A. Unique Interdisciplinary and Cross-School Approach

The College One Core Course Sequence is unique in the UC system in that the Sequence draws on the disciplines and faculty of all three UCM Schools--Natural Sciences, Engineering, and Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts--to introduce first-year college students to the fields in which they will first want to major and later make their career (1).

Capitalizing upon this interdisciplinary approach, the Core Course Sequence will show students how different experts in what has been called "the two cultures"--humanist and scientist--view the world, analyze information, and attempt to solve problems (2). Thus, the intent will be to show, through examples, that complex questions are best understood not from a single, decoupled perspective, but by insights gained from different--even seemingly widely-disparate--approaches. By this method, the linkages between various disciplines will likewise be demonstrated to students.

Hallmarks of the Core Course Sequence will be:

- The curriculum will be characterized by connections: faculty working together to connect academic themes and subjects, students connecting what they have just learned with what they will learn, and subject matter in the junior course (CORE 100) cross-referencing and reinforcing the subject matter in the freshman course (CORE 1).
- Students will learn to think analytically and communicate effectively in the context of problems affecting their lives and futures.
- Faculty will be able to explore new directions by working with colleagues in the Sequence, as well as stimulating student interest in their fields.
- The eight Guiding Principles for General Education, adopted by the UC Merced faculty, will inform the curriculum.

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1. *Two sister UC campuses, Santa Cruz and San Diego, have had college-oriented core courses since their inception in 1965. However, the core courses at UCSC and UCSD have been oriented toward the unique theme or emphasis of the college offering them, rather than deliberately interdisciplinary in nature. A retrospective survey done at UCSC, analyzing 25 years of core course experience on that campus, concluded that its major value was that students in different disciplines and from all backgrounds shared a "common intellectual experience," as well as receiving a valuable introduction to college life.*

2. *From British writer C.P. Snow's 1960 Godkin lectures on science and government, which observed: "[T]he results of the lack of communication between scientists and nonscientists...is worth examining. A good deal of the future may spring from it."*