

## Core Proposal Draft Discussion – Core Planning Committee & Subcommittees

December 2, 2013

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

The CPC and CPC subcommittees convened to discuss a draft of the core curriculum proposal and to decide on whether it was ready to be submitted to undergraduate faculty for review. CPC Chair Kristin Moran said CPC members would receive Microsoft Outlook calendar invitations for the spring meetings on Wednesday, December 4. Spring meetings are in February and March, with a reserved meeting time in April, if needed.

Clickers were distributed to members of the CPC to gauge support for the draft core proposal. A few people had trouble with their clickers due to dead batteries, but received a new clicker if they asked for one. Questions would be phrased as to whether CPC members were generally “comfortable” with various elements of the proposal and whether committee members felt comfortable forwarding the proposal on for a full faculty review. Approximately 28 people participated using clickers. Members clicked “A” to affirm support and “B” to decline support. A few people arrived to the meeting late, hence the range of total responses, which varied between 24-28, as well as the possibility that some abstained from answering a question or questions, and one or two clickers may have stopped working at some point during the meeting.

Moran began with a general overview of the model and explained where changes had been made since the CPC last met on November 19 for the Competencies presentation. Changes were based on the subcommittees’ input and work, as well as discussion at meetings and subcommittee presentations. The total number of units proposed for the revised core is 40.46. This is a decrease from the total number of units (48.54) in the current core curriculum. Moran then discussed each element of the model; discussion ensued alongside engaging the use of clickers to estimate support for the model and its various elements.

### **Integrative Learning**

Integrative learning would take place through a first-year integration seminar (one unit per semester). In the fall, it would be linked to the LLC theme, meeting bi-weekly for two hours (one hour of lecture and one hour of breakout sessions). Each LLC faculty member would give one lecture during the semester. In the spring, the integration seminar would still meet bi-weekly for two hours as in the fall, but would add a structured element related to CIT, as well as incorporate at least one “field experience” where students visit a community site where USD engages in community service learning. A final project at the end of the spring semester would give students the opportunity to demonstrate how they have integrated their knowledge from their LLC theme in the fall with their experience with CIT and community engagement in the spring and would include an oral presentation. A college level introduction to critical thinking, information literacy, and oral communication would be embedded in the first year seminar.

The integrative component introduces students to a liberal arts education by examining a theme (such as social justice) from multiple disciplinary approaches (such as cultural, scientific, economic, etc.) in the fall. A bridge is created from the fall to the spring semester by placing the theme and its interdisciplinary elements, to include CIT, in a real-world setting via one or more field experiences in the spring. The field experiences also introduce students to the opportunities for community service-learning throughout their college careers.

During the senior or final year, students would complete an advanced integration project demonstrating critical thinking and information literacy, skillful writing, oral presentation, and synthesis of knowledge. The project would be added to a “major” or “core” capstone course as a one-unit component. The “major” capstone would have an interdisciplinary component. The “core” capstone would be a culmination of the developmental approach across the core curriculum.

The issue of compensation was brought up, due to the additional workload anticipated. An increase in compensation for faculty who participate in the full, first-year seminar has not yet been determined, but would be discussed. Not all faculty would be required to do an integration seminar, only those who are interested or those who are currently LLC preceptors and wish to continue. Current survey data shows that students enjoy the co-curricular aspects of the LLCs, but are not yet seeing the academic connections. LLC faculty say that students are missing the intellectual integrative component. The lecture and breakout sessions are in part meant to address the current disconnection between the LLCs and the academic component and would not be taught during “dead hours.” The two-hour seminars would be part of the class schedule.

It was asked how students would remain in the same LLC in the spring. Currently, students cannot change LLCs. They would not be able to change themes in the integration model. If they begin in social justice, they continue in the spring with that same theme. The LLC *theme* would continue from the fall into the spring for the 1-unit integration seminar. If a student could not get into an LLC spring course, they would still meet with their LLC group in the one-unit seminar. Other logistical and implementation issues were also discussed, such as the use of auditoriums for lectures and splitting LLC groups if necessary to accommodate for space, meeting one week with half the LLC, and the next week with the other half of the LLC, in lieu of meeting bi-weekly with the entire LLC. Ideally, faculty teaching in an LLC in the fall would also teach in the spring LLC cohort course. Spring courses would be flexible so that faculty could teach a cohort class in another breadth area.

LLC directors are very busy; how does the integration seminar affect their workload? If it is agreed that the integration seminar is a pedagogically enriching experience for students and should be a requirement of the new core curriculum, then it will need to be worked out how to compensate faculty who participate in a year-long LLC either as a director or an instructor. LLC themes will need to be chosen carefully to find areas of multi- and interdisciplinary connections, in addition to finding preceptors who are a good fit for an LLC theme.

#### Clicker session:

- Do you generally support a first-year integration seminar? 24 Yes; 2 No.
- Do you generally support the fall integration seminar and its connection to the LLC theme and preceptorial? 23 Yes; 1 No
- Do you generally support the spring integration seminar and its connection to an LLC cohort course, so that the integration seminar is one full year? 17 Yes; 9 No.

#### Theology and Religious Studies Inquiry

Students would take two courses in THRS: one lower-division course and one upper-division course. They would also take one Philosophy course, one Ethics course, and two flagged developmental courses in Inclusion and Social Justice (one course from a domestic perspective, and one either from a domestic or global/transnational perspective). It is expected that the THRS department would provide the majority of THRS courses and the Philosophy department would provide the majority of Ethics courses, but other units could contribute to either or both. The THRS courses would pay particular attention to Catholic theology and tradition while recognizing the diversity of religious traditions and how religion is part of human experience and values.

The ISJ courses would recognize the inherent dignity of each person as an integral part of the CIT. It is strongly recommended that transnational linkages between the local and global elements be made within this two-course sequence to bring together the knowledge, comprehension, and experience of social justice and inclusion. Courses meeting ISJ learning outcomes may also satisfy Breadth, CIT, and/or “major” course requirements. Preliminary learning outcomes have been developed for each area; the CIT subcommittee developed proposed learning outcomes for Ethics and Philosophy.

A CIT committee would be formed to oversee courses in these areas. Committee representation would be a majority of faculty from THRS, PHIL, and Ethnic Studies, with representation from other areas to ensure a multidisciplinary representation. Faculty outside of the THRS, PHIL, and Ethnic Studies departments would need to submit their course proposal to the committee. The committee would determine if the proposal meets the learning outcomes and if the syllabus demonstrates expertise in the area. The learning outcomes would help guide courses approved for THRS, PHIL, and Ethnic Studies. It is possible there could be one committee or as many as three committees (each area having its own committee). If the course proposal fails, faculty may appeal. This proposal process would also assist for assessment purposes.

The proposed ISJ courses would differ from the current “D” courses. “D” courses vary in the percentage of the subject devoted to inclusion and diversity (such as a third or half of the course). ISJ courses would wholly comprise inclusion, diversity, and social justice themes along with the ISJ learning outcomes.

#### Clicker session:

- Are you generally comfortable with the PHIL learning outcomes and the requirement of 1 PHIL course and

- 1 Ethics course? 25 Yes; 3 No
- Are you generally comfortable with the THRS/CIT learning outcomes and the requirement of 1 lower-division and 1 upper-division course? 24 Yes; 2 No
- Are you generally comfortable with having the option to teach an Ethics course open to various departments outside of Philosophy? 24 Yes; 1 No
- Are you generally in favor of having two flagged, developmental ISJ courses, one of which is solely domestic-oriented? 20 Yes; 7 No
- Are you generally in favor of supporting the creation of a CIT committee to oversee the Theology and Religious Studies inquiry, to be comprised of a majority of THRS, PHIL, and Ethnic Studies experts, but to also include some representatives from other disciplines, instead of having separate PHIL, THRS, and ES committees? 18 Yes; 7 No

### **Breadth**

Five courses are recommended to fulfill the breadth requirement (one from each inquiry plus an additional course from an inquiry chosen by the student) with no more than two from the same department. It was asked why four courses are not required instead of five. Mike Mayer explained that the fifth breadth course gives students an opportunity to use an extra elective they otherwise might not have had, as well as to consider pursuing a minor in one of the areas of inquiry. If a second course was taken from scientific inquiry, for example, the student could take it without a lab. The current core involves seven courses, so the new model reduces the number to five courses.

Another question was how to accommodate for overlap, such as a creative writing course, which could fall under the artistic inquiry and/or the historical and literary inquiry. Will the core have to be “reinvented” every semester considering the amount of faculty oversight needed regarding which courses will fall under an inquiry or multiple inquiries? Careful consideration of the syllabus and learning outcomes would help guide decisions on which courses would fit within an inquiry or inquiries.

It was asked why literary and historical inquiries were grouped together. Mayer explained that they are part of the humanities tradition and that the Breadth subcommittee was looking to see how disciplines naturally cluster. AP credit satisfying an inquiry requirement is still under discussion.

### **Clicker session:**

- Are you generally comfortable with this structure for breadth? 23 Yes; 2 No

### **Competencies**

A foundational first-year seminar (a new course) in writing is recommended for the written communication competency (taught by faculty who know how to teach writing). Courses in the major or in breadth designated as an intermediate-level writing course in the major or in a breadth course, above the 100-level, would fulfill the intermediate-level of writing competency, culminating with an advanced writing component as part of a capstone within the major or a breadth inquiry, or as an advanced-level writing course similar to the current “W” requirement for advanced writing.

Oral communication would be embedded throughout the curriculum, in the first-year integration seminar with a student presentation at the end of the spring semester, followed by an intermediate-level flagged course for oral communication, and culminating in as an advanced component with a capstone in the major or in a breadth category. No credits are associated with the oral communication competency because it is embedded. It has not yet been discussed if courses taught in another language could be flagged for oral competency.

Critical thinking and information literacy courses would be embedded in the major and in the breadth inquiries, recognizing that many courses already incorporate CTIL. A course flagged for CTIL means that CTIL skills are applied in the course. In this new model, critical thinking is not limited to a logic or mathematical logic course. Logic and mathematical logic courses would still be included, but additional courses could also be taken that involve different types of critical thinking and information literacy. Much of this is already done, but this enables students and faculty to more clearly demonstrate learning and teaching of CTIL.

The second language would continue as a third-semester competency, 0-3 semesters at 3-units per semester, finding that a 4-unit structure is premature at the moment. If reconsidered later, the core curriculum committee could take up this possibility of a unit increase.

The Mathematical Reasoning and Problem Solving competency would be fulfilled by a math course and must be taken before the Quantitative Reasoning course. Quantitative Reasoning would be met by taking an MRPS or QR flagged course in a breadth area or in the major. A major or breadth course that includes research methods could fulfill the QR competency. A humanities major,

### **Jurisdiction**

A Senate Core Curriculum Committee is proposed to have jurisdiction over core courses. Representation would be proportionally based on the Senate, but with undergraduate programs only. The SCCC would review annual reports from each area committee, handle appeals, and be responsible for meeting academic program review guidelines for the core curriculum. In any case, the Senate would still have jurisdiction over the core curriculum, whether if a SCCC is created or not. The SCCC would not approve courses, but could function as an appeals committee and be responsible for ensuring that proposed courses would meet the APR guidelines.

Essentially the current CPC would be replaced by the SCCC along with three area committees: Breadth & Integration (representatives from the different inquiry groups), CIT (majority THRS, PHIL, and ES, but including at-large members), and Competencies (representatives reviewing courses for designation of a particular competency or competencies).

There was some concern over the appropriateness of having experts outside of a particular field or competency weighing in on a discussion and whether experts within a field or competency would have more influence. The competencies committee would be comprised of experts in those competencies; breadth would have experts per the breadth areas listed. There was also some concern expressed about having too many committees and a heavily flagged curriculum, such as Pepperdine.

The committee structures are meant to be conscientious, not overwhelming or burdensome. They are to be organized to make “intellectual sense” for the different areas, though numbers and representation have not yet been determined. The committees would preferably be created by election, not appointment.

### **Clicker session:**

- Are you generally comfortable with recommending to the Senate that a Senate-level core curriculum committee be established? 23 Yes; 1 No
- Are you generally comfortable with the 3 area committees' structure, details of which are still to be worked out? Yes 23; 3 No

### **Assessment**

The Core Curriculum would count as a program that would follow academic program review (APR) guidelines outlined by the Academic Review Committee (ARC). The core would be reviewed every six years, like any other program. The SCCC would be responsible for meeting the APR guidelines. There was no clicker session for assessment because it is given that, per WASC, assessment and academic program review are essential.

### **Forwarding Core Proposal for Faculty Review**

The proposal emailed to undergraduate faculty would include a breakdown of the level of support from the clicker sessions. The proposal will have links to the individual subcommittee reports on the Core website. The proposal, subcommittee reports and revisions, and notes from the CPC presentations will be on the Core website when the emailed proposal is sent to undergraduate faculty.

### **Clicker session:**

- Are you generally comfortable with distributing the current proposal for full faculty review due to a majority of the CPC feeling comfortable with the above suggestions, per the clicker sessions? 25 Yes; 3 No