



CORE CURRICULUM

EFFECTIVE FOR THE CLASS OF 2016

Core Curriculum

At a Glance

EFFECTIVE FOR THE CLASS OF 2016

Foundational Component

DWC—16 credit hours

Theology—6

Philosophy—6

Natural Science—3-4

Social Science—3

Quantitative Reasoning—3-4

Fine Arts—3

Notes

♦The DWC requirement remains 20-hours for Liberal Arts Honors students.

♦Students who have not completed physics in high school must take a Physics-based Natural Science course.

Core Focus

2 courses/6 credit hours

Notes

♦Greater student choice is introduced into the new Core with the ability for students to designate a core focus area—within a foundational discipline or along an interdisciplinary theme.

Proficiencies

Intensive Writing—2 courses

Oral Communication—1

Diversity—1

Civic Engagement—1

Notes

♦It is expected that learning proficiencies will be met by courses taken for the major, the Core foundational component, the Core Focus, or carefully chosen free electives.

♦Intensive Writing courses will typically be capped at 18 students and Oral Communication courses will typically be capped at 20.

DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION (DWC)

The first three semesters consist of a seminar-style encounter with significant texts from western and other world civilizations.

The fourth-semester consists of a team-taught colloquium. Building on the first three semesters, the advanced colloquium focuses on a specific, contemporary issue in the context of the western tradition.

THEOLOGY

Two 3-credit courses: one from Core-designated 200-level courses and one from Core-designated 300-level courses.

PHILOSOPHY

Two 3-credit courses: one must be a Core-designated ethics course and the other must be a Core-designated course in a field of philosophy other than ethics.

NATURAL SCIENCE

One 3- or 4-credit course, Core-designated as inclusive of a “hands-on” component. Students who have not taken a high-school physics course will be required to take a physics-based natural science Core course.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

One 3-credit course chosen from Core-designated courses, ordinarily in a social science discipline.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

One 3- or 4-credit course chosen from Core-designated courses that meet one of the course options listed below.

- ♦**Option 1:** Focus on the basic elements of statistics.
- ♦**Option 2:** Focus on the basic theory of differential or integral calculus.
- ♦**Option 3:** Introductory focus on the language and notations of set theory, propositional logic, and methods of proof.
- ♦**Option 4:** Introductory focus on the mathematics underlying some commonly encountered objects including, for example: present and future value, elementary probability, expected value, optimization, elementary graph theory, etc.

FINE ARTS

One 3-credit course chosen from Core-designated courses, ordinarily in the fine arts.

CORE MISSION-RELATED LEARNING GOALS

1. In the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas, our students should understand the essential compatibility of faith and reason, and the integrated and cohesive nature of reality and truth. Our students should pursue the highest ideals of Dominican education: the contemplation of truth, and the sharing of the fruits of contemplation with others.
2. In the Dominican tradition, study is undertaken not only for itself but for the benefit of others, and thus students should demonstrate a commitment to civic engagement and service to others informed by Catholic Social Teaching.
3. Our students should demonstrate an understanding of how philosophical and theological questions inform and guide the pursuit of the truth, therefore philosophy and theology should have an essential place in the Core.
4. Students should demonstrate a capacity for moral and ethical reasoning, including an understanding of the virtue-based ethics tradition, and how these ethical traditions can be applied to specific disciplines or fields of endeavor.
5. In the Dominican pedagogical tradition of the disputed question, students and faculty should be trained in the art of anticipating difficult questions from alternative perspectives and the use of reasoned argumentation in search of a broader understanding of important truths.
6. Since the pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom does not take place in isolation but in the context of community and the larger world, our students should:
 - a. demonstrate an integrated understanding of the important events, ideas, and cultural traditions that have shaped the world;
 - b. demonstrate awareness and understanding of other cultures, societies, and creeds;
 - c. demonstrate an understanding of the natural world and the importance of the intersections of scientific and humanistic modes of reasoning for understanding our place within it.
7. In the spirit of the Dominicans as the Order of Preachers, students should develop fundamental skills in critical, logical, and quantitative reasoning and should demonstrate the ability to speak and write in a clear, coherent, and well-informed manner.
8. Since the Judeo-Christian tradition finds in creation an image of its Creator, and recognizing the importance of creativity and artistic expression in the Dominican tradition, students should develop the aesthetic dimensions of their minds and spirits.
9. Finally, students should demonstrate an understanding of the Core Curriculum as the heart and soul of a Providence College education. The Core should help illuminate the key questions of human existence relating to life’s purpose and meaning.

CORE FOCUS

To encourage depth of knowledge as well as an interdisciplinary perspective, students must take two courses as part of a Core Focus.

- ♦**Option 1: Focus in a discipline.** Focus in a discipline consists of two courses in language (modern or classical), science (physical or biological), social science (e.g., psychology, sociology, economics), fine arts (e.g., art, music, theatre, creative writing), or quantitative reasoning (e.g., math, statistics). Both courses must be from the same department, but outside of one’s major requirements.
- ♦**Option 2: Focus in a theme.** Focus in a theme consists of two linked courses that come from two different departments or programs, outside of one’s major requirements, but address a similar topic/theme. Students will choose these thematically linked courses from an approved list.

INTENSIVE WRITING PROFICIENCY

Two Core-designated intensive writing courses with at least one at Level II. Level I and Level II courses each require a variety of writing assignments, totaling at least 5000 words of out-of-class formal writing. Level II courses will further promote students’ insight, organization, and stylistic techniques with respect to their writing, beyond Level I.

ORAL COMMUNICATION PROFICIENCY

One Core-designated oral communication course. Oral Communication Proficiency courses will require students to present at least one formal oral presentation, along with a variety of other oral presentations, such as student-led class discussions. These courses will instruct students in delivering oral presentations that are designed to be lively and interesting, and in the virtues of effective communication.

DIVERSITY PROFICIENCY

One Core-designated diversity course. Students will demonstrate proficiency in diversity, understood as either cross-cultural or involving diversity within the American context.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROFICIENCY

One Core-designated civic engagement course. Among other objectives, these courses will offer students the opportunity to examine, in depth, a public problem or civic issue that concerns them.