CORE CURRICULUM

The University of San Diego’s core curriculum fosters the pursuit of knowledge through active student and faculty participation in core courses throughout a student’s academic program. The core promotes critical appreciation of beauty, truth and goodness in the context of engagement with the Catholic intellectual tradition and diverse faith communities. The high academic standards of the core curriculum will sharpen student learning in critical thinking and analytical thinking, and increase competency skills in writing, oral communication and cognitive reasoning. Students will be well equipped to creatively envision, articulate and apply new solutions to the problems of today and be prepared to confront humanity’s urgent challenges.

Only courses approved as meeting core curriculum student learning outcomes can be applied to core curriculum requirements.

**Integrative Learning**

Goal: Integrate knowledge, insights and skills gained through scholarly inquiry and strong community into the quest for truth as a continuous process of making connections. Students complete two integration experiences, one during their first year at USD and another as they are completing their degree requirements.

- First year students participate in the two-semester Living Learning Community (LLC) program by taking two courses that will satisfy core and/or major/minor requirements.
- Transfer students participate in the one-semester Transfer Learning Community (TLC) program by taking one course that will satisfy core and/or major/minor requirements.

Students complete an advanced integration experience and/or project in which they synthesize and apply knowledge and/or skills from multiple disciplines or perspectives. These courses will satisfy core and/or major or minor requirements.

**Competencies**

Goal: Learn essential skills of written communication, mathematical reasoning and problem solving, second language, oral communication, critical thinking, information literacy and quantitative reasoning in order to become effective leaders.

**Written Communication**

Successfully complete the First Year Writing course (FYW 150) or demonstrate competency by passing a composition exam.

Successfully complete an Advanced Writing course, which is writing intensive and instructive, focusing on writing as a process. Advanced Writing courses are offered by a variety of departments and will be clearly identified with an “Advanced Writing” attribute.

**Mathematical Reasoning and Problem Solving**

Students must demonstrate competency either by successfully completing one of the approved mathematics core curriculum courses or by passing an examination in mathematics.

**Second Language**

Third semester competency in a second language is required for students seeking the bachelor’s degree. Students are encouraged to fulfill this requirement during their first two years at USD. This can be done by successfully completing the third-semester course (201); by taking a course beyond this level in any of the nine languages offered in the Department of Languages, Cultures and Literatures; or through alternate credit.

**Oral Communication**

Students successfully complete a course in the core or in the major/minor that includes an oral communication component. Courses that include oral communication will be clearly identified with an “Oral Communication” attribute.

**Quantitative Reasoning**

Students successfully complete a course in the core or in the major/minor that includes a quantitative reasoning component. Courses that include quantitative reasoning will be clearly identified with a “Quantitative Reasoning” attribute.

**Critical Thinking and Information Literacy**

Students demonstrate Critical Thinking and Information Literacy by satisfying outcomes in Historical Inquiry courses (see below).

**Foundations**

Goal: Become individuals who, through the search for truth and goodness, uphold the dignity and aspirations of all people; and who critically and creatively explore the “big questions” about God, personal identity and social identity.

**Theological and Religious Inquiry**

Students successfully complete two courses in the study of religion. One course must include the study of Catholic Christianity and one course must be upper division.

**Philosophical Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one approved course in the study of Philosophy.

**Ethical Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one course in the study of ethics.

**Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice**

Students successfully complete two courses that are identified with a “DISJ” attribute. Courses are developmental, and the level 1 course must be completed prior to enrolling in the level 2 course. At least one course must be domestically focused.

**Explorations**

Goal: Critically and creatively explore the breadth of the liberal arts, focusing on social identity, scientific literacy and personal expression through varied modes of inquiry.

**Scientific and Technological Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one science or technology course that includes a laboratory experience.

**Historical Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one course that analyzes historical evidence using critical thinking and information literacy skills.

**Social and Behavioral Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one course that examines the human condition.

**Literary Inquiry**

Students successfully complete one course that examines text and language from a literary perspective. This requirement may be completed in languages other than English.
Artistic Inquiry

Students successfully complete three units of course work that examines an art form.