



Catholic Intellectual Tradition & Breadth Presentation

October 22, 2013

12:15-2:00 p.m., Serra 204

Alberto Pulido presented for CIT in the core. He referred to the CIT Task Force's report and described the CIT subcommittee's work to develop a general, multifaceted definition of CIT and how to integrate CIT into the core. He began by explaining several key elements of CIT:

- the study of theology, religious studies, and philosophy as a distinguishing characteristic of a Catholic university in its disciplined and systematic exploration of life's meaning and the integration of faith and reason
- the academic study of religion (THRS) as an exploration of religious meaning, values, engagement, and skills acquisition
- the study of philosophy that allows students to question the self, the world, and human existence
- the study of ethics in the development of ethical judgement and action
- the study of diversity in fostering an informed appreciation of different experiences and perspectives and a range of intellectual and cultural traditions

The CIT subcommittee offered general recommendations on how CIT might be expressed in the core. First, it acknowledged that students engage with CIT outside of the core and that many core courses outside of theology and religious studies, philosophy, and diversity incorporate or could incorporate CIT. The CIT subcommittee did not list which courses these may be, but instead said it is up for discussion. Second, CIT could be a part of the core through course clusters whose learning outcomes relate to the appreciation of CIT. Lastly, other departments could offer courses that include a CIT learning outcome.

A tentative, basic proposal was made for a framework for CIT in the core and included three variations. The basic proposal envisions a sequential, developmental sequence of one UD and one LD core course each for THRS and diversity and one core course each for philosophy (non-ethics) and ethics. The diversity component would include one course in domestic or local diversity and one course in transnational diversity, to comprise either countries outside of the U.S. and/or sovereign nations inside the U.S. The total number of courses would be 6.

Model variation A would depend on whether a Philosophy course in Ethics would count for both the ethics and philosophy requirements, allowing CIT outcomes to be met by one course instead of two courses, for a total of 5 courses (6 courses if the philosophy and ethics courses do not overlap). Variation B replaces the ethics course with an ethics-themed course, the determination of which is governed by an ethics or ethics-themed committee that could include non-ethics faculty, for a total of 6 courses. Variation C has no changes in requirements, for a total of 6 courses, but diversity would be reframed as "inclusion and social justice" to make clear that diversity would be explored through lenses of power and privilege, emphasizing the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, religious preference, and ability. It is to ask questions and actively engage with difference and how difference is addressed in terms of social justice.

CIT is a central aspect of the core, the CIT subcommittee suggests that governance of CIT courses might best come from those who are experts in the fields of CIT, philosophy, ethics, diversity, and social justice, but that a broad conversation could be had to incorporate other fields while also acknowledging the categories of knowledge that specifically come from these disciplines. The CIT subcommittee also suggested opportunities for team teaching within the model and its variations.

Mike Mayer presented the Breadth subcommittee's work. The model would be more concerned with integration and inquiry than with discipline and content, recognizing the commonalities among diverse disciplines in the ways information is generated, perceived, analyzed, and used. The "modes of inquiry" structure groups courses by the kind of inquiry and perspective they employ. Breadth is envisioned in four modes of inquiry:

- History and literary (one course)
- Social and behavioral (one course)
- Artistic (one course)
- Scientific (one course plus lab)

Students would take one class from each area for a total of 4 courses, plus two additional courses from any of the four areas for a total of 6 courses. A maximum of 2 courses from the same department would be allowed and cross-counting with other requirements is likely. These 4 modes were chosen because they use familiar terminology, many courses already fit into these areas, the enhanced prospect of team teaching and interdisciplinarity, and the opportunity for more students to consider a minor.

Challenges include where to place the “interdisciplinary breadth course” and how to build a less prescriptive structure so that students would have greater responsibility for their course choices and have more courses from which to choose. Learning outcomes for breadth are yet to be determined and it is uncertain how courses will fit a particular breadth area. Comparison of learning outcomes could help decide which courses fall into which breadth area. The faculty must be open to teaching courses differently than they have done in the past, and/or to teach new courses, to acquire breadth, and doing so may stretch some beyond their comfort zones and their specific discipline. Team teaching is an option in this model as well.

A question and answer session followed. Many questions concerned implementation. It was asked if a breadth course would fulfill a major or minor requirement, or if, for example, a breadth course could be a chemistry class that is required for an Engineering student. It might be more difficult for some majors with heavy core requirements of their own to fulfill a breadth requirement with a course in the major. If two science courses were required for breadth, could one of them count toward the major? Carole Huston suggested focusing on the method of inquiry, whether the course is taken in biology, chemistry, or engineering, etc. The method of inquiry would be taught and reemphasized within the breadth requirement. Flagging courses is also an option and is negotiable; for example, a social justice/transnational course may also count for breadth.

It was asked if non-THRS course could be included in the CIT model. Additional questions concerned whether breadth requirements could be met in other disciplines; for example, whether the ethics requirement could be met in a business ethics course instead of philosophy, or whether diversity could be met in a business or economics course instead of Sociology or Ethnic Studies. It was noted that diversity could be looked at from any discipline and it is integral to CIT. These determinations would be governed by committees for each area (diversity, theology, philosophy, ethics) with a majority of the committee specializing in the area, but would include faculty from other departments. Assurance that these committees would be truly interdisciplinary and not departmental in nature, befitting an interdisciplinary core, is important, so it is important to ask whether the majority of the committee should be from any particular discipline. It is not yet known how these faculty committees would be formed. It is possible CPC Steering may propose a new Senate structure to oversee the core courses.

It was asked if the science requirement could be met in a history of science course, but the model specifies engagement with the scientific method (formulating a hypothesis, conducting an experiment, analyzing data, and interpreting results). The bulk of courses will likely come from the sciences, engineering, and computer science, but the contribution from another unit is possible. More discussion is needed on this matter.

Also asked was whether students who are Catholic would have a different sequence of THRS courses than non-Catholic students, considering approximately 50% of USD students are Catholic and may already have had significant exposure to CIT. This is not to say that every student should take a course in Catholicism; the point is that not every student who comes to USD knows what CIT is. CIT would be met in a THRS course but it could also be met as part of the integration component. Eventually, the core curriculum will need a vision statement and learning outcomes. CIT would ideally exist throughout the core, including all disciplines, with a focus on learning outcomes and what students are expected to learn about and from CIT, in theory and in practice.

Whether to allow or disallow double-counting of core and major courses is something to keep in mind and if so, if there is a limit to the number of double-counting courses. Considering that THRS and Philosophy would each require a lower and an upper division course, how might the courses ensure that they are sequential and developmental? Would two courses be enough to fulfill an outcome?

With only one science or one math requirement, how will students get the most out of that course requirement? It was suggested that an inventory could be taken, looking at all courses to see which would and would not count

toward core requirements, which courses need revision to be included, and how students could meet core requirements within specific disciplines and across disciplines. The core as it currently stands is a “smorgasbord.” How might the core contribute to the capstone experience? How might the core be foundational and developmental? Not every course will be a good fit for the core, which is to be expected.

It was then asked what constitutes artistic inquiry and who would decide on it. Again, learning outcomes were emphasized as a decision-maker in determining which courses will fulfill core requirements in breadth.

It was remarked that the Liberal Studies major already has many required courses that meet breadth requirements; LBST requires 3 math, 3 science, and 3 fine arts courses for educators and follows a path of core, concentration, and credential courses. Might the Breadth subcommittee further study the LBST major for ideas, substituting “capstone” for “credential”?

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Next presentation: Competencies Subcommittee, Tuesday, November 19 from 12:15-2:00 p.m. in Serra 204.

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