USD faculty has approved a new Core Curriculum, which will be implemented for students entering in Fall 2017. Core curriculum revision has been a key component of the University strategic planning process as the centerpiece of liberal learning. One of the cornerstones of the new core is the integration component. We will require students to participate in a first-year integrative Living Learning Community and complete an advanced core integration project in the junior or senior year. Integration as a core requirement will ensure that all students have integrative experiences at both foundational and advanced levels. The intention is to use the first-year integration experience to introduce students to habits of inquiry that will guide their learning through their undergraduate years and beyond. By introducing students to integration at an early stage in their development, we can scaffold their learning within this area so that the advanced integration experience builds upon the first-year experience. At the advanced level especially, we need to balance the requirements in the core curriculum with department majors, because a number of departments have existing capstone requirements; these also may satisfy the advanced integration requirement in the new Core Curriculum, if the appropriate learning outcomes can be achieved.

A small team of faculty worked together to write the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the integration requirement, as follows:

**Students will be able to:**

- **Recognize** broad connections between multiple disciplines, perspectives, and/or approaches to learning.
- **Articulate** how the integration of different disciplines, perspectives, and approaches to learning can enhance one’s understanding of practical issues and problems.
- **Synthesize** knowledge and/or skills from multiple disciplines or perspectives.
- **Apply** knowledge and/or skills from multiple disciplines or perspectives.

**Goal:** Beginning in Fall 2017, 100% of students will participate in a revised LLC program that embeds curricular and co-curricular integrative learning outcomes, including a second-semester flagged integration course in Spring 2018. The first Advanced Integration experiences will take place by Fall 2019.

**First year integration**

As part of the new Core Curriculum, incoming students will engage in either the Living Learning Community (LLC) program or the Transfer Learning Community (TLC), which enable students to
recognize and articulate the usefulness of integrative approaches to different subjects/areas of inquiry/experiences. The following areas will be addressed to refine the existing LLC and TLC programs to meet the first year integration requirement of the new Core Curriculum.

**Trainings:** Revise LLC faculty, LLC faculty assistant, community director, and resident assistant training to reflect changes to the program, focusing on integration and how their respective roles support this goal. Establish learning outcomes for the comprehensive set of training sessions. Refine job descriptions to clearly articulate each role’s relationship to the LLC program. Collaborate with the Center for Educational Excellence on faculty trainings.

**Themes:** Identify new themes that reflect our university mission and changemaking identity, and provide a basis for connecting each LLC course to the theme. Meet with faculty, staff, and students to generate new themes. We expect to have five LLCs, each with a different theme, beginning in Fall 2017. Themes that we’re considering and that seem to work well for this purpose are Social Justice, Sustainability, and Faith & Reason.

**Faculty Development and Leadership:** Ensure faculty development and leadership in the LLC program. Identify strong LLC faculty academic directors for the 2017-18 academic year. Build in continuity by establishing a shadowing/apprenticeship program for the LLC faculty academic director position. Provide ongoing faculty development for integration in the fall (LLC course to theme) and spring (fall course to spring course within context of the theme) courses.

**Reflection:** Embed a reflection component in the LLC and TLC experiences (and possibly during the second year as a co-curricular experience) that facilitates meta learning. Consider connecting these reflections to co-curricular outcomes focused on self-awareness and purpose, and being, belonging, becoming (diversity and inclusion). Consider utilizing residential life staff to facilitate the reflections for residential students, identify other staff to facilitate reflection for commuter and transfer students.

**Transfer Learning Community:** The Transfer Learning Community (TLC) program will be offered in both the fall and spring semesters to ensure that all transfer students entering USD will be introduced to integration and the core curriculum. TLC courses will be selected with attention to the disparate courses that transfer students have completed before arriving at USD. TLC courses should satisfy previously unmet graduation requirements for each student. To scale up current efforts, we will expand the current TLC program to accommodate all transfer students in fall and spring semesters and assess Fall 2016 pilot TLC experiences to identify best practices and inform efforts to expand the program to include all transfer students by Fall 2017.

**Assessment:** Assess the first year integration outcomes and disaggregate results by relevant variables (race/ethnicity, first generation, gender, and others) to illuminate and address any issues of equity.

**Advanced Integration - Core Project**

As part of the new Core Curriculum, students are required to meet an Advanced Integration component through a Core Project in their Junior or Senior years. Through this component, students will be able to
synthesize and apply knowledge and/or skills from multiple disciplines or perspectives. In addition to reflection and integration across experiences, Core Projects will ideally include the other six engaged learning elements that have been shown to promote student success and retention (high performance expectations, significant investment of time and effort, interactions with faculty, staff and peers about substantive matters, experiences with diversity, frequent, timely and constructive feedback, application and practice in real-world settings, and public demonstration of competence). Lastly, providing curricular and co-curricular opportunities guarantees that all students will be able to fulfill the requirement in a way that is meaningful to them.

It is expected that students who enter USD in the Fall 2017 will begin working on Core Projects as early as Fall 2019. One of our action items has been to envision a menu of possible courses and experiences through which students can achieve Advanced Integration through a Core Project. The following courses and experiences are being put forth as a way for students to achieve Advanced Integration:

**Team-Taught Courses:** Intensive, multidisciplinary upper-division courses inclusive of one or more synthetic, applied integrative projects evaluated by both instructors.

**Linked/Cluster Courses:** Simultaneous courses of different disciplines linked by instructor-coordinated theme(s) and consisting of one or more synthetic, applied cross-course integrative projects evaluated by both instructors.

**Community-Based Learning:** Service-oriented projects must be developed in collaboration with one or more pre-approved community partners. These projects should provide opportunities for significant acquisition and integration of intercultural knowledge (not exclusive of further applications of multidisciplinary knowledge), and must be supervised and evaluated by the community partner(s) in conjunction with a faculty advisor.

**Internship:** Internship opportunities may satisfy Advanced Integration if (1) they are offered as part of an approved course and (2) they meet the Integration criteria associated with discipline-specific capstone projects (specified below).

**Discipline-Specific Capstone Projects:** Discipline-specific capstone projects may be supervised as determined by specific departments. However, in order to satisfy the Advanced Integration component, such projects should entail the substantial synthesis and application of multidisciplinary knowledge and should be endorsed by and evaluated in conjunction with an external faculty advisor.

**Undergraduate Research, Independent Study, or Creative Projects:** In order to satisfy the Advanced Integration component, independent projects should be developed and executed under the supervision of an approved faculty advisor. These projects should consist of or culminate in substantial work(s) derived from the synthesis and application of multidisciplinary knowledge. In cases of nonverbal creative work(s), projects should be accompanied by a written rationale that articulate the relevant sources of multidisciplinary knowledge and elucidated the strategies or techniques through which those sources have been synthesized and applied. Ideally, these projects will be endorsed by and evaluated in conjunction with an external faculty advisor.
**Successful Implementation**

*ePortfolios:* To facilitate student learning, agency and engagement through integrative experiences that will seamlessly connect curricular and co-curricular activities, students must participate in reflective activities throughout their time at USD. ePortfolios could be a valuable way to facilitate student reflection about integrative experiences, connect previous experiences (especially important for transfers) first-year integration to other learning experiences, including advanced integration, and provide students with a dynamic and ever-growing dossier that also can be presented to potential employers and graduate schools. Selection of an ePortfolio platform should take into account a number of criteria, including ease of use and maintenance, and portability for students.

*Faculty Development:* Integration, as an outcome of the core curriculum, is new to USD and will require faculty training and development. The Core Project is one of the most complex parts of the core curriculum because it can be met with multiple curricular experiences, each of which should include all eight engaged learning elements that have been shown to promote deep learning, student success and retention. Furthermore, the success of the Advanced Integration component of the Core Curriculum requires a breadth of faculty from many departments and divisions across campus to offer Core Project options through one of the courses or experiences identified.

Faculty engagement with Advanced Integration will require clear communication of the Student Learning Outcomes and assessment options as well as opportunities for faculty training and incentives for participation (such as monetary compensation for syllabus development and first time course offerings). Working closely with the Center for Educational Excellence and faculty members on the Integration Area Task Force, workshops will be offered to support faculty in course design and assignment creation. Additional options for faculty engagement and training should be considered, including the formation of a Committee of Integration Faculty Fellows from each academic unit and division; these fellows will provide training and support to departments and faculty in designing Core Projects. The charge of the committee will be to mentor faculty who are interested in developing integrative Core Projects before they are submitted for curricular approval. When a course is approved for the Advanced Integration component of the core, faculty will be required to commit to offering the integrative experiences at least three times as a way to incorporate formative assessment and optimization.

It is very important that faculty participation in core integration be recognized and valued. In addition to stipends for course development and execution, faculty participation in core integration should be reflected in institutional reward structures, such as annual evaluation and the reappointment, promotion and tenure processes.

*Advising:* To support students connect disparate parts of their educational journey, faculty and student advisors will need to be trained to emphasize the benefits of integrative learning on long term career success and personal development.

*Presidential Award on Innovative Integration Excellence:* Implement a new award that will recognize outstanding achievement for a student(s) and faculty to be honored during the Research Week which showcases student collaborative work.
Communication Strategy

Throughout the upcoming year, institutional leaders on campus will engage in communicative practices that highlight the benefits of engaged integrative learning for student success. There will be multiple communication outlets that attend to various audiences, including a new Core website designed to appeal to prospective students and parents. We will develop a communication plan for all LLC stakeholders that includes changes to the program. Key elements of the communication plan will include disseminating the title updates, theme changes, and adjustments in the roles and responsibilities of LLC participants. Further, so-named Integration Faculty Fellows will serve in disseminating information to faculty in various departments to encourage participation in integration experiences.

Measures of Success

The following timeline identifies the short-term goals and measures of success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year Integration (LLC)</th>
<th>Sep 01 ‘16</th>
<th>Sep ‘16</th>
<th>Oct ‘16</th>
<th>Dec 15 ‘16</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call for Director</td>
<td>ATF Workshop; Integration Workshop</td>
<td>Call for LLC Faculty; Schedule of Fall 17 LLC Courses</td>
<td>Schedules for Spring 2018 LLC Courses</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year Integration (TLC)</th>
<th>Feb ‘17</th>
<th>Fall ‘17</th>
<th>Fall ‘19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess Fall 2016 pilot TLCs; identify best practices</td>
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<tr>
<th>Advanced Integration</th>
<th>Fall ‘17</th>
<th>Fall ‘19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Integration Workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td>First Advanced Integration Core Projects</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Long-term measures of success include assessment of integration learning outcomes that demonstrate that students are achieving the outcomes. This assessment will occur through faculty teams who will be
instructed on the process of developing assessment criteria from the ATF reports to be applied in the evaluation of student work. Assessment data will be used to report on student achievement of learning outcomes as outlined in the Area Task Force reports and will be presented as aggregate data to the Core Curriculum Committee who will make evidence-based decisions regarding resource allocation and program development.