Overview

The General Education Curriculum supports the University’s mission with three objectives.

- Engage students in thoughtful self-reflection and exploration of their place in relation to a dynamic and diverse community.
- Introduce students to modes of academic inquiry that lead to thoughtful, critical analysis and provide a foundation for lifelong learning.
- Challenge students to integrate and synthesize knowledge in order to ask questions, solve problems, gain perspectives, and apply learning.

Our proposed curriculum weaves transdisciplinary questions through a set of content and competency requirements. The objective is to build competencies in key areas, introduce students to multiple modes of inquiry, and bring context and cohesion to a student’s coursework through overarching questions. Structurally, the curriculum requires students to take courses designated with particular attributes to fulfill an aggregate requirement. This set of attributes can be divided into three components:

1. **Big Questions**
   - The Big Questions provide an opportunity for students to engage with pressing and enduring questions. This approach recognizes that a key element of education is learning what questions to ask and how to pose them. These questions challenge thought, shake up disciplinary boundaries, and engage students to bring their diverse perspectives to bear on enduring as well as emerging issues.

2. **Core Competencies and Understandings**
   - The Core Competencies build a foundation for student growth and provide students with what they need to ask questions and solve problems across an array of disciplines. They provide skills for lifelong learning, competencies and understandings that students will continue to draw on throughout their lives both to “produce scholarly and creative work” and to maintain an attitude of “thoughtful inquiry” to the world around them.

3. **Foundations**
   - The Foundations provide students with the methods of the traditional academic disciplines and contemporary correctives to those disciplines, in order to “to prepare students to contribute to, and succeed in, a complex, interconnected world.”
**Curriculum Components**

The curriculum requires students to take courses to satisfy the following Big Questions, Core Competencies, Foundations requirements. A single course may satisfy multiple attributes.

1. **Big Questions** – students must take 2 courses designated as Big Questions:
   - At any time, we anticipate 4-5 Big Questions as a part of the curriculum. Stability across academic years is important for these questions to effectively build cohesion across the curriculum, though new questions should be regularly substituted into the curriculum.

2. **Core Competencies and Understandings** – numbers in parentheses indicate the number of courses a student must take that possess that attribute:
   - Deep Reading (1)
   - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (2)
   - Oral Communication (1)
   - Quantitative Data Literacy (1)
   - Written Communication (2)

3. **Foundations** – students must take a 1-unit First-Year Seminar Course, complete 1 unit in each of several Areas of Inquiry, demonstrate Second-Language proficiency, complete a 0.25-unit Wellness course, and demonstrate the integration of their curriculum:
   - First-Year Seminar*
   - Second Language Proficiency (based on current proficiency requirement)
   - Wellness
   - Integrative Learning (e-portfolio or other reflective or capstone component as defined by major)

1 unit in each:
   - Arts
   - Humanities
   - Mathematical and Logical Analysis
   - Natural and Physical Sciences
   - Social Sciences

*The First-Year Seminar course should include written communication, oral communication, and information literacy as learning objectives (these attributes do not count towards the number of attributes listed above).

**Course Attribute Designations**

- Courses designated with a core competency should include that competency as a learning objective.
- Individual faculty are responsible for submitting their courses as being designated with curriculum attributes (to be reviewed by faculty committee).
- A course may not be designated with more than 3 total attributes.
- A course may not be designated with more than 1 Big Question attribute.

**Examples**

- A quantitative social science course could satisfy 1 unit in Social Sciences, the Quantitative Data Literacy competency, and address a Big Question.
- A history course could satisfy 1 unit in Humanities, a single Written Communication competency, and the Oral Communication competency.
- A biology course could satisfy 1 unit in Natural and Physical Sciences.