



GENERAL EDUCATION



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Why General Education?

- **Helps develop a more informed, engaged, and globally aware citizenry**
- **Employers view a candidate's capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems as more important than their undergraduate major when making hiring decisions***
- **Both field-specific skills and broad range of knowledge is most important for long-term career success***

"The key to educational excellence lies not in the memorization of vast amounts of information, but rather in...habits of mind [that enable one] to continue learning, engage new questions, and reach informed judgments."

-College Learning for the New Global Century (AAC&U, 2007)

"The only education that prepares us for change is a liberal education. In periods of change, narrow specialization condemns us to inflexibility--precisely what we do not need. We need the flexible intellectual tools to be problem solvers, to be able to continue learning over time."

--David Kearns, Xerox, 2002

Overview

- ❑ Provides all students with a broad range of foundational skills and knowledge
- ❑ Opportunities to select classes that interest them, challenge them, and expand their horizons
- ❑ 10 classes across 5 foundational areas, total of 31 credits
- ❑ College Writing and Mathematics are additional
- ❑ No more than 2 courses from same discipline (PSYC, BIO, LIT, etc.)
- ❑ Can “double-count” courses for both GenEd and major/minor
- ❑ For students entering AY 2014-2015, the minimum grade requirement is a C or better

Program Learning Outcomes

Aesthetic sensibilities Critical reflections on the nature and history of beauty and art

Communication skills Interchanging ideas and information through writing, speech, and visual and digital media

Critical Inquiry Systematic questioning and analysis of problems, issues, and claims

Diverse perspectives and experiences Acquiring knowledge and analytical skills to understand a variety of perspectives and experiences, including those that have emerged from the scholarship on age, disability, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class

Innovative thinking Venturing beyond established patterns of thought in imaginative and creative ways

Ethical reasoning Assessing and weighing of moral and political beliefs and practices, and their applications to ethical dilemmas

Information literacy Locating, evaluating, citing, and effectively using information

Quantitative literacy and symbolic reasoning Applying mathematical, statistical, and symbolic reasoning to complex problems and decision making



Learning Outcomes Guidelines

- ❖ Each course meets at least two of the Learning Outcomes
- ❖ Program Assessment will focus on how well courses achieve these Learning Outcomes
- ❖ Each Foundational Area also has its own learning objectives
- ❖ General Education learning outcomes helps students make connections between different courses
- ❖ Please list both the General Education Program Learning Outcomes that apply to your course, as well as the Foundational Area learning objectives on your syllabus



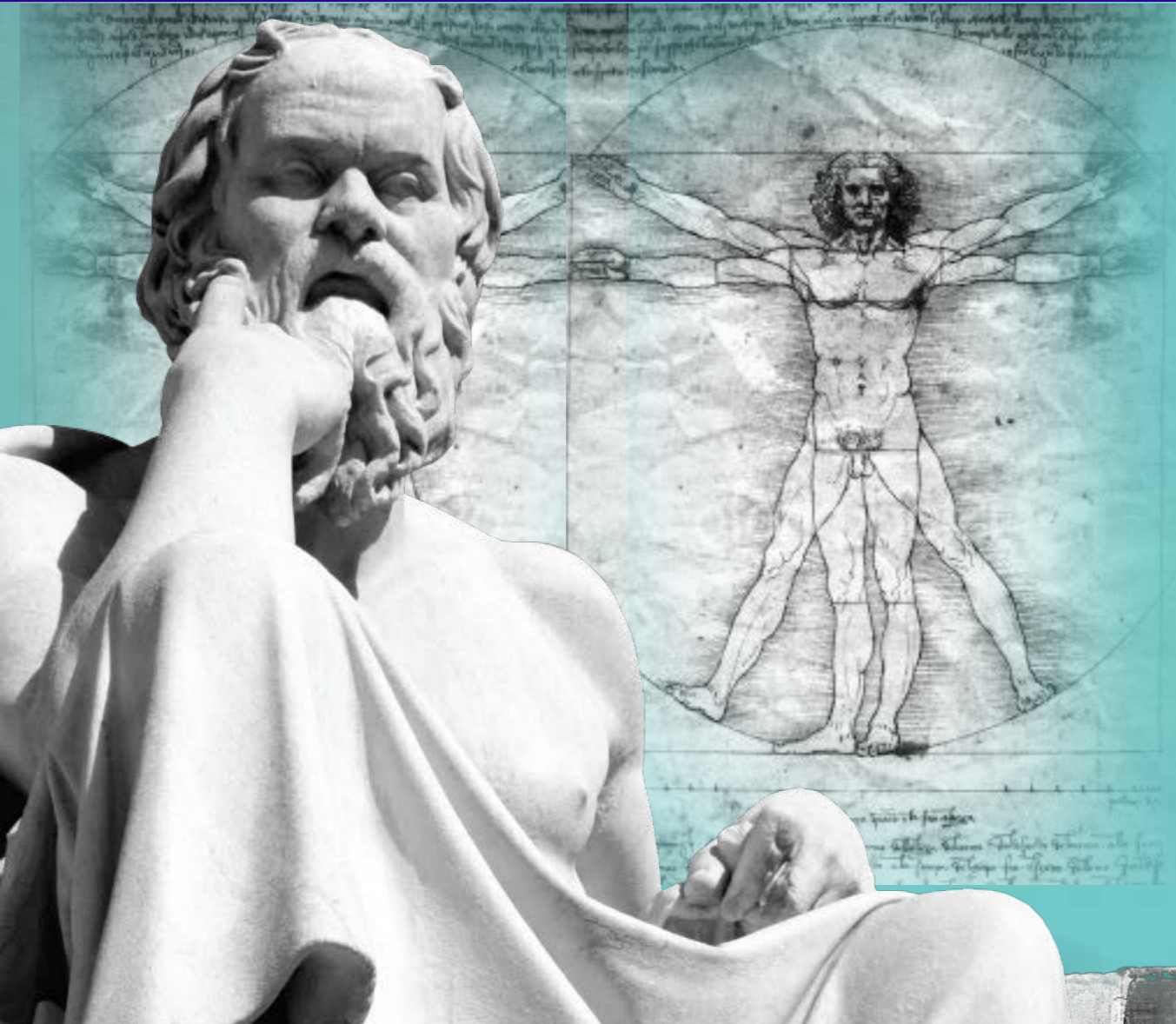
The Creative Arts (FA 1)

- ✧ Examine the nature of creativity, especially imaginative and intuitive thinking
- ✧ Situate creative works, and judgments about those creative works, in their appropriate social and historical context
- ✧ Develop your own creative and expressive abilities, so that you can better understand the qualities that shape an artist's work



Examples of Courses

- Language and Human Experience (Anthropology)
- Buddhist Arts of Asia (Art History)
- Visual Literacy (Communications)
- Critical Approach to Cinema (Literature)
- Dance as an Art Form (Performing Arts)
- Meaning and Purpose in the Arts (Philosophy)

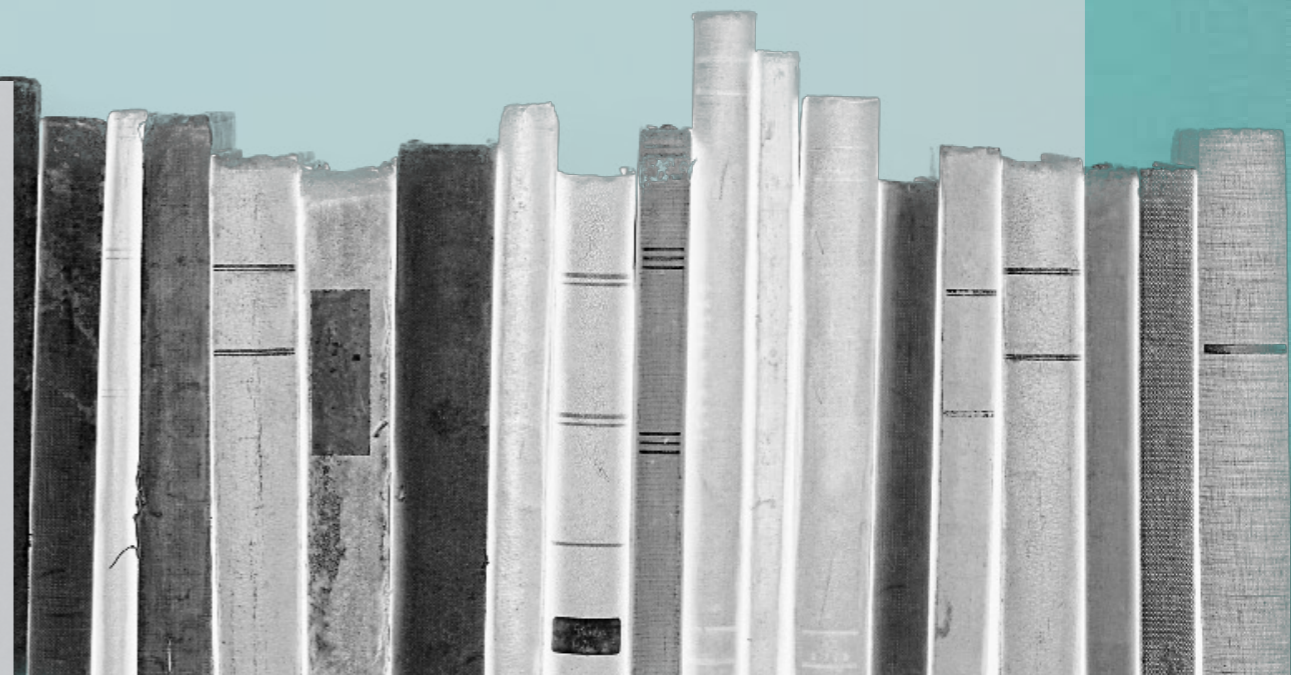


Traditions That Shape the Western World (FA2)

- ✧ Explore the diverse historical and philosophical traditions that have shaped the contemporary Western world
- ✧ Read and discuss fundamental texts from those traditions, situating the texts in their appropriate intellectual contexts
- ✧ Develop your ability to critically and comparatively reflect on religious and philosophical issues, in dialogue with others both past and present

Examples of Courses

- Individual Freedom vs. Authority (Government)
- Renaissance and Revolutions: Europe, 1400-1815 (History)
- Western Legal Tradition (Justice, Law and Society)
- African American Literature (Literature)
- Theories of Democracy and Human Rights (Philosophy)
- Changing Views of the Universe (Physics)
- The Rise of Critical Social Thought (Sociology)



The Global and Cross-Cultural Experience (FA3)

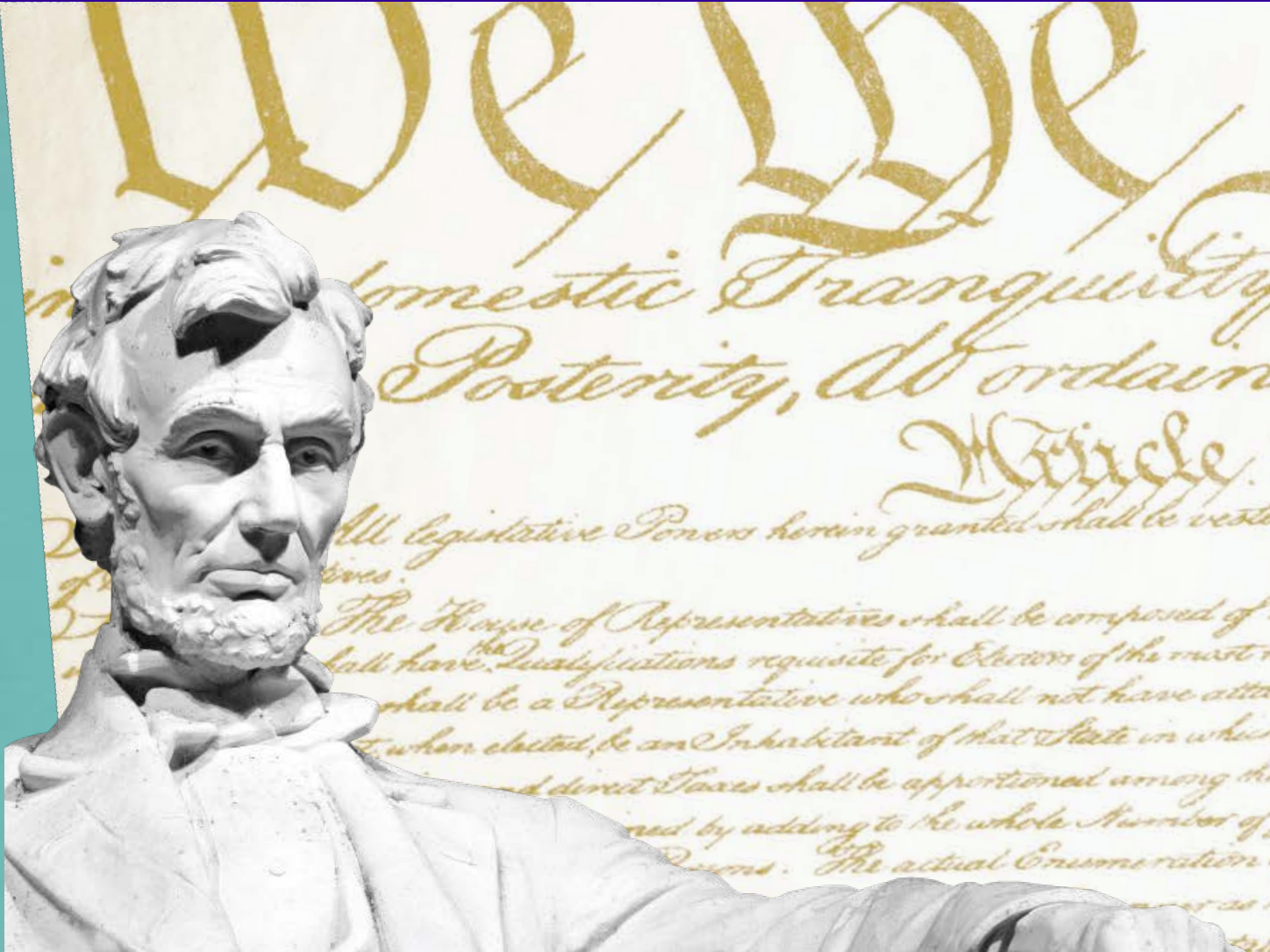
- ✧ Explore those habits of thought and feeling that distinguish regions, countries, and cultures from one another
- ✧ Discuss, in comparative and cross-cultural perspective, the concepts, patterns, and trends that characterize contemporary global politics
- ✧ Develop your capacity to critically analyze major issues in international and intercultural relations, especially how categories of difference are organized within and across cultures and how they affect political systems



Examples of Courses

- Living in Multicultural Societies (Anthropology)
- Russia and the Origins of Contemporary Eurasia (History)
- Comparative Politics (Government)
- Cross-Cultural Communication (International Studies)
- Views from the Global South (Sociology)
- Latin America: History, Art, Literature (Spanish)

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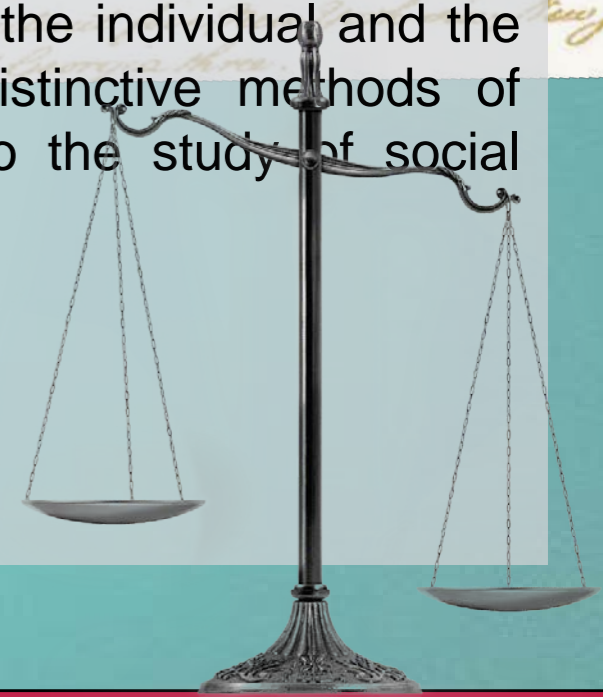


Social Institutions and Behavior (FA4)

- ✧ Study the institutions, systems, and patterns of governance and of economic and social organization that underlie contemporary societies
- ✧ Place policy options and their consequences in their appropriate social and political context, drawing on classic and contemporary theories of human organization
- ✧ Develop your capacity to critically reflect on the organization of societies and the relationship between the individual and the society, using the distinctive methods of inquiry appropriate to the study of social institutions

Examples of Courses

- Poverty and Culture (American Studies)
- Understanding Media (Communications)
- Politics in the U.S. (Government)
- Cities and Crime (Justice, Law and Society)
- Theories of Personality (Psychology)
- Introduction to Public Health (Public Health)
- Gender, Politics and Power (Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies)



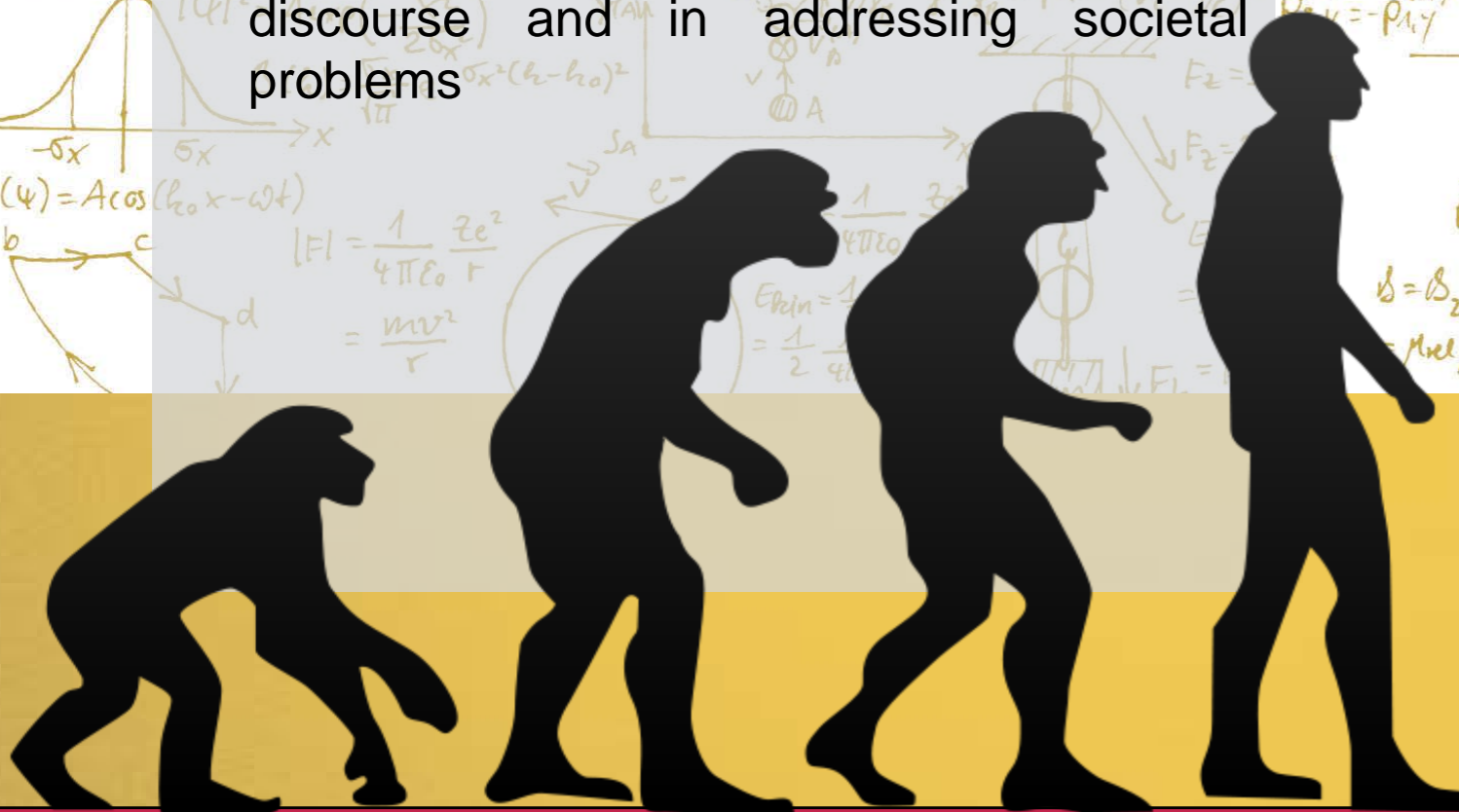
The Natural and Mathematical Sciences (FA5)

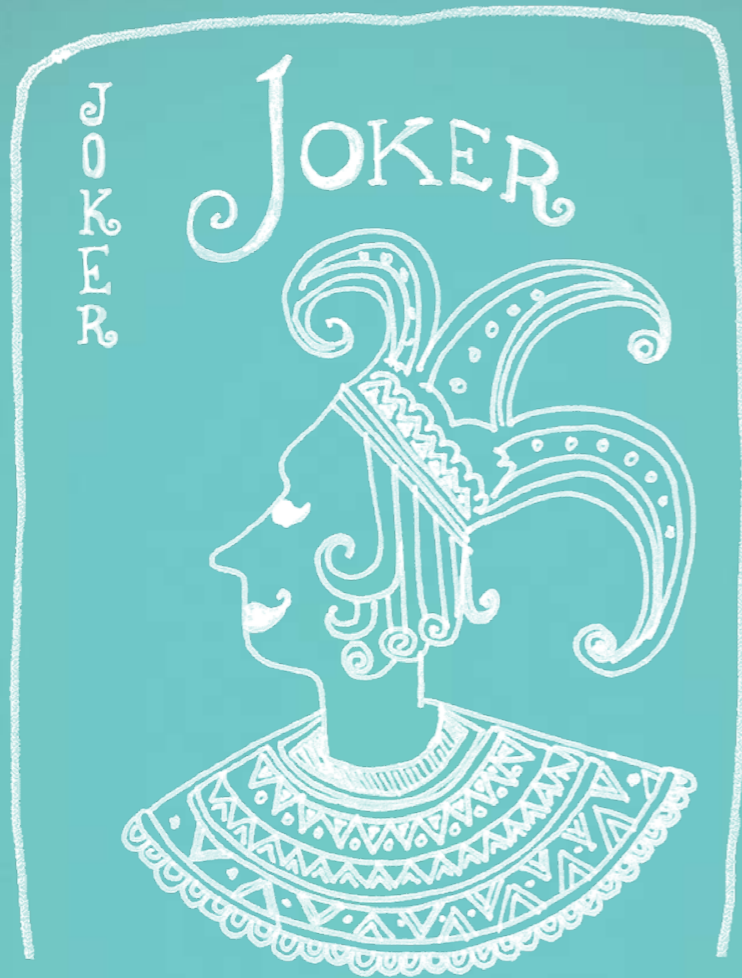
- Investigate the natural world and the living forms that inhabit it by studying the systems and processes that occur at scales from the atomic to the cosmic
- Develop problem-solving skills and utilize the scientific method to describe, explain, and predict natural phenomena through laboratory experiences
- Analyze the role of science in public discourse and in addressing societal problems



Examples of Courses

- Human Origins (Anthropology)
- Great Experiments in Biology (Biology)
- Chemistry of Cooking (Chemistry)
- Sustainable Earth (Environmental Science)
- Introduction to Nutrition (Health Promotion)
- Physics for a New Millennium (Physics)
- Behavior Principles (Psychology)

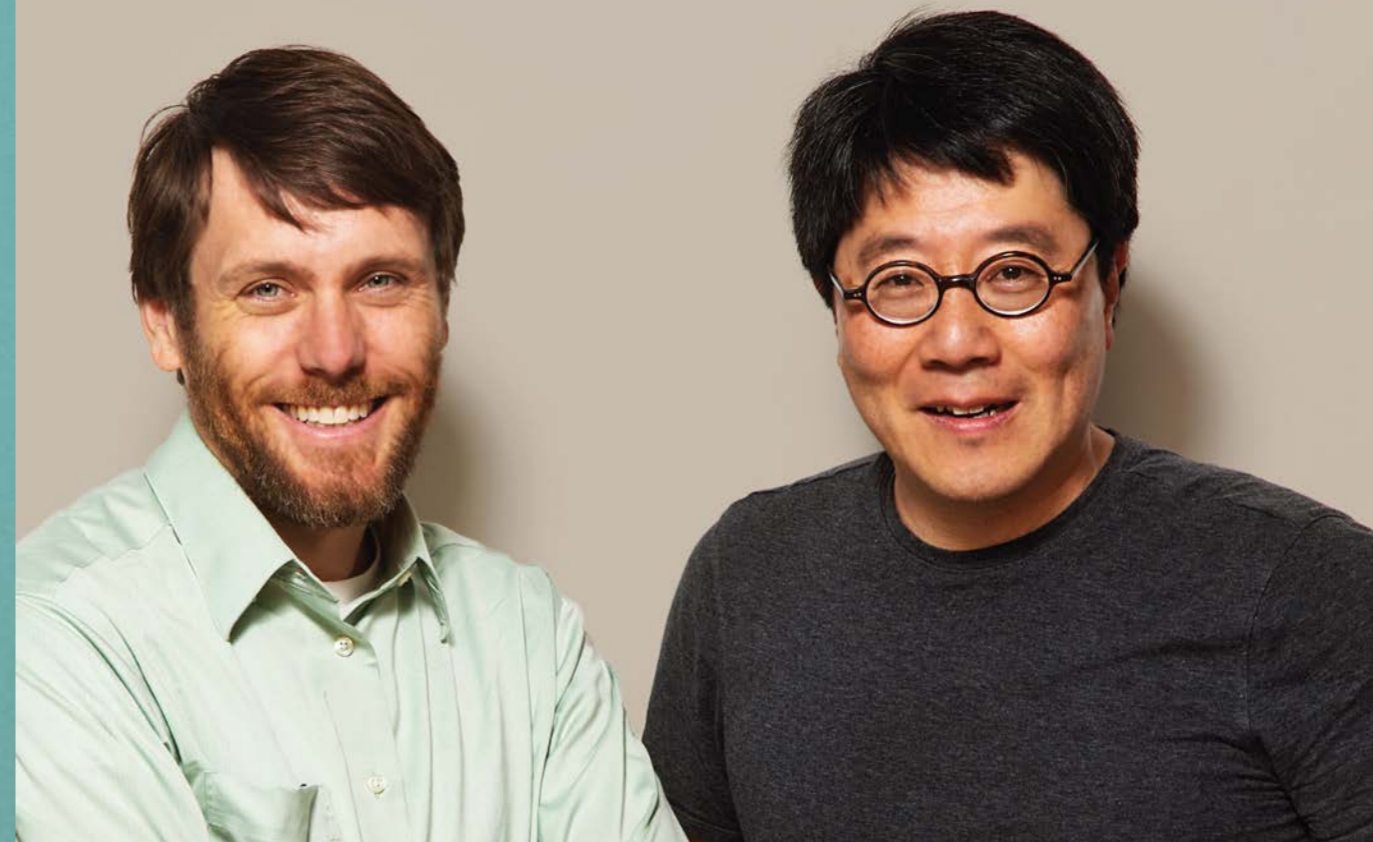




WILDCARDS are original and timely courses based on faculty research and current events. Many popular GenEds started as Wildcards and have since become part of the permanent curriculum.

SOPHOMORE SEMINARS are interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary courses that are listed under two or more foundational areas; students specify the area to which credit should be assigned.

Professors Nathan Harshman (Physics) and Richard Sha (Literature) co-taught Sophomore Seminar - Science and Literature: Bridging the Two Cultures



How to propose a Wildcard or Sophomore Seminar?

- ❖ Develop an original idea for a course and discuss with your department chair
- ❖ Go to the Registrar's website to download the proposal template: american.edu/provost/registrar
- ❖ Submit your proposal to gened@american.edu
- ❖ Proposals are reviewed by the Chair of the General Education Committee
- ❖ Course can be offered as a Wildcard up to 2 times. After that, you must submit a New Course Form if you would like the course to become a permanent offering in the General Education program

General Education Faculty Assistance Program (GEFAP)

- ❖ Small grants awarded to faculty teaching GenEd courses to hire undergraduate students for classroom support
- ❖ GEFAP students can lead peer review sessions, group discussions, and other activities that enhance students' mastery of General Education Program Learning Outcomes
- ❖ Application announcement for Spring 2015 will be in November 2014

Resources

- ❖ Website: Syllabus guidelines, course lists, FAQs, GEFAP information, and more!
- ❖ Committee: 16 faculty, represent each of the 5 foundational areas. Committee roles consist of approving proposals, reviewing policies of the program, and implementing assessment of the program's learning outcomes.

General Education Committee AY 2014-2015 – Chair: Andrea Tschemplik

Area One	Area Two	Area Three	Area Four	Area Five
Tom Ratekin (Literature)	Evan Berry (Philosophy & Religion)	William Quirk (German)	John Willoughby (Economics)	Teresa Larkin (Physics)
Cindy Bair Van Dam (Literature)	Mary Frances Giandrea (History)	Wanda Wigfall-Williams (SIS)	Jill Klein (School of Business)	Matt Hartings (Chemistry)
Cara Gabriel (Performing Arts)	Jane Hall (Journalism)	Jennifer Gumbrewicz (JLC)	TBD	Sarah Knight (Biology)

QUESTIONS?

General Education Program

gened@american.edu

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For more information, please visit our website at:

american.edu/provost/gened