

Resource Packet for Core Curriculum Revision Fall 2006 Santa Clara University

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Core Curriculum Revision Committee

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Dear colleagues,

Welcome back to Fall Quarter 2006!

We would like to give you an update on the work of the Core Curriculum Revision Committee, and invite you to continue to participate in the core revision process. Attached to this letter is a packet of informational material that you may find useful. We will present and contextualize these materials at the Faculty Convocation at 4:30 pm on September 12 in Mayer Theater, but want to circulate them in advance so that you have an opportunity to consider them in depth and over time.

The charge of the committee is to propose a revision of the core curriculum that reflects the mission, strategic plan, and accreditation standards of the university, and is accompanied by a clear statement of intended learning outcomes and connections between curriculum and outcomes. The committee believes that a revision should build on the strengths of our current core. We are also committed, as is the university as a whole, to a core that is built around the learning of our students, as well as to fortifying our community of teaching scholars who bear the mission of educating them.

Our committee has been consulting widely and deeply on the strengths and weaknesses of the current core curriculum. During the spring the committee held approximately 70 meetings, including several open meetings, and made ourselves available to meet with departments and individuals. We also researched core curricula at other universities and explored ideas for revising the core at a four-day intensive institute held in June at Catholic University, sponsored by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Our work continued over the summer, as we drafted the attached documents, continued to meet with faculty, and began to explore potential modifications to the structure of the core.

Because the core revision is a process led by the faculty, we have distilled the attached principles, mission, and learning outcomes from what we heard in our conversations with you this past spring. The draft documents take into consideration as well Santa Clara's membership in the higher education community in the United States and the world, and, in particular, our distinctiveness as a Jesuit liberal arts university.

We have learned these past months that attention to foundational principles and learning outcomes must precede arrival at any successful modifications to the current core, or to proposal of a new core. Once a consensus among the faculty is established with regard to these principles and learning outcomes, we will better be able to suggest structures that might accommodate them.

With this end in view, there will be ample opportunity provided to discuss both the draft principles and learning outcomes at multiple forums and through a campus survey during fall quarter. Through these means, we will seek your thoughtful responses on these principles and learning outcomes. These will, in turn, be revised as needed and inform any proposals, which we

plan to introduce later this fall. At that time, a second phase of consultation of faculty and other constituencies will commence. Our final proposals will be submitted for faculty approval at the conclusion of these processes of drafting and consultation.

The process of crafting learning outcomes and mapping them to curriculum requires active and continued participation of faculty and campus programs. Arriving at broad consensus is the goal. To that end, the committee will continue consulting with faculty and programs. We encourage all faculty, programs, departments, and schools to engage in the conversations that will lead to constructive results.

Finally, we wish to say that our work confirms for us that Santa Clara is unusually situated as a strong university. Over the past decade, the university community has made tremendous progress in determining mission and learning goals, and this has made the committee's work a delight. It is our hope that this core process will help us all build upon a proven record of success. We thank you for your continuing interest in this important project for the future of Jesuit education at Santa Clara.

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Principles and Practical Considerations for Core Curriculum Revision

Core Curriculum Revision Committee
Santa Clara University
Draft: June 29, 2006

Principles

A Santa Clara University Core should:

Promote the university mission...

- Advance the mission of SCU as a Catholic, Jesuit university that promotes and integrates “rigorous inquiry and scholarship, creative imagination, reflective engagement with society, and a commitment to fashioning a more humane and just world”
- Reflect the university’s strategic vision to “prepare students for professional excellence, responsible citizenship, and service to society, especially on behalf of those in greatest need”
- Align with the accreditation standards of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and other accrediting bodies
- Be common to all students in all schools and degrees
- Expose students to a wide variety of disciplines and subjects

Focus on student learning...

- State intended learning outcomes and the ways in which they are achieved through the curriculum
- Promote the development of students’ ways of knowing in sequenced courses and through pedagogies that move students to more complex levels of thinking or feeling over time (e.g. appreciation of ambiguity, or acting in solidarity with those in need)
- Cultivate students as intentional learners who regularly plan and reflect on their learning throughout their undergraduate careers and beyond

Complement the university as a whole ...

- Support the ability of faculty to be a community of teaching scholars
- Promote integrated learning by encouraging students and faculty to make connections among courses, among disciplines, between academic study and community experiences, between theory and practice, between curriculum and co-curricular programs, between academics and vocation

Practical Considerations

A revised Core should:

- Emerge from a process of wide campus consultation
- Build on the achievements and strengths of the existing Core
- Provide a framework for meaningful, manageable, and sustainable assessment of learning outcomes that supports faculty development and improves student learning
- Collaborate with Centers, Institutes, Programs, Residential Learning Communities, etc. to realize Core learning outcomes
- Ensure that transfer students can participate substantially in the Santa Clara Core
- Support a Core coordinator with adequate resources to ensure the continuing coherence, vitality, and adaptability of the Core
- Provide necessary resources to assist departments in implementing new responsibilities
- Offer adequate resources for interdisciplinary and collaborative teaching
- Supply necessary resources for assessment of the Core

Core Mission and Learning Outcomes

Core Curriculum Revision Committee
Santa Clara University
Draft: August 25, 2006

Mission of the Santa Clara University Core

A university expresses its most basic values in its core curriculum, that part of an undergraduate education shared by all students. As a Jesuit, Catholic university, Santa Clara University promotes rigorous inquiry and scholarship, creative imagination, reflective engagement with society, and a commitment to fashioning a more humane and just world.

Santa Clara University's Core Curriculum seeks to foster in students a spirit of informed, grounded, and purposeful engagement with an increasingly complex and interdependent world. The Core fosters the knowledge, habits of mind, and engagement with the world that distinguish a Santa Clara University education. The Core encourages and enables students to become citizens of competence, conscience, and compassion.

The Core Curriculum provides the opportunity for all students to develop these qualities and abilities together. The breadth of the Core—requiring students to engage in many disciplines—helps students discover hidden capabilities and complements existing competencies. The Core develops in students the foundations of *knowledge* of the world in which they live, a set of life-long *habits of mind* that enable them to participate in this world, and an *engagement with the world* devoted to discovering oneself through helping others.

Knowledge

To be prepared for *well-informed* engagement in society, students must comprehend what has shaped the world they have inherited, the evolving ways of understanding it, and how they might transform it for the better. To that end, the Core deepens students' knowledge of the most profound ideas and ways of knowing that emerge from the arts, humanities, natural and social sciences. Students develop a critical understanding of:

- The intertwined development of western and world cultures, ideas, institutions, and religions
- The principles of the scientific method and how to apply them in the natural and social sciences
- Analytical, logical and quantitative reasoning for problem-solving
- The production, interpretation, and impact of technology and the arts
- The diversity of human experiences, identities, and interpretations of social life within societies
- Ways of practicing the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society and in the world

Habits of Mind

To contribute to a *rapidly changing, complex and interdependent* world, students must develop ways of thinking and acting that allow them to educate themselves for the rest of their lives with passion and purpose. Through this honing of the mind, the Core enables students to think more deeply, communicate more clearly, and collaborate more effectively. Students learn to:

- Identify, reflect upon, evaluate, integrate, and apply different types of information and knowledge to form independent judgments
- Develop a nuanced approach to understanding the world that embraces ambiguity and complexity as well as clarity and precision
- Collaborate intellectually and creatively with diverse people
- Seek out the experience of different cultures and people, striving to view the world through their eyes
- Communicate effectively with different audiences, especially through writing, speech, and a second language

Engagement with the world

To engage the world in *meaningful* ways, students need opportunities to explore and refine self-knowledge in relation to others, especially the less fortunate. By encouraging reflection on the value and meaning of life, the Core enhances students' understanding of the integrity of their own life and the dignity inherent in the lives of others. The Core develops students' capacities for and commitment to:

- Clarifying and deepening beliefs, especially through open inquiry into the religious dimensions of human experience
- Weighing the ethical consequences of individual and institutional decisions
- Taking responsibility for major contemporary societal issues with a focus on social justice, environmental sustainability, and peaceful resolution of conflict
- Participating actively as a citizen of society and the world

How Learning Outcomes are Met in Existing Core Curriculum

Note: A bold X indicates that a course makes a major contribution to a learning outcome; a small X indicates some contribution. The contributions listed here are based on existing desc area of the Core in the Core Curriculum booklet. This may not fully reflect the actual contributions of each area. Conversely, it may overestimate the actual contributions of courses in an outcomes they were initially designed to teach. In either case, this indicates that we can be clearer about aligning learning outcomes with the components of a revised Core.

Learning Outcomes	Knowledge1 West/World Cultures	Knowledge2 Sci Method	Knowledge3 Quant Reasoning	Knowledge4 Tech & Arts	Knowledge5 Diversity	Knowledge6 Civic	Habits of Mind1 Critical Thinking	Habits of Mind2 Complexity	Habits of Mind3 Collaboration	Habits of Mind4 Cultl Empathy	Habits of Mind5 Communication	Orientation1 Clarifying Beliefs
University Reqmnts												
C1 - Eng 1					X		X		X		X	
C2 - Eng 2					X		X		X		X	
C3 - Rel 1	X				X		X			X		X
C4 - Rel 2	X						X					
C5 - Rel 3	X						X	X				
C6 - US	X					X	X					
C7 - WestCult1	X					X	X					
C8 - WestCult2	X					X	X					
C9 - Math			X				X					
C10 - Nat Sci		X	X				X	X				
C11 - Math or Nat Sci		X?	X or X				X	X?				
C12 - Soc Sci	X	X	X		X		X					
C13 - Tech			X	X							X	
C14 - Ethics						X	X	X				X
C15 - 3rd Writing					X		X				X	
C16 - W.Cult (Area)	X				X		X			X		
Totals	6 (2)	2 or 3	1 or 2 (3 or 4)	1	3 (3)	4	13 (2)	3 or 4	0 (2)	2	3 (1)	1 (1)
A&S Reqmnts												
C17 - WestCult (BA)	X					X	X					
C18 - Extra Math/Sci (BS)												
C19 - Ethnic/Women	X				X			X		X		
C20 - Fine Arts	X			X							X	
C21 - W.Cult (World/Area)												
C22-24 - 2d Lang	X									X	X	
Totals	8 (4)	2 or 3	1 or 2 (3 or 4)	2	4 (3)	5	13 (2)	3 or 4 (1)	0 (2)	4	4 (2)	1 (1)
Business Reqmnts												
C17-18 - 2d Lang	X									X	X	
Totals	6 (3)	2 or 3	1 or 2 (3 or 4)	1	3 (3)	4	13 (2)	3 or 4	0 (2)	3	4 (1)	1 (1)

Implications

Learning outcomes do not need to be equally distributed across the Core. Some courses may focus intensively on one learning outcome, while other outcomes may be reinforced through multiple courses. However, several learning outcomes do appear to need strengthening across the Core.

- Collaboration:** This is only explicitly addressed in Eng 1 and 2.
- Experiential learning:** Several learning outcomes - seeking out the experience of different cultures and people, taking responsibility for social issues, and active civic participation - imply the need for Core. This does not currently exist.
- Vocation:** Several learning outcomes especially aim to help students discover how their life's work intersects with their deepest interests and values - where one's talents meet the needs of society, related to students' orientation to society, as well as others. There are currently no structural elements of the Core that explicitly help students draw together and reflect on what they have learned, and v
- Fine Arts and Second Language:** Not all students are exposed to these learning outcomes in the current Core.

Possible areas of improvement based on conversations with faculty and students

Core Curriculum Revision Committee Santa Clara University Draft: August 25, 2006

- A More Integrated and Coherent Core Structure. Students frequently choose core classes based on their schedules, which tend to be driven by the demands of their major. As a result, there is often a lack of integration and coherence in the path that individual students follow. Double and triple dipping exacerbates the problem, as does the fact that there are a very large number of eligible core courses (well over 700).
- Greater Emphasis on Interdisciplinary Work. The current core offers a wide array of topics, but individual courses often address very specific issues. There is considerable pedagogical merit in reducing the overall degree of specialization, and systematically promoting interdisciplinary thinking across the curriculum. This would allow students to connect diverse fields of knowledge with greater ease.
- Active Engagement and Experiential Learning. There are a number of programs on campus that offer possibilities for experiential learning and active engagement with important social issues. In order to ensure that all students are exposed to this mode of learning, an “experiential” component could be included in the core.
- Teamwork, Collaboration and Diversity. A concerted effort could be made to foster teamwork and collaboration (through group projects and similar activities). This may already be built into some existing core courses, but is currently not mandatory. Students could also be systematically exposed to collaborating with diverse people, which is an increasingly important ability in a globalizing world.
- Global Citizenship and Multicultural Perspectives. The existing division into Western and World Cultures does not fully reflect the ongoing process of globalization. Rather than treating each theme separately, it could be more productive to systematically reinforce the existing connections.
- Vocational Discernment. Vocational discernment aims to help students discover how their life’s work intersects with their deepest interests, and how their talents can best meet the needs of society. There are currently no structural elements of the core that explicitly address this issue.
- Expanding the RLC Experience. The current core provides students with a unique opportunity for peer learning in the context of RLCs. There is broad agreement on campus that this experience could be expanded to a larger set of courses.
- Involvement of Centers and Institutes. The Centers and Institutes developed since the last revision of the Core are not clearly linked to the curriculum. Because they reflect the priorities of the University, they could be more directly involved with the core.
- Greater Emphasis on Natural Sciences. The current core is heavily weighted in favor of the humanities. Most core courses that deal with the social implications of science do not have a strong scientific content. These connections could be strengthened.
- Better Structure for Assessment Purposes. The current core can be improved by matching specific requirements to clear overall learning outcomes. This feature is important for the accreditation process, and provides a tool for ongoing improvement.

Public Fora on Core Revision

Core Curriculum Revision Committee Santa Clara University

August 28, 2006

The Core Curriculum Committee will hold four meetings in September that are open to faculty interested in discussing mission, learning outcomes, principles and implications for structuring of a revised Core. In addition, the Sept. 26 Faculty Development Forum will address the implications of student learning for revising our Core Curriculum, and the Oct. 4 Women's Faculty Group meeting will be devoted to discussing Core Curriculum issues.

Sept 26 (Noon-1)	Wiegand Room	Faculty Development Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Interdisciplinarity and Integrated Learning</i>: How is the Core interdisciplinary now and how could it be more so?• <i>Intentional learning</i>: How could the Core foster more intentional learning?
Sept 28 (Noon-1)	Benson Parlors BC	Faculty Feedback Forum on Principles and Learning Outcomes
Oct 3 (4-5:30 pm)	Benson Parlors BC	Faculty Feedback Forum on Principles and Learning Outcomes
Oct 4 (Noon-1)	Benson Parlors BC	Faculty Feedback Forum on Principles and Learning Outcomes
Oct 4 (Noon-1)	TBA	Women's Faculty Group meeting
Oct 5 (Noon-1)	Benson Parlors BC	Faculty Feedback Forum on Principles and Learning Outcomes

Online Resources

Core Curriculum Revision Committee Santa Clara University

August 28, 2006

GIVING FEEDBACK AND ASSESSING DOCUMENTS

Site for filling out online survey about Core principles and learning outcomes:

To be sent to faculty via email on Sept. 12

Core Curriculum Revision Committee blog:

<http://newcorecurriculum.blogspot.com>

JESUIT EDUCATION

Articles on Jesuit education:

http://www.bc.edu/offices/mission/exploring/jesuniv/omalley_education/

http://www.bc.edu/offices/mission/exploring/cathuniv/buckley_new_humanism/

<http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/brackley.html>

http://www.bc.edu/offices/mission/exploring/cathuniv/hollenbach_common_good/

GENERAL LIBERAL EDUCATION

American Association of Colleges and Universities:

<http://www.aacu.org>

***Greater Expectations*, an AAC&U publication on the goals of a twentieth-century liberal education:**

<http://www.greaterexpectations.org/>

***Integrative Learning: Mapping the Terrain*, a paper on creating opportunities for students to connect their learning into a more coherent whole:**

<http://carnegiefoundation.org/dynamic/publications/mapping-terrain.pdf>

***Our Students' Best Work*, an AAC&U position paper on assessments appropriate for learning and accountability purposes:**

<http://www.aacu.org/publications/pdfs/StudentsBestReport.pdf>

Liberal Education Outcomes: A Preliminary Report on Student Achievement in College:

http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/pdfs/LEAP_Report_FINAL.pdf

Site with links to various documents on reforming general education requirements:

<http://webs.wichita.edu/senate/GenEdResources.htm>