colleges to find moneys . That punishes all departments. That is immoral.
- We should eliminate CORE completely because we did not fund this program. It is draining resources from Arts and Sciences that could be much better used in my department. Therefore, I support doing away with CORE, then reducing the hours to 122 to 125 and giving 5 to 3 hours to departments and/or taking additional history classes. Another problem with CORE is that some CORE classes are too easy and a few are taught the way the were intended or it is very unevenly taught. I spent three years on a CORE implementation committee and little of this came out the way I thought it should. So please do not spend one more dime on this program. If you just cut it back I predict that in just a few years we will be "rethinking" CORE again.

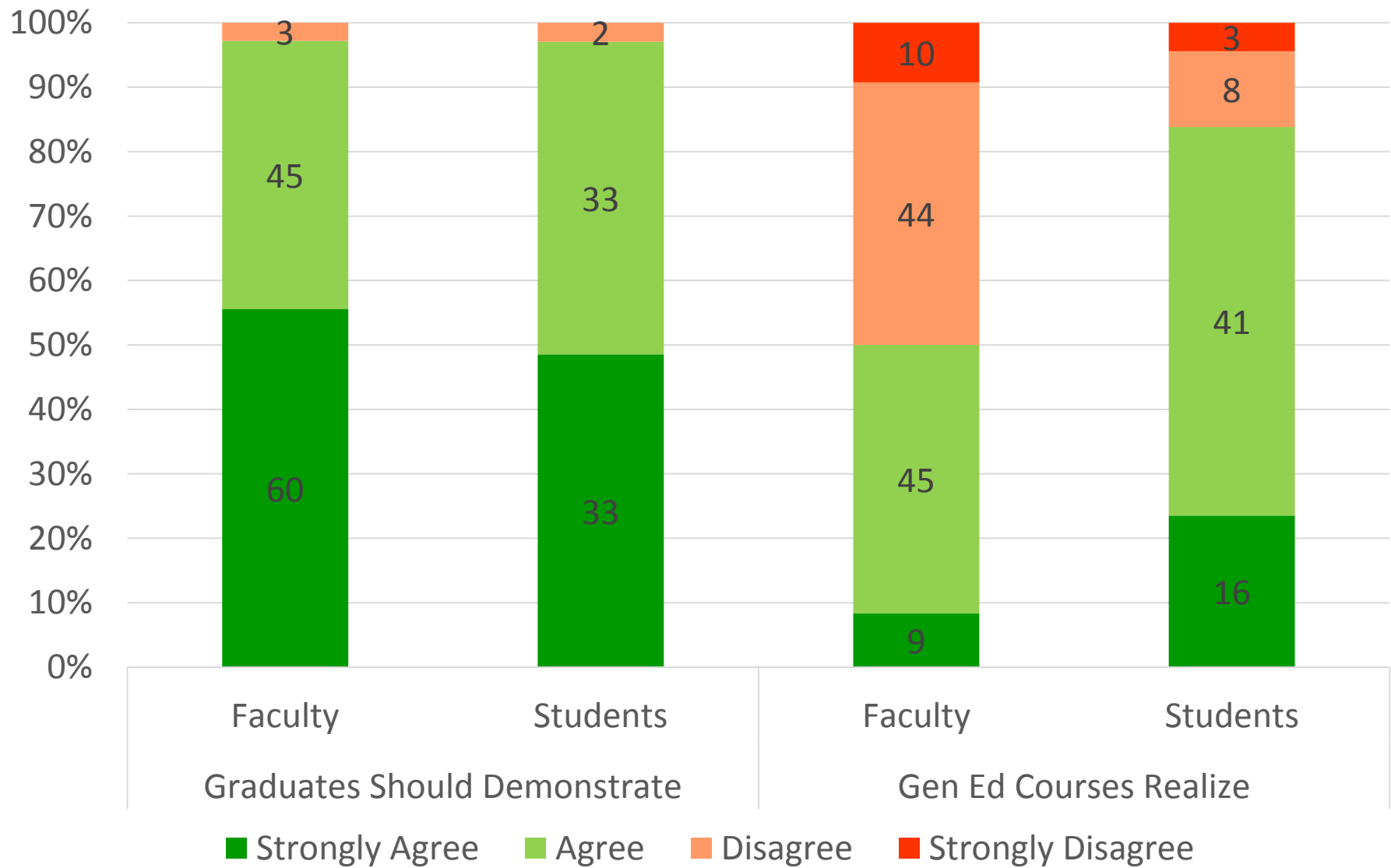
Faculty Gen Ed Survey - April 2015 - Most Significant Concerns



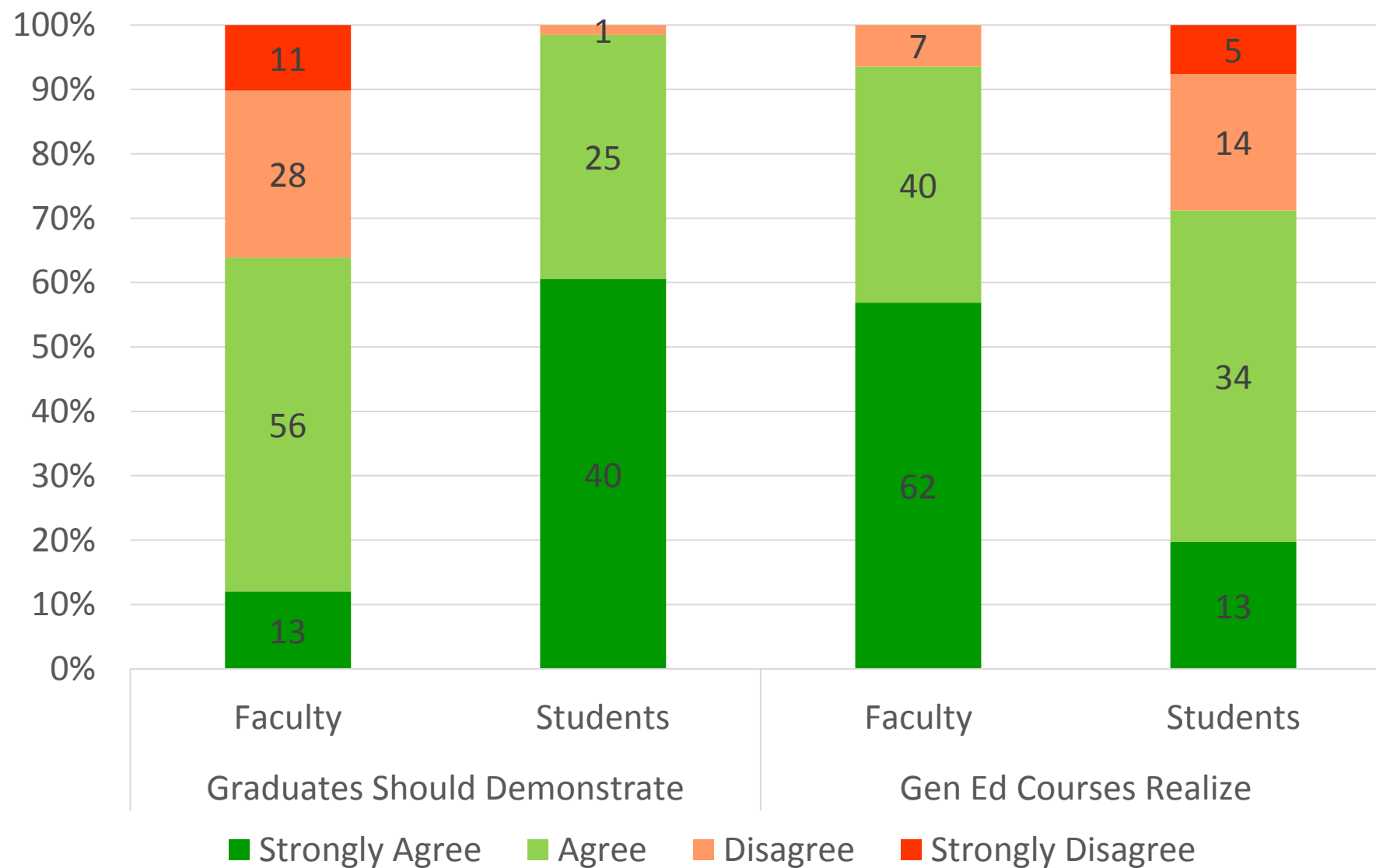
Outcome 1 - Strong analytical, communication, quantitative, and information skills



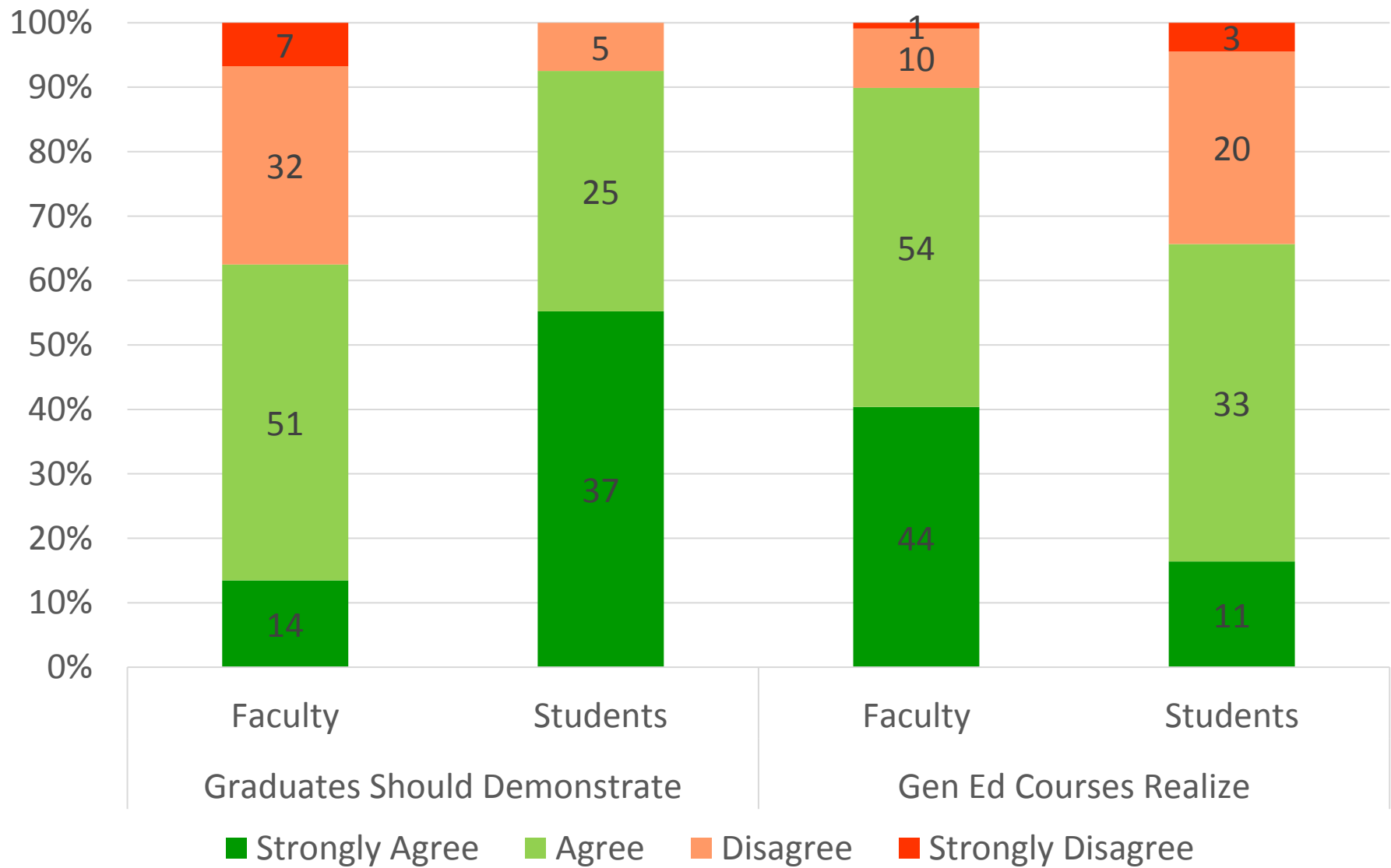
Outcome 2 - Deep understanding of and hands-on experience with the inquiry practices of disciplines



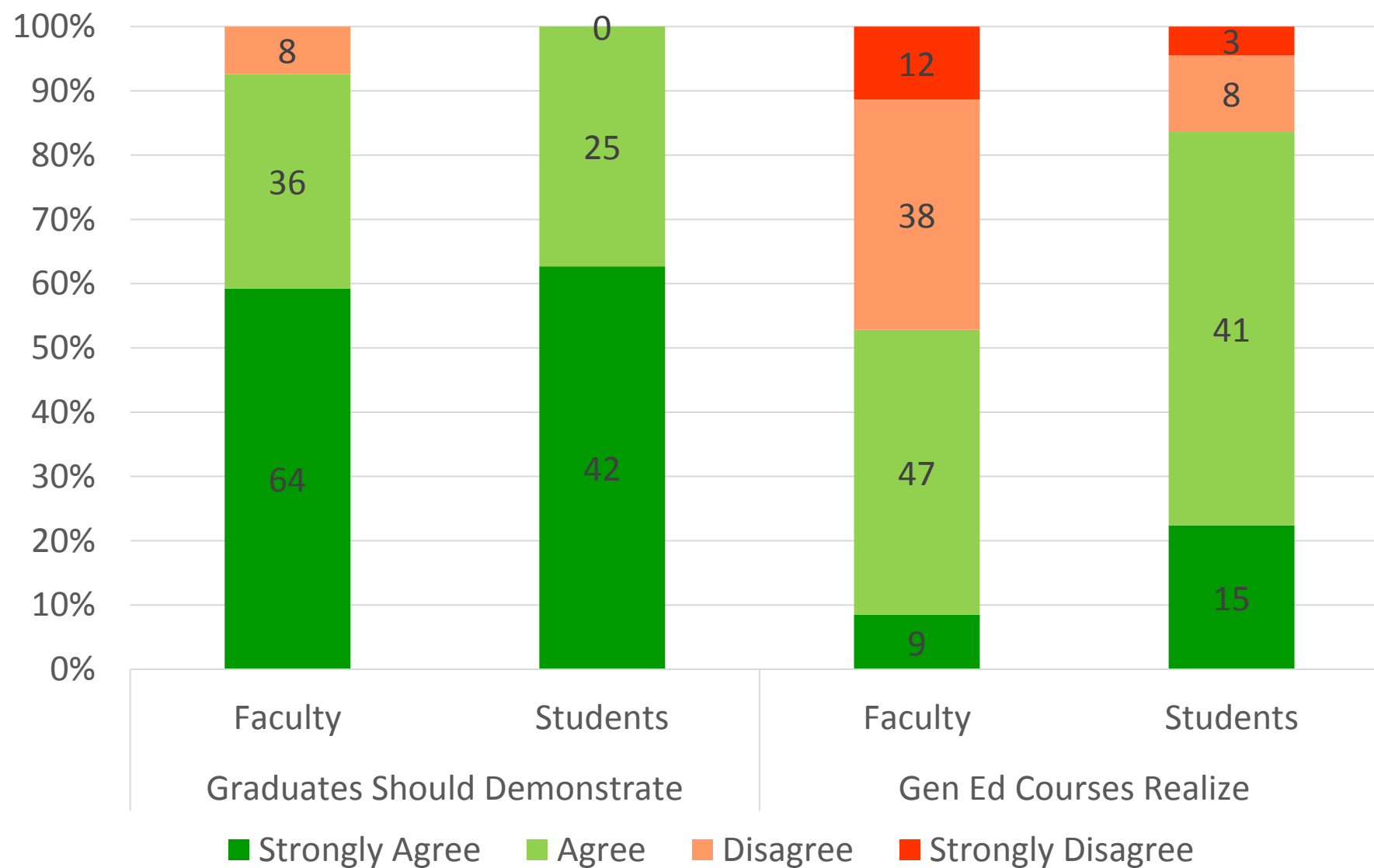
Outcome 3 - Intercultural knowledge, integrative thinking, and collaborative problem-solving skills



Outcome 4 - Proactive sense of responsibility for individual, civic, and social choices

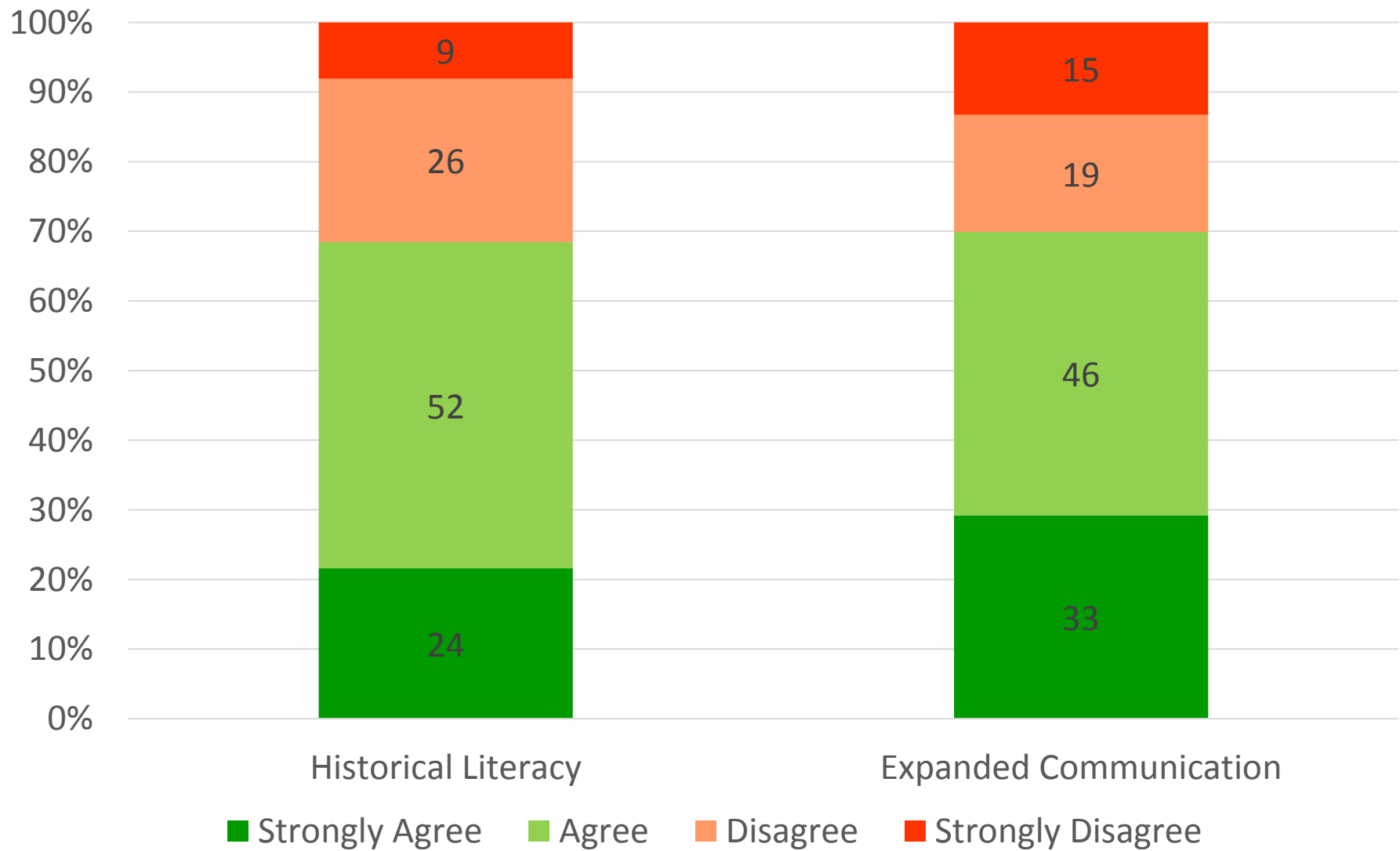


Outcome 5 - Integrative thinking and the ability to transfer skills and knowledge from one setting to another



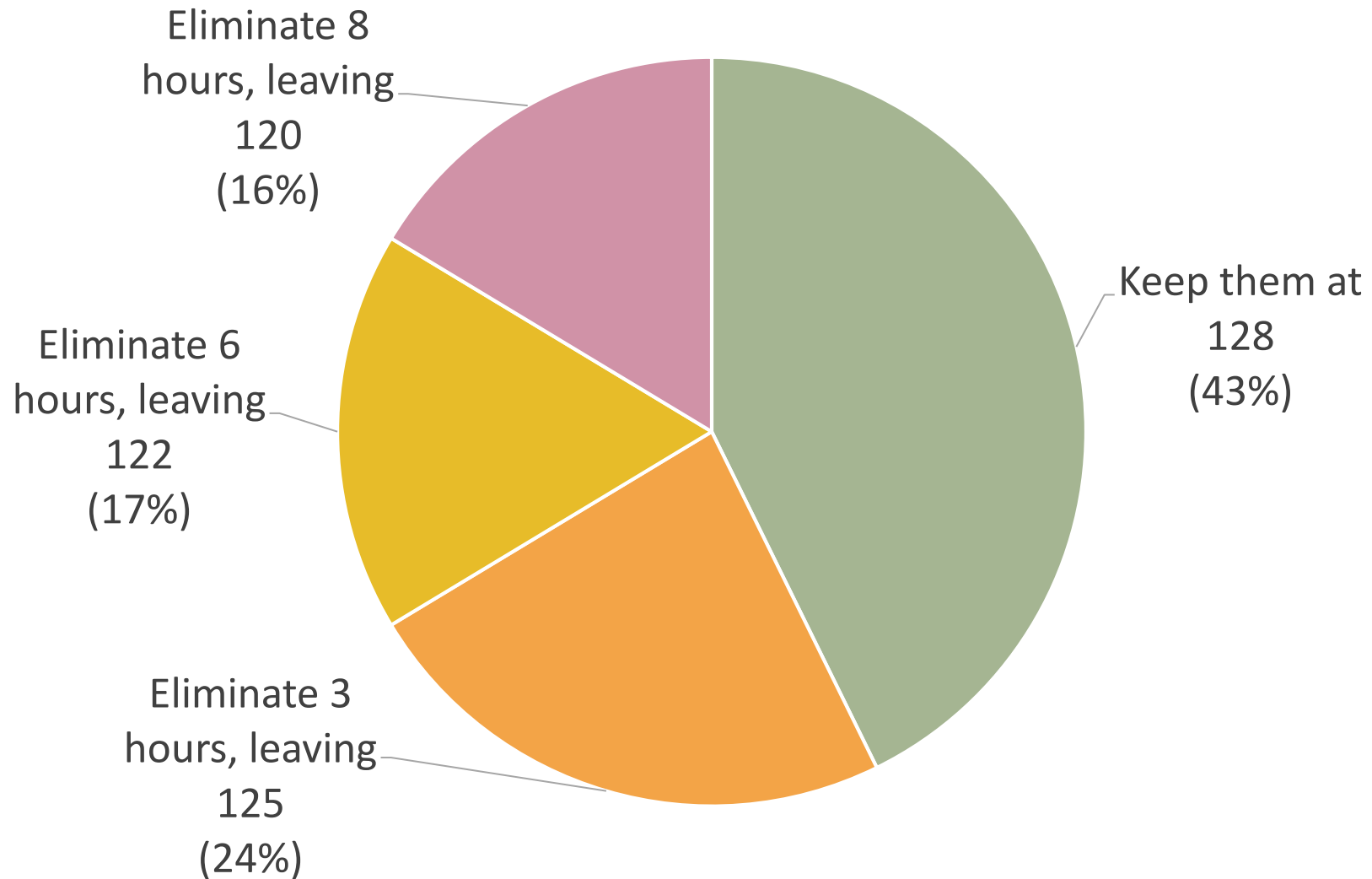
Support focusing the three-hour "gen ed elective" course to come from a menu of courses that emphasize historical literacy.

Support expanding communication objectives (COMS 211) to include a wider selection of communication classes.



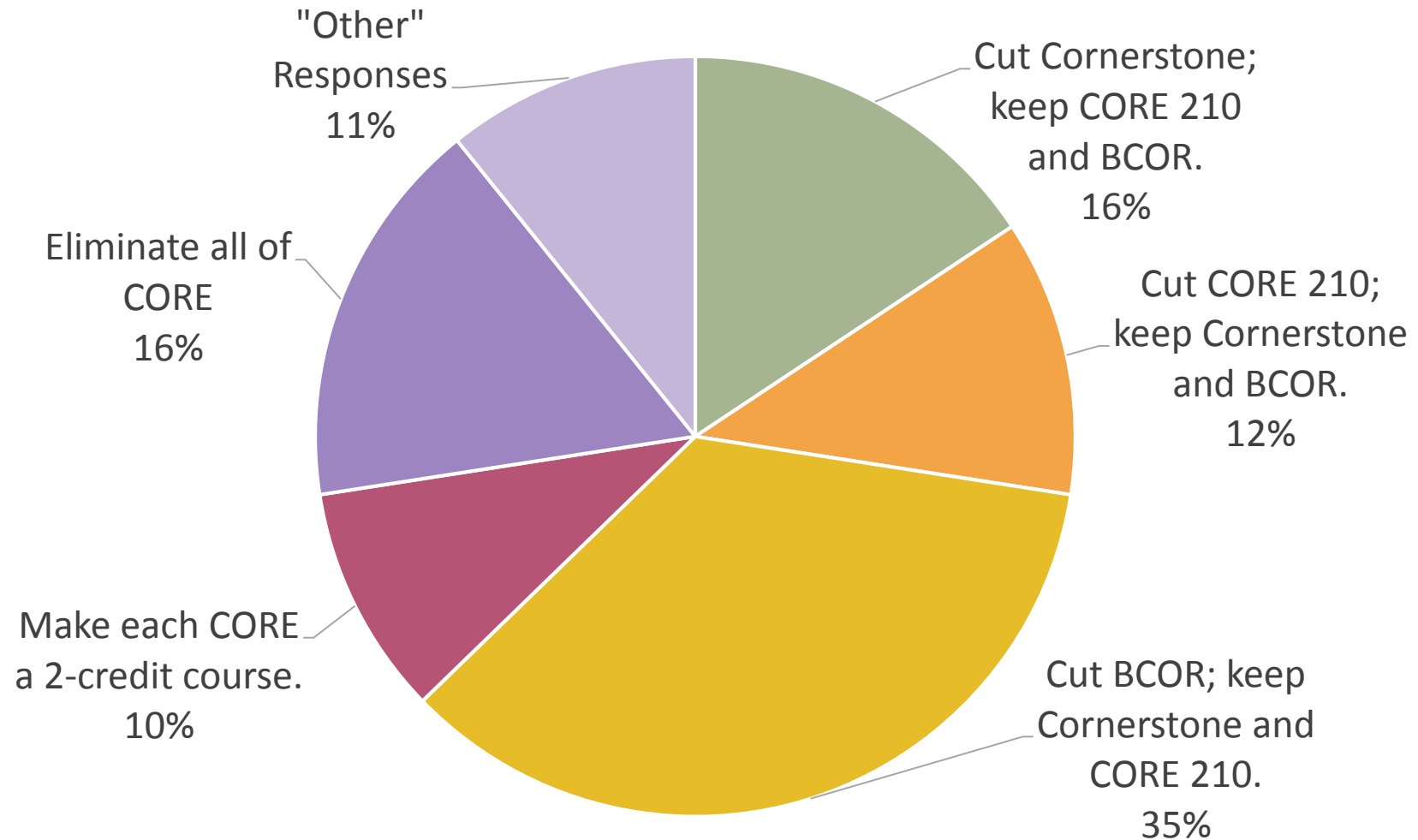
Which of the following best represents your view of
the 128 hours needed for a baccalaureate degree?

(110 responses)



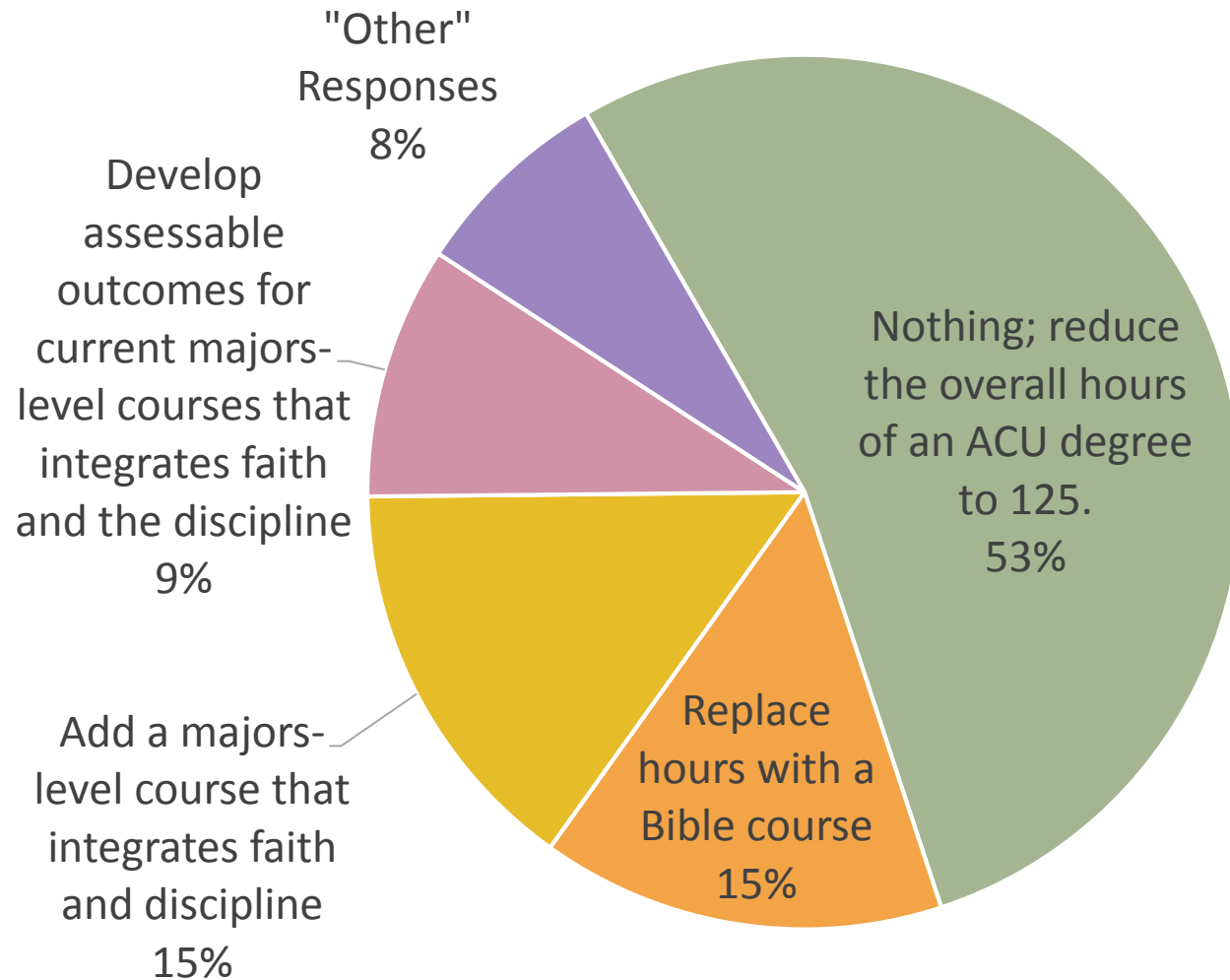
Which of the following scenarios represents the best way to implement a possible reduction in CORE hours?

102 responses



If BCOR were eliminated, what would be the best use of the three hour reduction?

107 responses



How much of CORE should continue if not resourced at levels appropriate to execute its objectives?

111 responses

