The UAB Undergraduate Academic Experience

Shared Vision for a UAB Graduate

The Shared Vision for a UAB Graduate reflects high expectations in the areas of Communication, Knowledge, Problem-Solving, and Citizenship.

Communication - A UAB graduate

- Participates effectively in the world of ideas and information.
- Reads with comprehension, attention to detail, and an awareness of context, tone, and interconnections with other texts, life experiences, and public events.
- Writes correctly and effectively in response to specific needs and for diverse audiences and contexts.
- Speaks effectively as determined by audience, setting, and circumstances.
- Uses information technology effectively for professional communication.

Knowledge - A UAB graduate

- Possesses a depth and breadth of knowledge sufficient for informed decision-making.
- Demonstrates substantial knowledge in a disciplinary major.
- Differentiates among methodologies, major ideas and figures, and specific information or issues relevant to the sciences and humanities.
- Uses effectively the technology appropriate for one's discipline.

Problem-Solving - A UAB graduate

- Collects and evaluates data and analyzes complex issues, using appropriate methods.
- Demonstrates critical thinking skills by synthesizing information, making reasonable arguments, and arriving at logical conclusions.
- Demonstrates quantitative reasoning by interpreting data in multiple formats and applying quantitative methods to solve complex problems.
- Demonstrates the ability to achieve goals through collaboration.

Citizenship - A UAB graduate

- Is aware of contemporary issues and prepared to engage responsibly in the community.
- Understands civic responsibility and engages in informed decision-making with respect to social and political issues.
- Recognizes that values and ethics are integral to one’s academic, personal, and professional life.
- Respects the significant role of diversity in the contemporary world.

The Shared Vision for a UAB Graduate is achieved through the UAB Undergraduate Academic Experience, which begins with the first year experience and the core curriculum; continues with major courses, elective courses, and perhaps courses required for a minor or certificate; and culminates in a capstone experience.

First Year Experience

Every UAB first year student will share a common foundation for learning, whatever their majors or professional goals. This common foundation is found in the Discussion Book and the First Year Experience (FYE) course.

Discussion Book

Since 2005, UAB has selected an annual UAB Discussion Book as one focal point for uniting freshmen students, faculty, and staff of this research extensive campus. The Discussion Book has literary merit, raises complex questions, is relevant to contemporary issues, and broadens the reader's understanding of diversity in a meaningful way. Students are able to purchase the book at the Barnes & Noble UAB Bookstore during New Student Orientation.

A presentation during the first few weeks of class, usually by the discussion book author, kicks off the Discussion Book events. It is followed up with various activities scheduled during the academic year and may be incorporated into courses, residence hall activities, and student life. The UAB Discussion Book project promotes conversation on a broad range of topics from a common foundation, with goals of civic engagement, respectful dialogue, and more knowledgeable participation in the university and society.

First Year Experience Course Requirement

Students entering UAB with fewer than 24 hours of college credit must enroll in and pass a first year experience (FYE) course in their first 24 credit hours at UAB.

FYE courses are the gateway to undergraduate education at UAB. FYE courses improve student success by helping to bridge the gap between high school experiences and university expectations and enhance successful progress towards graduation by establishing the foundations for academic achievement and holistic development. FYE courses include:

- Freshman Learning Communities
- College-, School-, or Department-focused FYE courses, which may be the required option for certain majors (check catalog requirements).

On This Page

- Core Curriculum Requirements (p. 1)
- Who is required to fulfill the Core Curriculum Requirements? (p. 1)
- Can One Satisfy Core Curriculum Requirements with Alternative Credit? (p. 1)
- What Courses Satisfy Core Curriculum Requirements? (p. 1)
- What is the relationship between the core competencies and the core curriculum courses? (p. 1)
- The UAB Core Curriculum Matrix (p. 1)
- Writing (W) (p. 1)
- Quantitative Literacy (QL) (p. 1)
- Ethics and Civic Responsibility (ECR) (p. 1)
Core Curriculum Requirements

Sometimes called general education courses, the core curriculum is a selection of required and elective courses that together promote six competencies which build the foundation for attainment of the Shared Vision for a UAB Graduate.

A graduating student should be able to demonstrate the following core competencies:

- Reading and writing skills sufficient to ensure access to information and ideas in the institution’s curriculum as well as in society at large.
- An ability to make aesthetic judgments in the arts, literature, and humanities based on relevant historical, social, or philosophical contexts.
- The ability to collect and evaluate information within the context of the scientific method and to use this ability to further one’s understanding of the natural world.
- The ability to apply mathematical skills and quantitative reasoning to solve problems and interpret information.
- The ability to reason and evaluate information within the context of the social and behavioral sciences and to use this ability to further one’s understanding of the social, economic, and political environment.
- Knowledge of contemporary and/or historical issues.

Who is required to fulfill the Core Curriculum Requirements?

- First time college freshmen who have no credit for college work (excepting credit earned while still enrolled in high school).
- Those returning UAB students or transfer students who are enrolling as a degree student after an absence from college of more than 12 months.
- Students who enrolled for the first time in any institution of higher education in Fall 1998 or later and who subsequently transferred to the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Any student with a valid articulation contract from an Alabama two-year school will be able to enroll under the terms of the contract. Contracts prior to Fall 1998 must have been submitted to UAB’s Office of Admission according to the procedures in place at the time.

Since Fall Term 2000, all undergraduate students entering UAB have been subject to the 1998 Core Curriculum requirements.

Can One Satisfy Core Curriculum Requirements with Alternative Credit?

Students may satisfy certain Core Curriculum requirements by presenting credit earned through the following: Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and Credit by Examination (CBE). Students with AP, IB, or CLEP credit must have official documents sent to the Office of Enrollment Management, ATTN: Alternative Credit, 1605 Building, 1605 11th Avenue South, (205) 934-5503, for evaluation and acceptance before credit can be posted on the UAB transcript.

What Courses Satisfy Core Curriculum Requirements?

Core curriculum requirements are divided into four areas, and all students must fulfill requirements in each area. See Collat School of Business and School of Engineering sections of this catalog for their specific variations. Majors may also have specific requirements in each area, as indicated in this catalog.

Refer to Core Curriculum (http://catalog.uab.edu/shared/uab_undergraduate_experience)

What is the relationship between the core competencies and the core curriculum courses?

The matrix below identifies how specific core curriculum courses introduce or reinforce the desired core competencies which build the foundation for attainment of the Shared Vision for a UAB Graduate. Faculty who teach courses in the disciplines have identified these core competencies as essential for success in upper-division major courses.

UAB has chosen to place special emphasis on three essential competencies embedded in the six core competencies identified below. These targeted competencies are writing, quantitative literacy, and ethics & civic responsibility. Core courses which intentionally provide specific instruction in, practice of, and assessment of writing, quantitative literacy, and ethics & civic responsibility are identified below with a W, QL, and/or ECR.

The UAB Core Curriculum Matrix

Core Competency

Demonstrate reading and writing skills sufficient to ensure access to information and ideas in the institution’s curriculum, as well as in society at large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Curriculum Courses in Which Introduced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMST 101</td>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BY 123</td>
<td>Introductory Biology I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BY 124</td>
<td>Introductory Biology II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 101</td>
<td>English Composition I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 102</td>
<td>English Composition II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 216</td>
<td>Introduction to Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENV 109</td>
<td>Laboratory in Environmental Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR 101</td>
<td>Introductory French I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GN 101</td>
<td>Introductory German I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA 126</td>
<td>Calculus II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA 252</td>
<td>Introduction to Differential Equations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHS 101</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPA 101</td>
<td>Introductory Spanish I</td>
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</tbody>
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Core Curriculum Courses in Which Practiced and Reinforced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAS 200</td>
<td>Introduction to African-American Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARH 204</td>
<td>Early Modern-Contemporary Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 102</td>
<td>English Composition II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 217</td>
<td>World Literature I: Before 1660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 218</td>
<td>World Literature II: 1660-Present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 221</td>
<td>British and Irish Literature I: Before 1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EH 222</td>
<td>British and Irish Literature II: 1800-Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Competency

Demonstrate an ability to make aesthetic judgments in the arts, literature, and humanities based on relevant historical, social, or philosophical contexts.

Requirements

Core Curriculum Courses in Which Introduced

- ARH 101  The Art Experience  3
- EH 216  Introduction to Literature  3
- MU 120  Music Appreciation  3
- PHL 100  Introduction to Philosophy  3
- PHL 115  Contemporary Moral Issues  3
- PHL 120  Practical Reasoning  3
- PHL 203  Philosophy of Religion  3
- THR 100  Introduction to the Theatre  3
- THR 105  Introduction to Dance  3

Core Curriculum Courses In Which Practiced and Reinforced

- ARH 203  Ancient and Medieval Art  3
- ARH 204  Early Modern-Contemporary Art  3
- ARH 206  Survey of Asian Art  3
- THR 200  Plays on Film  3
- EH 217  World Literature I: Before 1660  3
- EH 218  World Literature II: 1660-Present  3
- EH 221  British and Irish Literature I: Before 1800  3
- EH 222  British and Irish Literature II: 1800-Present  3
- EH 223  American Literature I: Before 1865  3
- EH 224  American Literature II: 1865-Present  3

Core Competency

Demonstrate the ability to collect and evaluate information within the context of the scientific method and to use this ability to further one’s understanding of the natural world.

Requirements

Core Curriculum Courses in Which Introduced

- AST 101  Astronomy of the Universe  3
- AST 102  Astronomy of Stellar Systems  3
- AST 103  Astronomy of the Solar System  3
- AST 105  Extraterrestrial Life  3
- BY 101  Topics in Contemporary Biology  3
- CH 105  Introductory Chemistry I  3
- CH 107  Introductory Chemistry II  3
- CH 115  General Chemistry I  3
- CH 117  General Chemistry II  3
- PH 201  College Physics I  4
- PH 221  General Physics I  4
- PHS 101  Physical Science  4

Core Curriculum Courses in Which Practiced and Reinforced

- ARH 101  Ancient and Medieval Art  3
- ARH 203  Early Modern-Contemporary Art  3
- ARH 206  Survey of Asian Art  3
- THR 200  Plays on Film  3
- EH 217  World Literature I: Before 1660  3
- EH 218  World Literature II: 1660-Present  3
- EH 221  British and Irish Literature I: Before 1800  3
- EH 222  British and Irish Literature II: 1800-Present  3
- EH 223  American Literature I: Before 1865  3
- EH 224  American Literature II: 1865-Present  3
- AST 101  Astronomy of the Universe  3
- AST 102  Astronomy of Stellar Systems  3
- AST 103  Astronomy of the Solar System  3
- AST 105  Extraterrestrial Life  3
- BY 101  Topics in Contemporary Biology  3
- CH 105  Introductory Chemistry I  3
- CH 107  Introductory Chemistry II  3
- CH 115  General Chemistry I  3
- CH 117  General Chemistry II  3
- PH 201  College Physics I  4
- PH 221  General Physics I  4
- PHS 101  Physical Science  4

Core Curriculum Courses in Which Practiced and Reinforced

- ARH 101  Ancient and Medieval Art  3
- ARH 203  Early Modern-Contemporary Art  3
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- EH 221  British and Irish Literature I: Before 1800  3
- EH 222  British and Irish Literature II: 1800-Present  3
- EH 223  American Literature I: Before 1865  3
- EH 224  American Literature II: 1865-Present  3

Core Competency

Demonstrate the ability to apply mathematical skills and quantitative reasoning to solve problems and interpret information.

Requirements

Core Curriculum Courses in Which Introduced

- FR 101  Introductory French I  4
- MA 105  Pre-Calculus Algebra  3
- MA 106  Pre-Calculus Trigonometry  3
- MA 107  Pre-Calculus Algebra and Trigonometry  4
- MA 110  Finite Mathematics  3
- PHL 120  Practical Reasoning  3
- PHS 101  Physical Science  4
- SPA 201  Intermediate Spanish I  3

Core Curriculum Courses In Which Practiced and Reinforced

- MA 125  Calculus I  4
- MA 126  Calculus II  4
- MA 227  Calculus III  4
- MA 252  Introduction to Differential Equations  3
- MA 260  Introduction to Linear Algebra  3
- PH 201  College Physics I  4
- PH 202  College Physics II  4

The University of Alabama at Birmingham 3
Core Competency
Demonstrate the ability to reason and evaluate information within the context of the social and behavioral sciences and to use this ability to further one’s understanding of the social, economic, and political environment.

Requirements
Core Curriculum Courses in Which Introduced
AAS 200 Introduction to African-American Studies 3
ANTH 101 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology 3
ANTH 106 Introductory Archaeology 3
ENV 108 Human Population and the Earth’s Environment 3
ENV 109 Laboratory in Environmental Science 1
ITS 101 Introduction to International Studies 3
PHL 100 Introduction to Philosophy 3
PHL 115 Contemporary Moral Issues 3
PHL 116 Bioethics 3
PHL 120 Practical Reasoning 3
PHL 125 Introduction to Ethics 3
PY 101 Introduction to Psychology 3
WS 100 Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies 3

Core Curriculum Courses In Which Practiced and Reinforced
ANTH 120 Language and Culture 3
EC 210 Principles of Microeconomics 3
EC 211 Principles of Macroeconomics 3
HY 102 Western Civilization II 3
HY 105 World History 1600 to the Present 3
HY 121 The United States Since 1877 3
PHL 203 Philosophy of Religion 3
PSC 221 American State and Local Government 3
PY 212 Developmental Psychology 3
SOC 245 Contemporary Social Problems 3

Writing (W)
Effective communication skills are fundamental to competent functioning across the undergraduate curriculum and in life beyond graduation. Improving writing contributes to the development of other communication competencies, such as reading and public speaking. Writing is crucial to critical thinking and effective problem-solving, as well as for the communication of knowledge. The ability to write effectively is a key skill that contributes to professional advancement, successful personal relationships, and responsible civic involvement. Writing designated courses have a “W” designation in their description. To foster this essential competency, every program ensures that its majors take a minimum of two W courses between the First Year Experience and the Capstone.

Learning Outcomes for Writing include:

1. Respond to an assigned topic in a way that shows responsible concern for an identified audience.
2. Write a logical argument that makes an unambiguous claim, marshals reasonable and appropriate evidence, and takes seriously the perspectives of others by fairly presenting and responding to alternative claims.
3. Incorporate external sources pertinent to the argument and document such sources accurately and appropriately, demonstrating academic integrity when referencing the ideas of others.
4. Demonstrate an appropriate level of competence in grammar, usage, and mechanics.
5. Accurately use the writing conventions appropriate to the discipline.
Quantitative Literacy (QL)
Quantitative literacy is fundamental to solving quantitative problems that occur in school, life, and work, and in communicating solutions to those problems to others. Quantitative literacy builds on mathematics, but unlike “pure math,” it emphasizes the application of quantitative methods in a wide variety of contexts. Quantitatively literate students are able to understand and, as necessary, interpret a problem in quantitative terms and then solve it using appropriate methods. Like verbal literacy, quantitative literacy is critical to effective citizenship, communication, and personal and social responsibility. Quantitative Literacy courses have a “QL” designation in their description. To foster this essential competency, every program ensures that its majors take a minimum of two QL courses between the First Year Experience and the Capstone.

Learning Outcomes for Quantitative Literacy:
1. Compute using arithmetic and algebra, work with units of measurement, translate verbal descriptions into mathematical form, and/or evaluate the reasonableness of quantitative assertions.
2. Interpret and construct tables, graphs, and schematic representations of relationships among objects and concepts.
3. Draw conclusions based on probabilities, costs, benefits, and risks.
4. Use quantitative evidence as a basis for reasoning, problem-solving, and argument.
5. Design empirical research, evaluate research designs, and analyze data to draw conclusions about research hypotheses.
6. Communicate quantitative information using numbers and words appropriate to the audience.

Ethics and Civic Responsibility (ECR)
The role of a university is to prepare students to function effectively and engage responsibly in both the academic community and post-graduation life. Ethical decisions should be academic, personal, and professional goals for everyone. Effective and responsible living depends upon the ability of individuals to strive for excellence, to make informed and ethical decisions, to accept responsibility for one’s choices, and to practice good citizenship as part of multiple larger social units. Ethics and Civic Responsibility courses are have an “ECR” designation in their description. To foster this essential competency, every program ensures that its majors take a minimum of two ECR courses between the First Year Experience and the Capstone.

Learning Outcomes for Ethics and Civic Responsibility:
1. Understand and practice ethical reasoning and decision-making.
2. Be knowledgeable about contemporary events and issues.
3. Understand civic responsibility.
4. Understand the role and value of diversity.

Capstone Requirement
UAB’s undergraduate programs culminate in a capstone requirement. The capstone provides a summative opportunity for students to draw upon, synthesize, and apply what they have learned to an original project and/or real life application. Depending on the discipline, the capstone may involve such components as collaborative projects, internships, service learning, fieldwork, independent research, community outreach, and/or thesis writing. In every case capstones include a set of well-defined learning outcomes, significant writing, and integration of discipline-specific competencies in quantitative literacy and in ethics and civic responsibility. Most importantly the capstone provides an enriching bridge experience for students between their undergraduate education and post-graduation lives.

All UAB students must successfully complete the capstone course or experience required by their major program or school in order to graduate.