

Core Curriculum

Shaped by Gonzaga's Catholic, Jesuit, and humanistic heritage, the Core animates Gonzaga's mission. It provides every student with opportunities to further develop their skills of intellectual inquiry, come to a fuller understanding of who they are, and begin to imagine their role in a complex and changing global community.



ABOUT THE CORE

Gonzaga's deep commitment to educating the whole person is embodied in the University Core Curriculum. Completed by all students regardless of major, the Core has several purposes.

First, **the Core refines students' abilities to think critically and creatively.** While honing their reasoning skills, students learn to articulate their ideas clearly and concisely. These skills are essential to intellectual inquiry and are highly valued in every vocation beyond college life.

Second, **the Core widens students' viewpoints.** To understand the world, students must see it from many perspectives. Gonzaga students explore a variety of subjects and themes in courses outside their major and take courses that focus on global issues and social justice. This exposure to diverse ideas broadens students' understanding of themselves and provides a rich context for their major coursework.

Third, **the Core ultimately challenges students to integrate their studies and actions into a systematic and comprehensive philosophy of living.** While completing the Core, Gonzaga students inevitably encounter perennial questions about truth, equity, human nature, faith, justice, and personal responsibility. Through this work, they develop intellectual frameworks and reflective capacities that help them understand events around them and navigate complex situations. Without asking that students embrace a particular belief system, the Core engages students in the exploration of personal beliefs, biases, faith, and spirituality. Thus, the Core prepares Gonzaga students for a lifetime of thoughtful reflection and action.

FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR

The FYS is designed to help students make the shift to university academic life. Topics include:

- Digital Ecology
- Social Justice and Music
- Spartacus: Fact & Fiction
- What is a Visionary?
- Indigenous People, Global Issues

CORE INTEGRATION SEMINAR

The CIS asks students to integrate the principles of Jesuit education, prior components of the core, and their disciplinary expertise. Topics include:

- Arts in the Community
- Ethics of Eating
- Science and Society
- Philosophy in Film
- Bad Religion



THE CURRICULUM

The University Core Curriculum is a four-year program. Each year of the Core is organized around a theme and question to provide a cohesive Core experience.

The Year 1 Question -

“Understanding and Creating: How do we pursue knowledge and cultivate understanding?” - is examined through courses that encourage intellectual engagement and curiosity while also providing a broad foundation of fundamental skills.

The Year 2 Question -

“Being and Becoming: Who are we and what does it mean to be human?” - is seen through Philosophy of Human Nature along with Christianity & Catholic Traditions.

The Year 3 Question -

“Caring and Doing: What principles characterize a well-lived life?” - Year three is explored through courses in Philosophy and Religious Studies.

The Year 4 Question -

“Imagining the Possible: What is our role in the world?” - is addressed through the culminating Core course, the Core Integration Seminar.

Taken at any time throughout the four years, broadening courses intersect with the Core themes and extend students’ appreciation for the humanities, arts, and social/behavioral sciences. Courses designated as Writing Enriched, Global Studies, and Social Justice reinforce essential knowledge and competencies.

Courses in Gonzaga’s Core Curriculum are taught by many of the most talented and experienced professors at the University. Gonzaga alumni regard the Core among the most influential and beneficial elements of their Gonzaga education, citing exceptional teaching and the education of the whole person as primary reasons. The Core is a unique venue for students from different majors to interact in the classroom, bringing together the perspectives of multiple disciplines in enlivened discussion, and many Core courses can be completed as part of a study abroad program. The Core is the educational bond that unites Gonzaga University and contributes to its vibrant academic community.



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