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## **Liberal Education at John Carroll University**

### **DISTRIBUTIVE CORE**

Not all courses in departments named below are “Core” courses. The University Core Committee determines which courses satisfy the criteria for Core courses. The course schedule for each semester will designate which courses fulfill Core requirements. (Check computer listings for updates.) See pages 64-65 for a list of approved Core courses as of May 1, 2005. This list is subject to change, and a current list is maintained in the office of the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

#### **Division I: Basic Core**

The ability to formulate ideas clearly and to present them effectively in written and oral form is characteristic of the Jesuit educational tradition, *eloquentia perfecta*. The study of foreign language provides the basic tools for understanding another culture and its literature. Through courses offered by the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures, the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts, and the Department of English, students are expected to become competent in speaking and writing and to demonstrate that competence throughout their course work. In addition to the skills described above, a first-year seminar provides an interdisciplinary introduction to academic investigation.

The **First-Year Seminar (FY SEM)** offers an interdisciplinary introduction to academic investigation. It focuses on common readings, thematically organized, and on the perennial questions of human experience, and is taught by faculty from all areas of the university. A graded course characterized by disciplined investigation of topics and consistently rigorous academic standards, the seminar features:

- An environment that promotes the early development of academic skills in first-year students and fosters a serious attitude toward academic activities and responsibilities.
- A pedagogy that emphasizes active learning and develops students’ skills in critical inquiry and problem solving.
- A context that promotes collaborative and integrated learning.
- An atmosphere in which faculty facilitate discussion while sharing a learning experience in which they are not necessarily “expert.”
- A milieu in which students learn to question and clarify their values.
- An emphasis on the development of written and oral skills.

Transfer students with 25 or more accepted credits may waive the First-Year Seminar.

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### **Competence in Oral Communication**

The ability to speak effectively and clearly before audiences is an essential goal of the Core. Students must demonstrate competence in speaking before an audience as a requirement for graduation. In addition to this minimal requirement, students should seek frequent opportunities throughout their college career to improve speaking skills through presentations and reports before other audiences.

The requirement in speech communication is normally satisfied by successful completion of CO 100. This requirement in speech may also be satisfied through an examination administered by the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts for those students who have completed at least one year of high school speech.

### **Competence in Written Communication**

Fluency in written expression is essential to a liberal education. The university expects students at all times to maintain acceptable standards of written English. Failure to maintain these standards in any class work may result in the lowering of the final course grade. Prior to such grade reduction, the instructor will return at least one assignment to the student with a written warning that the student's writing is not of acceptable quality.

All students must demonstrate a satisfactory level of writing competence before graduation and are urged to take courses each year that will progressively sharpen writing skills through papers and other exercises. Those with writing deficiencies should seek tutorial and other remedial help.

The university provides writing instruction in three ways: two courses in composition in the first year introduce students to college-level reading and writing abilities and stress the processes of composing and revising analytical and argumentative prose; a writing-intensive course at a more advanced level in the student's major or elsewhere in the curriculum extends the practices of good writing into the context of disciplinary inquiry; and in all courses professors hold high standards for writing and offer appropriate support and instruction. All students are encouraged to use the Writing Center throughout their time at John Carroll for individual instruction and guidance in good writing.

The level of placement for English composition (usually EN 103, 111, or 114) is determined on the basis of individual needs as indicated by test scores submitted at the time of admission, by high school GPA, and by an essay examination taken during summer orientation for first-year students. See page 204 (English) for further details.

### **Competence in Foreign Language**

The foreign language requirement is satisfied by two courses in the same language. Students may begin a new language or continue a language at their level of competence, as determined by placement examinations administered during the orientation for first-year and transfer students. International students (see page 22-23) whose native language is not English are exempt from the foreign language requirement.

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Nontraditional students (defined as part-time students, evening students, and students who began or returned to college after an absence of five years from formal education) may satisfy the foreign language requirement by an alternative method approved by the chair of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures, the director of the Core Curriculum, and the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Students with documented language learning disabilities may avail themselves of this alternative method on the recommendation to the Core Committee of the coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

**Requirement:** First-Year Seminar (3 cr.); English composition (6 cr.); speech communication (2 cr.); foreign language (6 cr.).

### **Division II: The Humanities**

The Humanities study the intellectual and cultural foundations and values, primarily of the Western tradition, through literature, languages, the rhetorical arts, and the history of ideas, as well as the theoretical, historical, and aesthetic studies of the visual and fine arts. These studies develop an awareness of the relationship of the present to the past, a sensitivity to aesthetic expression, and the ability to make critical discernments and to express them cogently.

The literature requirement is satisfied by a course from either the Department of English or the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures. The chosen course will be one in which literature is studied as an aspect of culture, a historical period or a genre.

**Appropriate disciplines:** Art History (AH); Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures (CMLC); Communication and Theatre Arts (CO); English (EN); and History (HS). Basic speech, first-year English composition and language skill courses are excluded here, since they are required in their own division of the Core.

**Requirement:** 9 cr. - three courses: one literature course; one course in History (HS) or Art History (AH); one additional course.

### **Division III: The Social Sciences**

The Social Sciences study the human condition, that is, the nature of human behavior, human interaction in group life, and the effect of social, political, and economic forces on humanity over time. Their methodology incorporates descriptive and analytical techniques. These disciplines enhance the understanding of the humanities and natural sciences by showing their operation in everyday life, and thus are necessary for a liberal education.

**Appropriate disciplines:** Economics (EC); Political Science (PO); and Sociology (SC).

**Requirement:** 6 cr. - two courses from two disciplines.

#### **Division IV: The Sciences and Mathematics**

The physical and life sciences provide introductions to both the quantitative and qualitative study of life, matter, and the physical universe, and are basic to a liberal education. The study of science, requiring basic steps of observation, organization of data, and the construction and testing of hypotheses, is best understood in applications through laboratory and field experimentations. Mathematics, in itself an essential component of the liberal arts, also provides the relational and computational tools necessary for scientific inquiry.

**Appropriate disciplines:** Biology (BL); Chemistry (CH); Computer Science (CS); Mathematics (MT); Physics (PH); and Psychology (PS).

**Requirement:** 10 cr. minimum - three courses: one Mathematics (MT) course; one laboratory science course in Biology (BL), Chemistry (CH), or Physics (PH), or a laboratory science course which integrates these three disciplines; one additional course.

#### **Division V: Philosophy and Religious Studies**

Philosophy examines the formative concepts underlying world culture and teaches the ability to interpret and integrate these concepts as well as the skills for the development of arguments and conceptual and logical analyses—both formal and dialectic—necessary for the integration of the intellectual, ethical, and practical aspects of life.

Religious Studies recognizes the phenomenon of religion as a universal and fundamental part of human culture and encourages the examination of the world's faith communities through the analysis of religious writings, teachings, and practices. In keeping with the university's Jesuit heritage, special emphasis is given to the Roman Catholic tradition.

In both philosophy and religious studies the introductory course acquaints students with those disciplines in a manner that ensures a common basis of knowledge for courses that will follow the introductions to the disciplines.

**Requirement:** 15 cr. PL 101, followed by one PL course in the history of philosophy at the 200 level, followed by one PL course on specific philosophical problems and topics at the 300 level; RL 101, and one other RL course at the 200 or 300 level.