The University Core Curriculum

Why do universities require general education courses?

At SU we want more than “Well-Rounded!”
The University Core Curriculum

• We want students “Well-Prepared!”
  – Strong Academic Skills
  – Inquiry: Producing & Evaluating Knowledge
  – Jesuit Intellectual Tradition: Tools for Life
  – Making a Difference: Leadership for Justice

• Not a Distribution Curriculum: A second major

• Valued in the real world
### Skills Employers Seek

#### Skills Sought by Employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apply Knowledge</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivated/Proactive</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Independently</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work in Teams</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Decision-Making</td>
<td>85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking/Analysis</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>90</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Data from AAC&U 2018
Rooted in Jesuit Tradition

- Academically Rigorous: Challenging
- Finding God in All Things
- Qs of Justice & Meaning
- Reflection & Personal Growth
- Engaging With & For Others
University Core Curriculum
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Module I: Engaging Academic Inquiry
- UCOR 1100 Academic Writing Seminar
- UCOR 1200 Quantitative Reasoning
- UCOR 1300 Creative Expression & Interpretation
Inquiry Seminars:
- UCOR 1400 Inquiry Seminar in the Humanities
- UCOR 1600 Inquiry Seminar in the Social Sciences
- UCOR 1800 Inquiry Seminar in Natural Sciences
30 Credits

Module II: Engaging Jesuit Traditions
- UCOR 2100 Theological Explorations
- UCOR 2500 Philosophy of the Human Person
- UCOR 2900-2920 Ethical Reasoning
15 Credits

Module III: Engaging the World
- UCOR 3100 Religion in a Global Context
- Global Challenges: Two Courses
- UCOR 3400 Humanities and Global Challenges
- UCOR 3600 Social Sciences and Global Challenges
- UCOR 3800 Natural Sciences and Global Challenges
15 Credits

Module IV: Reflection
Capstone Course in Major:
- MAJOR 4XXX
3-5 Credits in Major
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- Capstone Course in Major: MAJOR 4XXX

Foundational skills and knowledge

30 Credits
15 Credits
15 Credits
3-5 Credits in Major
Foundational Skills

UCOR 1100: Academic Writing

- Process-focused: How to go about writing
- Content + Mechanics
- Theme-based courses
  - Civil Liberties in the 21st Century
  - Sustainable Food
  - Politics and Media
  - Arts for Social Change
Foundational Skills

UCOR 1200: Quantitative Reasoning

- Using mathematics to solve problems and make arguments with numbers.

  – Two paths:
    • Advanced Math sequence
    • UCOR 1200: Quantitative Reasoning – single course

  – Thematic courses:
    • The Mathematics of Epidemics
    • Quantitative Literacy and Social Justice
Foundational Skills

UCOR 1300: Creative Expression & Interpretation

– Hands-on art courses
– Learn artistic principles & perspectives
– Variety of choices
  • Visual art: drawing, photography, sculpture, etc.
  • Drama: Acting, design, costuming, etc.
  • Music: Composing, world music, etc.
  • Creative Writing: Prose, poetry, non-fiction
Understanding Inquiry: Thinking like a scholar.
Inquiry Seminars

• Traditional intro surveys: Broad & shallow

Traditional Survey Course

The Discipline
Inquiry Seminars

• Inquiry Seminar: Focused study of question
Inquiry Seminars

• Focused on an important question in field
• Learn:
  – How scholars pursue knowledge: Where does knowledge come from
  – Academic Skills: Research, Writing, Speaking
  – Relevant knowledge of field
• Wide variety of choices
Critical Jesuit foundations
Engaging Jesuit Traditions

• Not “conversion” courses: No Catechism.
• Scholarly study of
  • Nature of personhood
  • Fundamental assumptions about existence
  • Reasoning about ethics, values, and spirituality
• Examples:
  • 2100: Women and Christian Theology
  • 2500: Nature and Technology in the Contemplative Life
  • 2900: Environmental Ethics
Applying knowledge and skills for global citizenship
Engaging the World

Module III Goals:
• Understand complex global issues and systems
• Use disciplinary knowledge and methods to address complex problems
• Improve writing and research skills
• Apply knowledge in non-academic contexts

Options:
• 3100: Religions in Native America
• 3400: Literature and Activism
• 3600: Global Politics of Migration
• 3800: Conserving Large Carnivores
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3-5 Credits in Major

Synthesis and reflection
Reflection (Module IV):

• Courses housed in the majors
• Signature capstone projects in major field
• Reflection on overall educational experiences:
  • Your own academic strengths and weaknesses
  • How have your studies helped you develop?
  • Your sense of purpose/goals/vocational calling
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Total Credits:
- Module I: 30 Credits
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Nuts and Bolts:

• AP and IB credits can be used to fulfill **four** Core courses:
  • Academic Writing Seminar (UCOR 1100)
  • Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning (UCOR 1200)
  • Creative Expression and Interpretation (UCOR 1300)
  • Religion in a Global Context (UCOR 3100)
• Transfer: Some, but not all, Core courses can be transferred
  • Depends on credits and degrees earned
  • Depends on course (Module II Jesuit)
• Official policies are available on the Office of the Registrar's website under Academic Policies.
Registering for Core Courses:

- We registered students for appropriate Fall courses:
  - Their preference forms
  - Their stated major interest(s)
  - Their academic record
  - Limited remaining availability, but can fix errors
- Students register themselves in future terms
  - Advisors there to help: Must see advisor!
  - SUOnline: courses needed and courses available
  - Plenty of choices, but encourage flexibility!
The Seattle University Core: An Overview

• A Common SU Experience

• 13 courses over all four years
  – Goal: Complete Module I by early Sophomore year

• Core courses are designed for the Core
  – Not “distribution” requirements
  – Common learning objectives and pedagogy

• Encourage student agency: Many choices
  – But limited availability of some courses. Be flexible!

• Core courses are small: Module I = 20, Modules II & III = 30.
Questions?

Dr. Jeff Philpott
Director, University Core
core@seattleu.edu
Break Out Sessions Up Next....

- Understanding Persuasion: Rhetoric in Everyday Life........PIGT 306
- The 2\textsuperscript{nd} (+) Time Around ..........................................................PIGT 200
- Treating Homesickness All The Way From Home................PIGT 101
- Academic Growth Mindset.................................................................PIGT 203
- Healthcare in Seattle........................................................................PIGT 307
- Career Engagement at SU.................................................................PIGT 108
- Q&A Session for Out of State Families.............................................PIGT 308
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Core Curriculum
Dr. Jeff Philpott
Director
Asst. Professor, Communication
Inquiry Seminars: Humanities

- Art and Place in the American West
- Social Justice Cinema
- History of the Undead
- The Book of Job and the Question of Suffering
Inquiry Seminars: Social Sciences

Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Etc.

• Urban Wastelands
• Sociological Digest: The Sociology of Food
• Activism, Protest, and Law
• "Disabled": What's in a Name?
Inquiry Seminars: Natural Sciences

**Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Etc.**

- Fire and Ice
- Fierce Creatures: How Evolution Shapes Life on Earth
- The Genetics of Disease
- Knowing What We Cannot See: Electricity
- The Sound of Music