

# The UAB Undergraduate Academic Experience

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## 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 first year students with the returning students, faculty, and staff of this research extensive campus. In addition to providing all UAB community members with a common ground for discussion, the Common Reading program provides a contextualized foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff may explore personal and shared interests in issues related to civic engagement and social awareness. 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 UAB Bookstore during New Student Orientation.

Intentionally designed to foster a sense of community among all participants, programming related to UAB's Common Read includes activities throughout the academic year in courses, residence hall activities, and student life. The Common Read provides a focus point for students to explore and discuss their transitional experiences during their collegiate journey and is integrated into First Year Experience courses that are taught by the Vulcan Material Academic Success Center team as well as other core curriculum courses. Partnerships among colleagues within the Division of Student Affairs increases the diversity of events offered that connect curricular engagement through co-curricular activities in students' residence halls and social space as well as the classroom.

### Convocation

Your journey to graduation and the fulfillment of your academic goals all begins with **New Student Convocation**, the official start of the academic year and a chance for the entire UAB community - students, faculty and staff - to welcome the incoming class. Convocation is the first of many memorable moments for you at UAB and the only time prior to graduation that your entire class is gathered. The President, Provost, Undergraduate Student Government President, along with UAB students, faculty and alumni will all welcome the new class to UAB.

### First Year Class Photo

This is one of UAB's newest traditions! Each year, more than 2,000 incoming freshmen each year line the practice field and collectively form the shape of their graduation year. Since 2017, new students have smiled for the camera to show their UAB pride. The Class Photo cements the start of your UAB journey.

### 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: CAS 112, BUS 101, EDU 100, HRP 101, NUR 100, PUH 101, UASC 101, UASC 105.

## 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) 934-8228 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](#)

## 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.