

Content Advisor Feedback
Dr. Cat. Howard
Texarkana College
January 21, 2021

Earth and Space Science

I find that this course follows a logical progression. The standards seem to address the relevant scientific concepts.

As for gaps, I wonder what the rationale was for removing lab equipment used in #2. It seems that most of #2 was considerably shortened leaving out some important skills related to scientific process. In my opinion the material left out of #5 is important, but I do understand leaving this out if it is covered in other courses. As for the purple 13F, I wonder if abiotic chemical processes are the only possible origins of life.

I think the 40% of instruction earmarked to lab experiences is adequate and welcome. Student expectations in the revisions are clearer and more specific which is a benefit to both student and teacher. None appear to be duplicated. I have no suggestions for improvement.

Aquatic Science

Like Earth and Space Science, I find that this course follows a logical progression and is complete with no evidence of gaps and adequate time allotted to lab experiences. The new, revised wording of many of the TEKS are really improvements making them clearer, more specific. I am not sure what post-secondary class this would prepare students for—maybe environmental science? If so, this would be very good preparation.

Astronomy

Reading through the Astronomy recommendations from Work Group D, I am pleased with everything I see. Having a bit of experience teaching astronomy in contrast to my lack of experience with Earth and Space Science and Aquatic Science, I am more familiar with the traditional sequence and depth of this class on the college level. I found these TEKS to be logical, complete, clear, concise, a good balance of lecture and lab. I appreciated all of the revisions and completely understood and agreed with the rationale provided. This course would more than prepare students to take college-level astronomy.

Environmental Studies

I have limited experience teaching environmental science. So, in reviewing these TEKS, I consulted a couple of popular college textbooks. The progression of the course matches what most college courses include with no appreciable gaps. The changes recorded in the wording of the outcomes seems to me to be an improvement over the former language increasing the clarity and measurability of the outcomes. I do not notice any duplications or omissions, and feel that this course, as amended, would provide excellent preparation for continued work in higher education and to any consumer/citizen, in general.

Specialized Topics in Science

We have a similar special topics in biology and chemistry that are offered on our campus on the college level. The purpose of our courses is the same as that proposed by the workgroup: to give students the opportunity to take a deeper dive into areas of interest whether or not they have been covered in other courses. I appreciate how the course is designed as generally a research class with 40% of class time devoted to lab and many of the TEKS related to use of the scientific method and scientific communication. I think this class would provide not only additional incentive and interest for the students to pursue STEM related fields of study, but also great experience in actually “doing” science that will benefit them as they continue their post-secondary educations.