Process for Silver Core Verification
Amended August 20, 2015

The new Silver Core Curriculum is a hybrid system including certain General Education course requirements (Core Writing, Core Math, Core Natural Sciences, Core Humanities, Core Social Science, and Core Fine Arts) and 14 Core Objectives organized into four veins. All Core courses in the new Silver Core Curriculum need to be verified by the Core Curriculum Board before they can fulfill a General Education requirement and/or satisfy a Core Objective (CO).

A foundation for Silver Vein I (CO1-3) is built in the General Education requirements and developed in the general education requirements, but majors must continue to develop these foundational competencies and also integrate them into the Core Capstone courses. The processes of development and integration do not require verification by the Core Board.

Satisfying a Silver Core Objective:
Satisfaction of a CO must require substantial student effort, roughly equivalent to at least one credit hour. If COs are satisfied in a sequence of required courses, but no individual course in the sequence dedicates a full credit hour to the objective, only the final course in the sequence will have the Core designation, and this course must include the others as prerequisites.

A course that proposes to satisfy three COs will require a justification that explains how the course can do so without sacrificing all other content. A course should never attempt to satisfy more than three COs.

The standards for each CO are online at http://www.unr.edu/provost/curriculum-central/silver-Core-general-education-requirements/silver-Core-objectives, and this webpage is linked to the main address at http://www.unr.edu/Core. Changes to these standards require approval by both the Core Board and the Provost.

Starting the Verification Process:
All proposals are submitted through Curriculog, at http://unr.curriculog.com. Departments should identify a faculty member to initiate proposals for verification of their Core courses in Curriculog using the “Add Silver Plan Core Status to Current Course.” Instructions for using Curriculog can be found at http://www.unr.edu/provost/curriculum-central.

Before submitting a course, the initiator must prepare a sample syllabus which is reasonably representative of all sections taught, for all instructors and semesters. The course must have at least three measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that will be used each time the course is taught, though faculty may add their own when they teach the course. At least one of those SLOs must relate to each CO(s) that the course satisfies. The syllabus for a Core course must include the brief description of the CO that the course satisfies, and should also include the SLOs.

The initiator should also prepare a one-paragraph explanation for how the course satisfies the CO, and a one-paragraph explanation for how SLOs will be directly assessed. If a course is relying on prerequisites to cumulatively satisfy a CO, those prerequisites should be listed and sample syllabi for each attached to the proposal.
Once a proposal is launched in Curriculog, it is available for others to view. If the initiator is satisfied with the proposal after launch, the initiator must then approve the proposal before it will proceed through the verification process.

**The Workflow:**

Once a proposal has been launched in Curriculog, the workflow is set and may not be altered. If the initiator originally checked the box for one or more COs, then the proposal will go to the Core committees for all those COs, and only for those COs, even if some COs are unchecked and other COs are added. Thus, changing the COs or other parts of the review workflow after launch requires a new proposal.

Before launching a proposal, the initiator should take care to include all other departments that should review the proposal, especially when the course is cross-listed. If the course prefix is the responsibility of a college or other major unit, and not the responsibility of any department, then review by the department may be bypassed. The initiator should only check boxes for COs that the course proposes to satisfy and thus require verification by the Core Board, but not for COs that are only developed or integrated.

Once launched, the proposal will travel through the stages of the workflow until it is completed. If it is rejected at any stage, it is sent all the way back to the initiator. At that point, the initiator has the choice of deleting the proposal, or revising it and re-launching it. Once relaunched, it will have to go through the entire process, though the Curriculog administrator may force it through any unnecessary steps.

**Agenda Administrators:**

At each stage of the review process, there should be one agenda administrator who is responsible for making the actual decision. The agenda administrator may edit the proposal, and add new attachments, but the agenda administrator may not change the workflow.

If the agenda administrator approves the proposal on behalf of his or her committee, the proposal will move on to the next stage of review. If the agenda administrator rejects the proposal, the entire review process is stopped and the proposal is sent back to the initiator.

If the agenda administrator wishes to send the proposal back to the initiator for corrections, but does not wish to reject the proposal, a custom route should be requested. A custom route should only be used for individuals, not for committees, and it can be set to return back to the committee or move on to the next step afterwards.

If the agenda administrator wishes to reject one part of a proposal but not the entire thing, the administrator should choose the “approve” option but explain in the comments that it is being sent on to the next stop without approval of this one particular part. An agenda administrator may also request the proposal be held, and no further work can occur until the hold is released.
**Department Approval:**

Once a proposal has been launched and then approved by the faculty member, it will receive a technical review in order to ensure that all relevant sections have been completed, and if new SLOs are included these will be reviewed as well. In normal circumstances, these two steps are usually completed in five days or less, and any concerns will be included in comments to pass on to the department and college.

Members of the department’s curriculum committee will then receive an email from Curriculog that they have a new item on their task list. Either the department chair or a designee should serve as the sole agenda administrator. At the start of each academic year, the department chair should notify the Curriculog administrator of the names and NetIDs of the curriculum committee members.

The department should decide if the proposal is consistent with the needs of the department and its students, and whether the department is willing to support the proposal. However, the department is not responsible for predicting what the Core Board will approve.

If possible, reviewers should make their decisions within 14 days of being notified of the proposal. Members may recommend either approval or rejection online, or they can request the proposal be held until the committee can meet in person. Members may add further online comments, and this will be visible to all persons involved in the review.

Only the agenda administrator (the chair or designee) may forward the proposal for review by the college committee. If deficiencies in the proposal were identified in technical review, the committee should contact the originator to request the information before proceeding. The committee has the authority to edit the proposal on the originator’s behalf, but should only do so with permission of the originator, and should document these changes and the originator’s approval in the comments. The department committee may also reject the proposal, routing it back to the originator.

The department’s bylaws should govern the internal process, but the department chair or a single designee should be the agenda administrator. Typically, a quorum is two-thirds and approval requires a majority of those voting, and if one member asks to hold it for discussion then the decision should be made once the committee can meet. The chair of the department curriculum committee should notify the department chair when the committee has made its recommendation, and include an explanation if they recommend rejection. The agenda administrator must then either approve the proposal, or reject it with explanation.

**College Approval:**

Once a proposal has been approved by the department chair or designee, the department process is repeated at the college level. The dean’s designee (usually an associate dean, but possibly the college committee chair) should be the sole agenda administrator, and at the start of each
semester this administrator should notify the Curriculog administrator of the names and NetIDs of the college curriculum committee membership.

The college curriculum committee should decide if the proposal is consistent with the needs of the college and its students, and whether the department is willing to support the proposal. However, the college is not responsible for interpreting or enforcing the Core Board’s standards.

Members of the college committee should follow the same process as the department. If a proposal must be edited before it can be approved, permission from both the originator and the department chair should be documented in the comments. The committee should follow the college’s bylaws regarding quorum and voting, and the once the committee has made its decision then this recommendation should be given to the college’s agenda administrator, who must then either approve the proposal or reject it with explanation.

**Core Board Review:**

Once a proposal has been approved by the department and college, it then proceeds through the final steps. It will be reviewed by the Core committee responsible for each CO, and then it will proceed to the Core Board for verification. For an existing course with no changes to the course title or description, no review by the University Courses & Curriculum Committee is necessary.

In reviewing a proposal for verification, the Core committee should determine whether or not the course satisfies the CO, and make their recommendation to the Core Board. If the course has current Core status, then the course should be given the benefit of the doubt in order to speed up the implementation of the new Silver Core, though approval should not be automatic. If the course is new to the Core, then the Core committee should take a much more careful look. The Core committee should compare each proposal against the written Core standards. If the Core committee finds the written standards inadequate, the Core committee may delay its decision in order to propose amendments in the Core standards to the Core Board before making a decision on the proposal.

As with the department and college committees, members of the Core committee should make their recommendations within 14 days. They may recommend approval or rejection online, and make online comments. They may send it back to the initiator for edits through a custom route. They may edit the proposal themselves, as long as this is approved by the initiator and documented.

The Core committee chair is a voting member of the committee, and should wait until enough of the other committee members have voted before casting the final vote. Quorum for online proposals can be met quickly when two-thirds of the members (including the chair) have voted. Alternatively, if only half of the members have voted online, quorum is met once two weeks have passed since the proposal came to the committee, if committee members have been
reminded by the chair at least one week before. The decision is then determined by a majority of those voting, and split recommendations should be passed on to the Core Board without either a positive or negative recommendation.

Online voting is halted, however, if any member of the committee requests a discussion of the proposal. The chair shall then call a committee meeting using the same quorum rules, and the vote in the meeting shall be the one the chair reports.

The chair of the committee is the agenda administrator, is responsible for counting quorum and votes, and makes the online decision on behalf of his or her committee. The chair may approve the proposal, or reject the proposal to send it back to the initiator. If the chair wishes to reject the proposal for the committee’s particular CO, but other COs are proposed or recommended, the proposal should be approved with an explanation so the Core Board may consider it for the other COs. If the chair wishes to send the proposal back to the initiator for corrections, but does not wish to reject the proposal, a custom route should be requested. The chair may also request the proposal be put on hold.

If a proposal is approved by the Core committee(s), it proceeds to the voting members of the Core Board for review, and the Core Board will follow a similar procedure. The Core Director serves as the agenda administrator, but may only vote in case of a tie.

The Core Board will not vote on any proposal for verification of a CO if the relevant Core committee has recommended rejection, except in the case of an appeal. If the initiator believes the Core committee’s decision was arbitrary or inconsistent with the written standards, and the initiator made a reasonable effort to address the concerns of the committee, the initiator may write a memo to the Core Director to request and justify an appeal. The Core Director will reject this request unless the Core committee has reviewed the same course proposal, syllabus, and supporting materials, or if the appeal is poorly justified. If the Core Director accepts the appeal, the proposal will be promptly brought to a meeting of the Core Board.

The decision of the Core Board to approve or reject verification is final. Once verified by the Core Board, the course will have Silver Core status beginning in the following semester, until such status is revoked by the Core Board. If either the Core committee or the Core Board rejects the proposal for verification, the proposal should be substantially revised before being resubmitted.

Rejection does not remove a course from the current Core Curriculum, but it prevents it from being included in the Silver Core. Approval of a course for the Silver Core does not add it to the current Core Curriculum, though the Core committee may also make this separate recommendation if requested.

A list of all verified courses is made available to students and faculty, along with sample syllabi, at Curriculum Central (http://www.unr.edu/provost/curriculum-central). These will also be noted in the online catalog course descriptions.