

Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the Core

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One of the principal ways USD expresses its Catholic character is by incorporating the Catholic Intellectual tradition in the core curriculum. This tradition includes the study of theology, religious studies, philosophy, ethics, and studies in inclusion and social justice. In addition, through its core the university fosters community, integration of knowledge and intellectual rigor. [Report of Task Force on CIT in Core Curriculum]

Theological Inquiry and Religious Studies

Preamble

One of the principal ways USD expresses its Catholic character is by incorporating the Catholic intellectual tradition into the core curriculum.

The study of theology and religion is a distinguishing characteristic of a Catholic university because these courses offer the opportunity for a disciplined and systematic exploration of life's meaning and the integration of faith and reason.

The pursuit of theology and religion invites discernment of significant truths about reality, faith and human existence.

The academic study of religion (theology and religious studies) is uniquely suited to explore religious meaning, to help students probe religion as a constitutive element of human experience and values, and to help them acquire skills for engaging diverse dimensions of religion with openness and respect.

Description (Learning Outcomes)

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate how religion is a constitutive element of human experience and values.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of religious traditions with particular attention to Catholic theology and tradition.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of at least one religious tradition in depth.

Governance

The governance committee for Theological Inquiry and Religious Studies would be composed of a majority of members from the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, but would also include members of other departments.

PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY

PREAMBLE:

The academic study of philosophy is a distinguishing characteristic of a Catholic university and a Liberal Arts education. It uniquely allows students to understand and articulate comprehensive and fundamental questions about human existence and experience, about themselves and the world.

Learning Outcomes:

Students should be able to:

1. Describe the major perennial and the diversity of contemporary philosophical issues and worldviews, including their epistemological and metaphysical presuppositions and justifications.
2. Apply philosophical principles and concepts reflectively and critically to fundamental issues regarding human nature, the human person, and our relationship to knowledge and the world.

ETHICAL INQUIRY

PREAMBLE:

The study of ethics emphasizes the development of ethical reflection, judgment, moral responsibility, and action. Of traditional and particular significance in the intellectual and personal development of students studying at a university grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition, it evokes broad inquiry regarding the foundations of morality, ethical principles, and the application of these principles through reasoned reflection and critical engagement with real human and social concerns and problems.

Learning Outcomes:

Students should be able to:

1. Understand the fundamental principles of ethical judgment and behavior and be able to describe the major historical and contemporary ethical theories, including their rational justifications and limitations.
2. Reflectively analyze particular ethical problems, describe their ethical components and aspects in their social and practical context, and critically engage with significant ethical principles and theories.

List of Proposed Courses:

1. Philosophy Course – non Ethics
2. Ethics Course

* Specific course content to be determined by respective governance committee/department.

PROPOSAL FOR 'GOVERNANCE' STATEMENT IN FINAL REPORT:

The Learning Outcomes descriptions of the Core Curriculum requirements are general assessment-based indicators of what those requirements contribute to the academic and intellectual development of students. They do not capture the full range or the depth of learning activities and experiences which occur in the classroom, assignments, and study materials throughout the semester, nor the necessary expertise and special preparedness to be expected and required of the instructor approved to teach a course satisfying the particular Core Curriculum requirement. Oversight (identification and assessment) of courses and instructors approved to satisfy a Core requirement by similarly prepared and proficient faculty is paramount to its sound implementation and effective governance.

Inclusion and Social Justice: (ISJ)

The study and experience of inclusion and social justice fosters an informed appreciation of different experiences and perspectives as well as a range of Intellectual and cultural traditions. This includes opportunities to explore more than one's own limited experience and to engage others within and outside the community always recognizing that the inherent dignity of each person is an integral part of the Catholic intellectual tradition. It requires direct engagement with inclusion and difference with an eye toward fostering and embracing social justice. (Diversity Curriculum Proposal)

Learning Outcomes:

Students should be able to:

1. Understand "difference" through the lenses of power and privilege
2. Demonstrate comprehension of interdisciplinary sources of knowledge
3. Comprehend intersectionality in relation to categories and expressions of identity
4. Understand inclusion and social justice within domestic and global contexts.

List of Proposed Courses:

Course 1: Inclusion and Social Justice within a U.S. Context.

Course 2: Inclusion and Social Justice related to transnational and international experiences.

* Specific course content to be determined by respective governance committee/department.

Important note: Transnational linkages between the local and global are strongly recommended to be offered as a two-part course sequence -- underscoring a cumulative experience bringing together knowledge, comprehension and experience of social justice.

ISJ is to be overseen by a panel of qualified experts in both scholarly and curricular areas of inclusion and social justice. Administrative support will be required to have an adequate representation from scholars trained in this areas such as ethnic studies. This two course sequence is grounded in research that underscore the value of grounding students in domestic issues related to inclusion and social justice and then building out to transnational and international issues. [Diversity Curriculum Proposal]