



Core Competencies Model

Core Competencies Subcommittees

Communication

(Written, Oral & Second Language)

Critical Thinking & Information Literacy

Mathematical & Quantitative Reasoning

Committee Process

- ✧ Convened committees and read preliminary materials
- ✧ Discussed conceptions of seven competencies:
 - ✧ Written communication
 - ✧ Oral communication
 - ✧ Second language
 - ✧ Critical thinking
 - ✧ Information literacy
 - ✧ Mathematical reasoning and problem solving
 - ✧ Quantitative reasoning
- ✧ Constructed preliminary drafts of outcomes
- ✧ Compiled a set of curricular recommendations
- ✧ Organized a preliminary, draft model to see how competencies could fit the core

Written Communication as a Competency

Written Communication:

- ✧ Focuses on development and expression of ideas in writing
- ✧ Experimentation with many writing genres and styles
- ✧ Involves different writing technologies, texts, data, and images
- ✧ Developed through iterative experiences across the curriculum

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions:

- ✧ Context of and Purpose for Writing
- ✧ Content Development
- ✧ Genre and Disciplinary Conventions
- ✧ Sources and Evidence
- ✧ Control of Syntax and Mechanics

Definition of the written communication competency and its outcomes are derived from the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric and subcommittee group discussions.

Written Communication: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ✧ Developmental Structure:
 - ❖ Written communication competency screening for all students as they enter USD, including transfer students
 - ❖ Course in foundational first-year curriculum
 - ❖ Flagged course above 100-level
 - ❖ Embedded in capstone experience
- ✧ Student support: Mentoring and tutoring through the Writing Center
- ✧ Sufficient faculty support for development and implementation

Recommendations are derived from the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric and subcommittee group discussions which focused on the interdisciplinary nature of writing as a core competency.

Oral Communication as a Competency

Oral Communication:

Prepared, purposeful presentation to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, and to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions:

- ✧ Cohesive Organization of Content
- ✧ Language Choice
- ✧ Delivery Techniques
- ✧ Use of Evidence
- ✧ Central Message Development

Definition of the oral communication competency is derived from the AAC&U Oral Communication Value Rubric. Outcomes are derived from several key documents from the National Communication Association and subcommittee group discussions.

Oral Communication: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ✧ Developmental Structure:
 - ❖ Embedded within the 1-unit “integration” curriculum for LLCs and their linked courses (2 units total)
 - ❖ Flagged course above 100-level
 - ❖ Embedded in capstone experience
- ✧ Provide students with support through mentoring and “center” assistance (Writing Center could be expanded)
- ✧ Receive sufficient faculty support for development and implementation

Recommendations are derived from the AAC&U Oral Communication Value Rubric, several key documents from the National Communication Association, and subcommittee group discussions.

Second Language: Definition and Suggested Outcomes

Second Language proficiency refers to the ability of students to achieve basic proficiency in a second language across the dimensions and levels listed below (not currently met at USD).

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions and Proficiency Levels:

- ✧ Speaking (intermediate mid-level)
- ✧ Listening (intermediate low-level)
- ✧ Reading (intermediate mid-level)
- ✧ Writing (intermediate low-level)
- ✧ Cultural Competence – Diversity, inclusion, and social justice
- ✧ Cultural Competence – Intercultural competence

Outcomes are derived from the current outcomes for several languages at the 201 competency level at USD, based on foundational criteria suggested by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Second Language: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ✧ Proficiency for core courses: ACTFL standards for intermediate levels for speaking, listening, reading, and writing (increase contact hours to 4 units per semester)
- ✧ Complete language requirement in consecutive semesters if >1 course needed
- ✧ Develop global cultural competence in association with Inclusion and Social Justice (ISJ) requirement
- ✧ All first-year and transfer students screened for second language competency upon entering USD via the placement exam
- ✧ Students receive mentoring and tutoring through the new Rigsby Language and Culture Commons in Founders Hall 123

Critical Thinking as Methods of Inquiry

Critical Thinking forms the basis for every method of inquiry, requiring the analysis of an issue or problem and an exploration of the support and assumptions that underlie a thesis and derived conclusions.

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions:

- ✧ Explanation of Issue/Problem
- ✧ Support
- ✧ Influence of Assumptions
- ✧ Student Thesis
- ✧ Conclusion

Definition and outcomes derived from the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric, a variety of readings and group discussion. Conceptualization and operationalization of outcomes for critical thinking would require greater elaboration and refinement.

Information Literacy as a Competency

Information Literacy is the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information.

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions:

- ✧ Extent or Scope of Information
- ✧ Access of Information
- ✧ Evaluation of Information and its Sources
- ✧ Effective Use of Information for a Specific Purpose
- ✧ Ethical and Legal Access and Use of Information

Definition and outcomes derived from the Association of College and Resource Libraries (ACRL), a variety of readings and group discussions. Conceptualization and operationalization of outcomes for information literacy would require greater elaboration and refinement.

Critical Thinking and Information Literacy: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ❖ Developmental Structure:
 - ❖ Embedded in LLC and linked first-year courses
 - ❖ Flagged course above 100-level
 - ❖ Embedded in capstone experience
- ❖ Transfer students are assessed for critical thinking and information literacy competency and advised to take flagged CTIL courses which are specific to transfer students
- ❖ Provide students with mentoring and tutoring in these competencies
- ❖ Receive sufficient faculty support for development and implementation

Mathematical Reasoning & Problem Solving as a Competency

Conceptual Definition of the Reasoning Process:

- ✧ Creating, following and assessing chains of mathematical arguments
- ✧ Explaining, interpreting, and correctly applying definitions, theorems, and results
- ✧ Having familiarity with the idea of mathematical proof (including the ability to understand and explain simple proofs, to understand and derive mathematical formulas, and to recognize the difference between proofs and informal arguments)

Outcomes Cover these Dimensions:

- ✧ Problem Solving and Modeling
- ✧ Mathematical Reasoning, Argumentation, and Proof
- ✧ Communication

Definition and outcomes derived from a variety of readings on mathematics and problem solving and subcommittee group discussions.

Mathematical Reasoning and Problem Solving: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ✧ All students will satisfy the MRPS competency by either passing a mathematical competency exam or by completing an MRPS core course
- ✧ Students taking the MRPS core course would do so in their freshman or sophomore year

Quantitative Reasoning as a Competency

Quantitative Reasoning

Students cultivate an ability to evaluate and use quantitative evidence in the context of solving complex problems and issues.

Outcomes

- ✧ Interpret and represent quantitative information
 - ❖ Convert relevant information into mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams) and derive meaning from data presented graphically or in tabular form
- ✧ Evaluate validity, recognize assumptions, and apply data in context
- ✧ Communicate
 - ❖ Express quantitative evidence in support of an argument or decision

Definition and outcomes derived from the AAC&U Value Rubric for Quantitative Reasoning, a variety of readings, and subcommittee group discussions.

Quantitative Reasoning: Curricular Structure Recommendations

- ✧ All students are screened for a basic skills course in QR
- ✧ Students at low skill level enroll in a basic skills course in the first year
- ✧ All students take a QR-flagged course
- ✧ QR-flagged courses occur in core, in many majors, or as an elective

Common Features across Competencies

❖ Developmental Course Structure

- ❖ Embedded in or as stand-alone foundational courses
- ❖ Competencies embedded in one flagged course above the 100-level

❖ Foundations-level Courses

- ❖ Complete in first year
- ❖ First and Second Semesters: LLC breadth course and linked 3-unit CTIL course (critical thinking and information literacy) + 1-unit OC integration (oral communication) + Writing course (WC) or Mathematics (MRPS) course (flip with second semester)

❖ Entry-level Screening (includes transfer students)

- ❖ All students tested for competencies in writing, mathematical reasoning and problem solving, quantitative reasoning, and second language
- ❖ Competency exams allow students to test out of or be placed in appropriate-level courses (AP credit may be allowed for some competencies)
- ❖ International students screened for language proficiency at entry
- ❖ Transfer students participate in a preceptorial course that embeds CTIL and OC

❖ Capstones

- ❖ **Synthesis** of competencies in projects (inside/outside of curriculum)

Core Requirements	# of Courses	# of Units	Requirements that could be met in Major
BREADTH (inquiry dimensions with CTIL embedded outcomes)	5-6	15-18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper division ethics • ISJ-flagged course (could satisfy the cultural outcomes in second language courses) • Competencies flagged in courses above 100-level as preparation for a capstone project; NO extra courses • Capstone could be taken inside/outside major (majority of programs have capstones)
Integration units (OC embedded)	0	2	
CIT: THRS courses	2	6	
CIT: Philosophy courses	1-2	3-6	
CIT: ISJ courses	1-2	3-6	
COMPETENCIES			
Written Communication	1	3	
MRPS	1	3	
Second Language	3	9-12	
CAPSTONE	0-1	0-3	
TOTALS	14-18	44-59	
Note: Students could test out of up to 9 (12) units in 2 nd Lang.			
Students may be permitted to test out of or receive AP credit for other competencies.			

Competencies Core Model Presentation

Q&A

Core Competencies Subcommittees

Critical Thinking & Information Literacy

- ✧ Harriet Baber (Philosophy)
- ✧ Lisa Burgert (Copley Library)
- ✧ Jane Friedman (Mathematics)
- ✧ Michelle Gilmore-Grier (Philosophy)
- ✧ Nathalie Reyns (Marine Science/ Environmental Studies)
- ✧ Sandra Sgoutas-Emch (Psychological Sciences)
- ✧ Stefan Vander Elst (English)

Communication (Written, Oral, & Second Language)

- ✧ Tom Dalton (Accounting)
- ✧ Ron Kaufmann (Marine Science/ Environmental Studies)
- ✧ Amanda Petersen (Languages and Literatures)
- ✧ Deborah Sundmacher (English, Writing Center)
- ✧ Irene Williams (English)
- ✧ Larry Williamson (Communication Studies)

Carole Huston – Competency Groups Facilitator
(Communication Studies)

Mathematical Reasoning & Quantitative Reasoning

- ✧ Jennifer Gorsky (Mathematics)
- ✧ Diane Hoffoss (Mathematics)
- ✧ Anne Koenig (Psychological Sciences)
- ✧ Sue Lowery (Biology)
- ✧ Perla Myers (Mathematics and CAS dean's office)
- ✧ Dirk Yandell (Economics)