Academic Integration in the Core Report

Rae Anderson, James Bolender, Tom Dalton, Margaret Leary, Susan Lord, Chris Nayve, Roger Pace, Sandra Sgoutas-Emch, Yi Sun, Mike Williams
The Case for Integration

- Current Core does not offer structured opportunities for knowledge integration
- High impact practices (HIPs) research is clear that integration of knowledge is beneficial and gives students opportunities to address complex issues and to engage in real world problem-solving (Brownell and Swaner 2010).
Working Definition

According to AACU Integrative Value Rubric, integrative learning is “an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.”
Main Recommendations of Report

- Creation of a developmental model of integration that scaffolds from first year courses and experiences to the upper division level.

- Students complete three units of “integration” in the Core and transfer students complete two units of the integration.

- First year students will complete two units of the integration requirement through a first year seminar course offered in the fall and spring. The third unit of the integration is the completion of a Core Capstone course/experience.

- Transfer students complete one unit of the integration requirement in first semester through a transfer seminar course and the second unit of integration completed by Core Capstone course/experience.
An Interdisciplinary and Developmental Model of Integration

- USD’s fourth learning goal requires that students “integrate patterns of learning,” and “develop the ability to synthesize disparate areas of knowledge and courses of study though individual and collaborative learning.”
- Provide students with opportunities to understand and appreciate the value of interdisciplinary approaches to issues.
- Students should also apply what they have learned in a developmental model concluding with the Core Capstone course/experience.
The Developmental Approach

4th YEAR
Integration Capstone Experience (3 options)

2nd & 3rd YEARS
Interdisciplinary Core Requirements: Breadth, CIT, Competencies

FIRST YEAR
LLC Preceptorial Fall
Integration Seminar

LLC Cohort Course Spring
Integration Seminar
Social Justice LLC (Fall 2013)

- Intro to Ethnic Studies
- Modern Latin America
- Intro to Evolution
- The Global South
- Intro to Engineering
- Natural Disasters
- Theatre and Society
- Power and Inequality in Global Perspective
How to make linkages between classes?

- Intro to Ethnic Studies
- Intro to Engineering
- Theatre And Society
- Modern Latin America
- Intro to Evolution
- Power and Inequality in Global Perspective
- The Global South
- Natural Disasters
INTEGRATION SEMINAR I
-2 hrs every 2 weeks
-1 hr theme-based lecture from LLC faculty
-1 hr breakout session
-final project/presentation

Intro to Ethnic Studies
Intro to Engineering
Theatre And Society
Power and Inequality in Global Perspective
The Global South
Natural Disasters
Modern Latin America
Intro to Evolution
Goals for 1st Year Seminar
Fall Semester One-Unit Course

• To achieve academic integration in fall semester amongst courses offered in each LLC.
• Provide comparative framework of how different courses understand issues, questions, and concepts within LLC theme.
• Include a focus on competencies. Example: the fall semester could focus on writing and provide an important writing diagnostic.
• For more details please see full report.
Goals for 1st Year Seminar
Spring Semester One-Unit Course

- Required four-unit “cohort class” offered within their LLC theme.
- Focus on community-based engagement and learning about the San Diego community.
- Combined lecture and one hour of breakout session format.
- Final project demonstrating how students integrated the knowledge from their fall and spring courses as well as the freshman seminar.
Linking Semesters: Cohort Classes

FALL SEMESTER COURSES (20 students)
* Intro to Ethnic Studies*
* Intro to Evolution*
* Theatre and Society*
* Natural Disasters*
* Intro to Engineering*
* Intro to Ethnic Studies*
* Modern Latin America*
* The Global South*
* Power and Inequality in Global Perspective*

Each student enrolls in spring cohort class in the same LLC theme but in a different discipline than Fall semester LLC course

SPRING SEMESTER COURSES (30 students)
** Chemistry & Society**
* Power and Inequality in Global Perspective*
** Race & Ethnicity in the American Experience**
** Christianity & its Practice**
** Philosophy of Human Nature**

Cohort Courses could be new courses OR courses offered in the fall LLC
Linking Cohort Courses

INTEGRATION SEMINAR II
- similar format/schedule as Seminar I
- added emphasis on San Diego community, service-learning opportunities
- application of knowledge to off-campus site visits
- final project/presentation

Chemistry & Society

Power and Inequality in Global Perspective

Race & Ethnicity in the American Experience

Philosophy of Human Nature

Christianity & its Practice
Goals of LLC Cohort Classes (Spring)

- The LLCs offer a unique opportunity for students to make linkages across disciplines and through co-curricular activities.
- Cohort class would provide another opportunity for students to think more concretely about interdisciplinary approaches and continue to make linkages in the spring semester.
- Depending on LLC course offerings, this cohort class is an opportunity for students to address learning goals related to writing, civic engagement, and ethical and moral reasoning.
Integration Capstone

- Goals
  - Further develop integration skills
  - Synthesize broad knowledge attained through liberal arts core
  - Consistent with the goals of an integrative developmental model

- 3 alternatives for achieving Goals (1 integration unit)
  - Major-specific Capstone Course
  - Core Capstone course (Portland State Model)
  - Capstone Seminar linked to upper-division Cluster
Major-Specific Capstone

COURSE/EXPERIENCE
- 1-3 unit course requirement fulfilled within major
- Each capstone approved by “Integration Committee”
- Must demonstrate some degree of integration of competencies and disciplines, application of knowledge
- Office of CSL resource for majors to develop more interdisciplinary capstones
- Alternative capstone available for majors without capstone
- Public project presentation

PRO:
- Opportunity to integrate competencies & apply knowledge
- Flexibility for majors with existing capstones (& very structured requirements)

CON:
- Limited focus on interdisciplinary approaches, understanding, integration
Core Capstone

**COURSE/EXPERIENCE**
- 1-3 unit course requirement
- Interdisciplinary student/faculty collaboration to address complex issue in San Diego community
- Office of CSL helps to facilitate community project
- Public project presentation

**PRO:**
- Structure for interdisciplinary connections, applying knowledge, Connecting curric. & co-curric, integrating competencies

**CON:**
- Unclear which department(s) would offer capstone (resources, faculty needed)

*Capstone Course based on Portland State Model*
Capstone Cluster: Ex. The Energy Crisis

INTEGRATION SEMINAR III
- project-based 1-unit
  requirement
- interdisciplinary teams of
  students complete thematic
  project
- Cluster faculty organize/advise
  teams/projects
- public project presentation

PHYS: Energy &
the Environment

ECON: Economics of
Energy Production/Use

MARS: Impact of
Energy Sources
on Environment

POLS: Impact of
Policy on Energy
Production/Use

ENGR: Engineering
next generation of
Energy Sources

*all courses in example fulfill major requirements. Cluster courses could
alternatively fulfill a core requirement (i.e. breadth, CIT, etc)
INTEGRATION SEMINAR III

- project-based 1-unit requirement
- interdisciplinary teams of students complete thematic project
- Cluster faculty organize/advise teams/projects
- public project presentation

**PRO:**
- Courses fulfill major or additional core requirement, benefits structured major programs, already developed courses used

**CON:**
- Potential scheduling difficulties if 1-unit seminar must have all students meet at same time

**PRO:**
- Structure for interdisciplinary connections, applying knowledge, Connecting curr. & co-curr., integrating competencies

**PRO:**
- Parallel structure to 1st year seminar, consistent structure for faculty/students

*all courses in example fulfill major requirements. Cluster courses could alternatively fulfill a core requirement (i.e. breadth, CIT, etc)*
Why is Integration Critical?

- USD currently provides students with many unique learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom but what is lacking are ways to link these courses and experiences in more meaningful ways.
- Students will graduate from USD as citizens who understand how to solve complex problems.
- More integration will provide students with a way to synthesize and apply their learning in a way that defines the USD experience.
- Integration is central to a liberal arts education.
Summary: Main Recommendations of Report

- Creation of a developmental model of integration that scaffolds from first year courses and experiences to the upper division level.
- Students complete three units of “integration” in the Core and transfer students complete two units of the integration.
- First year students will complete two units of the integration requirement through a first year seminar course offered in the fall and spring. The third unit of the integration is the completion of a Core Capstone course/experience.
- Transfer students complete one unit of the integration requirement in first semester through a transfer seminar course and the second unit of integration completed by Core Capstone course/experience.