The University Curriculum

The University curriculum is composed of a diverse set of academic offerings and requirements, each designed to build high-quality learning environments both in and outside of the classroom.

Curricular development and improvement, a continuous responsibility of the University's faculty, is the primary function of the Academic Affairs sector administered by the Office of the Provost.

Undergraduate Education

A baccalaureate education exposes students to a diverse array of academic areas. Our undergraduate program includes requirements and electives to enhance intellectual capabilities and stimulate intellectual curiosity.

In addition to completing course work for a specific major, students must complete an extensive general education program to sharpen writing, speaking, computation, and critical thinking skills needed to ensure knowledge of the sciences, humanities, fine arts, and social sciences—the basic subject areas upon which all academic endeavors are based. Improved understanding of ethnic minorities, broader knowledge of non-western cultures, and an understanding of United States history, constitution, and American ideals are further goals of the undergraduate education program. This diverse curriculum is designed to stimulate a lifelong interest in learning.

Graduate Education

Built on the foundation of the baccalaureate, graduate education offers the master's degree to students who successfully complete a program of advanced study, scholarly investigation, and research in a specific academic field. While the acquisition of knowledge is a major task of undergraduate education, the utilization, synthesis, and advancement of knowledge are the major goals of graduate study.

Through a coherent pattern of courses, graduate students develop research methods appropriate to their discipline and culminate their studies with a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination. Students who have earned the master's degree have acquired sufficient mastery of a discipline for further study in a doctoral program and/or for significant professional careers in industry, education, research, government, or private organizations.

The Colleges, Schools, and Departments

Within Academic Affairs, subject disciplines are grouped into various administrative units based on commonality of the curriculum. There are seven colleges, each representing a major segment of the academic community and administered by a dean; and two interdisciplinary units: Undergraduate Education and the School of Graduate, International, and Interdisciplinary Studies. Within the colleges are individual departments that define the specific disciplines and several schools that either link together departments (Schools of the Arts, Communication, Education, and Engineering) or operate in lieu of a department (Schools of Nursing and Agriculture).

The colleges of the University are organized into two broad categories: liberal arts and sciences, and professional studies. In the following information, these two categories are used to define the colleges, schools, and departments that comprise the administrative structure of Academic Affairs.
The Colleges of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Liberal arts courses constitute the very heart of a university education. Historically, universities have grown up around the liberal arts—the arts and humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences. These disciplines provide a foundation learning experience for all college students, whatever their interests or career aspirations.

The General Education program draws nearly its entire curriculum from the liberal arts, and many professional programs depend heavily on liberal arts prerequisites for their own majors. Liberal arts majors offer a solid education for responsible contributions to a complex, modern world, equip students to reason, write, and communicate well, immerse them in moral and humane sensibilities, and bring them into intelligent and thoughtful contact with their physical and social worlds and with themselves. While many liberal arts majors lead to specific careers, all provide an education which promises value throughout life.

The Schools of Graduate, International, and Interdisciplinary Studies

The Office of Graduate Studies administers post-baccalaureate programs, including master’s degrees and options in thirty-six disciplinary programs and the Doctoral of Arts or Science in Interdisciplinary Studies. The school also administers international academic programs and international student services, Leadership Studies, Multicultural and Gender Studies, Special Major, and Experiential Education and Internship Office.

In conjunction with the colleges, schools, and departments, the Graduate School encourages all forms of creative activity.

The Office of General Studies Thematic, and University Honors. The Provost also oversees sponsored projects, grants, and contract activities which facilitate faculty development, faculty and student research, scholarship and creative activity.

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