To: Core Curriculum Committee
From: Beth O'Shea, Core Director
Re: Un-embedding Critical Thinking and Information Literacy from a specific discipline in
            the Core
Date: February 26th, 2019

Critical Thinking (CT) and Information Literacy (IL) are married and embedded in one discipline in USDs core curriculum, Historical Inquiry (EHSI). This marriage and embedding have created curricular and logistical challenges:

Curricular Challenges
Courses approved for EHSI must also be approved for CTIL. This places a heavy burden on faculty teaching these courses because they must satisfy the learning outcomes for CTIL, EHSI, plus their own course outcomes. Sometimes these courses also have other core attributes such as first year integration and/or a DISJ flag.

In Fall 2017 a pilot project[1] was conducted to evaluate student abilities to meet the CTIL learning outcomes. Of the four criteria assessed (e.g., Thesis/Argument, Credibility of Claims, etc.) student scores ranged between 1.6 and 2.1 out of a total possible score of four[2]. Faculty who participated in the project noted that often these courses are 100-level courses, which makes it difficult for students to achieve the desired competency, particularly since many students take these courses in their first year.

Logistical Challenges
Exploration areas of the Core are often completed by transfer and high school students prior to coming to USD. The embedding of two competencies in one of our exploration areas (EHSI) means that many non-USD and AP credits don't transfer because they don't meet all the learning outcomes for both EHSI and CTIL.

Recommendations to address further, taken from the CTIL Pilot project, were:

1. Should CT and IL be married or should they be taught and assessed independently?
2. Should CTIL be embedded in only one type of course? Or should it be taught across the curriculum?

Establishing a CTIL Taskforce
With the support of the History department, the Core Assessment Team, and members of the former CTIL ATF, the Core Advisory Committee and Core Director recommend the establishment of a CTIL Taskforce as outlined below:

1. Constitute a CTIL Taskforce. Solicit volunteer members with expertise and interest in CTIL with the goal of constituting a 5-member taskforce. Potential members could include former CTIL ATF members, CTIL CAR, CCC members, and members from across the College, the School of Business, the Shiley Marcos School of Engineering, and the Copley Library.

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[1] Evaluation of Student Learning in the new Core Curriculum, Pilot Project Fall 2017: Critical Thinking and Information Literacy. Presented to the CCC in April 2018.
[2] For contrast, of the 5 criteria assessed for oral communication student scores ranged between 2.4 and 2.9; and of the 5 criteria assessed for first year writing student scores ranged between 2.4 and 2.7.

2. The CTIL Taskforce is charged with investigating the pros and cons of several different models of CTIL across the Core, building on the work provided by the original CTIL ATF Report. Example models may include:
   - Flagging Critical Thinking across the curriculum
   - Flagging information literacy across the curriculum
   - Adding information literacy to first year writing courses
   - Others
3. The taskforce presents a variety of potential models, supported by in-depth research, at open faculty forums and/or department meetings and solicits feedback.
4. Taskforce then presents to the CCC providing in depth research and feedback on multiple models and provides the CCC with a ranking for each model presented.
5. CCC makes a recommendation on a new CTIL model in the Core.
6. That recommendation then goes forward for full faculty vote at each unit assembly.

Anticipated timeline: acceptance of a new model for CTIL by the end of Fall 2019 semester so that it can be included in the 2020-21 catalog year.

All going well with this timeline next Fall 19 and Spring 20 we will need to encourage new course submissions, whilst having history courses continue to serve CTIL, so that our 2020 students have enough courses on offer.