

# UNDERGRADUATE INFORMATION

## Undergraduate degree programs

The College of Humanities and Sciences offers baccalaureate degrees in the following areas (selected concentrations are indicated):

- African American Studies – B.A.
- Anthropology – B.S.
- Biology – B.S.
- Chemistry – B.S.
- Economics – B.S.
- English – B.A.
- Foreign Language – B.A.
  - French
  - German
  - Spanish
- Forensic Science – B.S.
- Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies – B.A.
- Health, Physical Education and Exercise Science – B.S.
- History – B.A.
- Interdisciplinary Studies – B.I.S.
  - liberal studies for early and elementary education major
- International Studies – B.A.
- Mass Communications – B.S.
  - advertising
    - creative
    - strategic
  - journalism
    - broadcast
    - digital
  - public relations
- Mathematical Sciences – B.S.
  - applied mathematics
  - biomathematics
  - general mathematics
  - mathematics
  - operations research
  - secondary teacher preparation
  - statistics
- Philosophy – B.A.
  - ethics and public policy
  - philosophy and law
  - philosophy and science
- Physics – B.S.
- Political Science – B.A.
- Psychology – B.S.
- Religious Studies – B.A.
- Science – B.S.
  - biology
  - chemistry
  - physics
  - professional science
- Sociology – B.S.

Information concerning curricula is given in the individual program descriptions.

## Minors and certificate programs

In addition to a major, a student may elect a minor area of study in any program or department offering such a program. The minor can be used to fulfill career needs or serve as a means for the student to study a discipline of secondary interest.

Students interested in pursuing a minor should discuss their intentions with their advisers or the chair of the major department. When the student decides on a minor, a change of major/minor form must be completed in the Office of Records and Registration. When the student files for graduation, the student must complete the minor application along with the graduation application.

Courses for the minor should be chosen from courses approved by departments offering minors in their areas. Generally, students cannot minor in the same area as their major.

A minor designation on the transcript requires a minimum of 18 credit hours and a minimum 2.0 GPA must be achieved in the minor. Prerequisites for courses are stated under course descriptions.

Detailed descriptions of each minor and certificate program appear in this bulletin.

Minors are offered in the following areas:

- African American studies
- African studies
- American studies
- anthropology
- Arabic and Middle Eastern studies
- Asian and Chinese studies
- biology
- British studies
- chemistry
- creative writing
- economics
- English
- European studies
- French
- gender, sexuality and women's studies
- German
- history
- international social justice studies
- Italian studies
- Latin American studies
- mathematical sciences
- media studies
- Mediterranean studies
- nonprofit management and administration
- philosophy
- philosophy of law
- physics
- political science
- psychology

- public management
- religious studies
- Russian studies
- sociology
- Spanish
- statistics
- world cinema

Undergraduate certificates are awarded in the following areas and levels:

- international management studies (baccalaureate certificate, in conjunction with the School of Business)
- Spanish/English translation and interpretation (baccalaureate certificate)
- statistics (post-baccalaureate undergraduate certificate)

## Teacher preparation

Students in the college can apply to the Extended Teacher Preparation Program sponsored jointly with the School of Education. This program awards both a bachelor's degree from the College of Humanities and Sciences and a master's degree from the School of Education. Students who successfully complete this program will be certified to teach in early childhood, middle or secondary education.

Additional information on this five-year program is available at the School of Education's Office of Student Services in Room 3106, Oliver Hall, or by calling (804) 827-2670. A more thorough description of this program is found under the "School of Education" section of this bulletin and in the extended teacher preparation handbook available from the School of Education's Department of Teaching and Learning or the College of Humanities and Sciences dean's office.

Information about VCU students' performances on the state-mandated licensure tests (Praxis I: Reading, Writing and Mathematics and Praxis II: Specialty Area Tests) is available on the School of Education website: [soe.vcu.edu](http://www.soe.vcu.edu) (<http://www.soe.vcu.edu>).

## Educational goals

The ultimate goal of a liberal arts education is to help students develop the abilities to think and continue their learning. These skills will aid students as they take their places in a world dominated by change. These abilities also will aid students in their future endeavors as they encounter problems, whether in their personal or professional lives or in their communities. Graduates of the College of Humanities and Sciences are broadly educated, not simply trained, allowing them to function as understanding participants in events rather than as spectators or even victims of those events.

To achieve this goal, the faculty of the College of Humanities and Sciences has identified the following specific requirements.

- Students should write well, organize their ideas, support them and communicate them clearly and effectively.
- Students should reason logically and be able to quantify experiences.
- Students should have knowledge of the fundamental ideas and methods of the natural sciences.
- Students should be able to analyze ethical conflicts.
- Students should have an understanding of literature and the other arts.

- Students should have knowledge of American heritage and those of other cultures, along with an introduction to a foreign language.
- Students should have a basic knowledge of human behavior and social, political and cultural institutions.

## Academic advising

All freshmen majoring in areas offered within the College of Humanities and Sciences are advised through University Academic Advising. Please refer to the "Undergraduate study" section of this bulletin for further information on the first-year advising program (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/academic-advising/first-year-students>). After attaining sophomore standing, students within the college receive academic advising from within the department or school of their majors. The advising system for each department and school varies somewhat; however, each student is assigned an adviser according to their program of study. Students are encouraged to take full advantage of the educational and career-planning assistance provided by their assigned faculty advisers. Ultimately, students are responsible for understanding all university and college requirements needed to earn a degree and for seeking out academic advising on a regular basis. The academic advisers provide assistance with interpreting policies, requirements and regulations, maximizing academic success, and enriching the overall undergraduate educational experience.

## Graduation requirements

For students majoring in a four-year bachelor's degree program within the College of Humanities and Sciences (including students in the pre-dental, pre-medical, pre-optometry, pre-veterinary and extended teacher preparation program classifications), there are four areas of requirements that the student must complete for graduation:

1. Undergraduate Core Education Program requirements
2. General education requirements of the College of Humanities and Sciences (see departmental major sections for collateral requirements)
3. Departmental major requirements
4. Electives to complete the total of a minimum of 120 credits

## General education requirements for undergraduate study

All baccalaureate degree programs require students to complete a minimum of 120 credits. No more than four of those credits can be physical education/activity courses. See program descriptions for exact number of major credits (30 credit minimum) and elective courses to complete the total required 120 credits.

## General education requirements for bachelor's degrees within the College of Humanities and Sciences

The purpose of general education courses in the College of Humanities and Sciences is to provide a foundation for lifelong learning among its students. This foundation includes the six core competencies of written communication, oral proficiency, critical thinking, information fluency, ethical and social responsibility and quantitative literacy.

The College of Humanities and Sciences' general education curriculum encourages students to pursue multiple interests simultaneously and creates opportunities for connecting learning across courses, disciplines and contexts. Additionally, it provides students with effective communication skills, the ability to analyze situations and think critically

about the world around them, locate and analyze information to make informed decisions, and integrate knowledge from multiple perspectives and disciplines. The College of Humanities and Sciences' general education curriculum proposes to foster academic community by linking the liberal arts and professional learning, and it provides a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and experiences that are the hallmark of a VCU undergraduate education.

The College of Humanities and Sciences' general education program totals 33-49 credit hours (hours vary according to foreign language placement and variations in individual course credit hours). The general education program includes three distinct tiers plus a senior capstone experience that is part of the major requirements.

### Foundational courses: 12-13 credit hours

Foundational courses lay the groundwork for developing skills in the six identified competencies and lay the groundwork for future learning. (These courses satisfy a portion of the University Core Curriculum (<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/core-curriculum>)).

Course	Title	Hours
UNIV 111 Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	Focused Inquiry I	3
UNIV 112 Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	Focused Inquiry II	3
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Select one of the following math and statistics courses:		3-4
MATH 131	Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics	
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking	
or a 100- or 200-level MATH or STAT course (except MATH 121, MATH 122, MATH 123) as listed on the major curriculum worksheet guide and recommended by the academic adviser		
Total Hours		12-13

### Supporting courses: 18-21 credit hours

Supporting courses further develop the core competencies while providing a vehicle for intellectual inquiry within specific areas of study. Students must complete at least 18 credits (comprising at least six courses) by successfully completing the following: (i) at least one course in each of the following four content areas, and (ii) two additional courses from these content areas or the Tier II content areas of humanities/ fine arts, social/behavioral sciences or natural/physical sciences of the VCU Core Education Program (the two additional courses must be from different content areas).

#### 1. Human, social and political behavior

These courses are designed to deepen students' understanding of the study of society and the behavior of its citizens in various contexts.

Course	Title	Hours
ANTH/INTL 103	Introduction to Anthropology	3
ECON 101/INTL 102	Introduction to Political Economy	3
HUMS 300	Great Questions of the Social Sciences	3
POLI 103	U.S. Government	3

PSYC 101 Play course video for Introduction to Psychology	Introduction to Psychology	4
SCTS 200	Science in Society: Values, Ethics and Politics	3
SOCY 101 Play course video for Introduction to Sociology	Introduction to Sociology	3

#### 2. Science and technology

These courses are designed to enhance students' literacy in science and technology, including an understanding of the natural world, experience with the fundamental ideas and methods of the sciences and greater scientific literacy, particularly in relation to energy, evolution and evaluation.

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 101	Biological Concepts (3 or 4 credits)	3
BIOL/ENVS 103	Environmental Science	4
CHEM 110	Chemistry and Society	3
ENVS 201	Earth System Science	3
FRSC 202	Crime and Science	3
INSC 201	Energy!	3
PHYS 103	Elementary Astronomy	3

#### 3. Diverse and global communities

These courses are designed to provide students with an understanding of communities, cultures and identities other than their own, and with the ability to apply methods of inquiry from various academic disciplines to the understanding of diverse cultures and societies and the interactions among them.

Course	Title	Hours
AFAM 111 Play course video for Introduction to Africana Studies	Introduction to Africana Studies	3
GSWS 201	Introduction to Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies	3
INTL 101	Human Societies and Globalization	3
MASC/INTL 151	Global Communications	3
POLI/INTL 105	International Relations	3
RELS 108	Human Spirituality	3

#### 4. Literature and civilization

These courses are designed to help students explore the relationships between human expression (in texts, films and material culture) and human societies, as well as between the present and the past.

Course	Title	Hours
ENGL 215	Reading Literature	3
HIST 201	The Art of Historical Detection: ____	3
HUMS 250	Reading Film	3
PHIL 201	Critical Thinking About Moral Problems	3
WRLD/INTL 203	Cultural Texts and Contexts: ____	3
WRLD 230	Introduction to World Cinema	3

**Experiential courses: 2-12 credit hours**

These courses complement the other areas of inquiry by providing practical and experientially based knowledge, both within and outside of the traditional classroom setting.

**1. Foreign language (0-8 credits)**

The study of a foreign language enhances students' appreciation for and knowledge of other cultures. Students who have studied a foreign language have cognitive development, creativity and divergent thinking. Students must complete a foreign language through the 102 level or equivalent through credit, placement testing or other demonstrated proficiency.

**2. Experiential fine arts (1-3 credits)**

Students involved in the fine arts gain a greater understanding of the cultural and aesthetic possibilities of the world around them. Students satisfy this requirement by the completion of one course offered by the School of the Arts.

**3. HUMS 202 (1 credit)**

An online personal finance course focusing on participatory, application-based exercises designed to arm students with the ability to make educated decisions in relation to future financial choices such as payment of student loans, understanding credit card statements, applying for mortgages, credit rating and planning for retirement.

**Senior capstone: 1-3 credit hours**

This course provides a discipline-specific culminating intellectual experience. Students must take at least one credit of a senior capstone experience within the major. Students must have senior status (at least 85 credit hours toward graduation) when completing this requirement.