

CORE CURRICULUM

The VCU Core Education Program provides a compact between VCU and its students. The university pledges to provide opportunities for students to improve their oral and written communication competency, to develop their critical thinking abilities, to improve their ability to work collaboratively on projects, to attain information fluency, to achieve quantitative literacy and to understand ethical perspectives and civic responsibilities in the 21st century.

Along with an emphasis on student-centered learning, the primary goals of the Core Education Program are to:

1. Improve students' levels of competencies in all skill areas.
2. Blend knowledge and skills from different disciplinary areas into one integrated experience.
3. Encourage and promote student engagement in present and future learning.

Mission of the Core: By providing shared learning experiences, the Core Education Program helps students develop competencies necessary for lifelong success.

The Core Education Program consists of 21 credit hours intended to be completed by the end of the sophomore year. Individual schools determine all other curricular requirements for their programs of study. For substitutions to the Core Education Program, please consult first with your academic adviser. Final approval occurs within the appropriate college, school or department.

All VCU students are required to take UNIV 111, UNIV 112 and UNIV 200. A minimum grade of C is required in UNIV 112 and UNIV 200. Transfer credits are not accepted for these three UNIV courses after a student is enrolled at the university.

The Core Education Program includes three tiers.

Tier I

Six credit hours: UNIV 111 and UNIV 112: This two-semester sequence is required of all first-year students and provides the foundation of the Core Education Program. A minimum grade of C is required in UNIV 112. Students begin their Core shared experiences through the Common Book initiative with follow-through in the FI sequence as they engage in similar assignments and projects both in and out of class.

Tier II

As a complement to the first tier, Tier II courses reinforce the learning objectives introduced in the Focused Inquiry sequence. Courses in this tier are drawn from across the university and include:

1. Three to four credit hours – a **quantitative literacy** course from the following approved list:

Course	Title	Hours
MATH 131	Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics	3
MATH 141	Algebra with Applications	3
MATH 151	Precalculus Mathematics	4
MATH 200	Calculus with Analytic Geometry	4
SCMA 171	Mathematical Applications for Business	3

SCMA 212	Differential Calculus and Optimization for Business	3
SCMA 301	Business Statistics I	3
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking	3

Option for School of the Arts programs only (three-course sequence)

MATH 121	Perspective Geometry	1
MATH 122	Tessellations	1
MATH 123	Visualization	1

Option for Honors College only

MATH 230	Mathematics in Civilization	3
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2. Three credit hours – a **research and academic writing** course that emphasizes academic argument, information retrieval, analysis and documentation. A minimum grade of C is required.

Course	Title	Hours
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3

Option for Honors College only

HONR 200	Rhetoric	3
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Option for clinical radiation sciences program only (two courses)

CLRS 390	Research Methods in the Radiologic Sciences	2
CLRS 398	Introduction to Research	1

3. Three credit hours – a **humanities/fine arts** course from the following approved list:

Course	Title	Hours
AFAM 111	Play course video for Introduction to Africana Studies	3
ENGL 215	Reading Literature	3
ENGL 250	Reading Film	3
HIST 201	The Art of Historical Detection: ____	3
MASC/INTL 151	Global Communications	3
PHIL 201	Critical Thinking About Moral Problems	3
PHIL 250	Thinking About Thinking	3
RELS 108	Human Spirituality	3
UNIV 213	Play course video for The Truth About Lying	3
UNIV 217	Finding Your Voice in Contemporary Society	3
UNIV 299	What's the Big Idea?	3
WRLD/INTL 203	Cultural Texts and Contexts: ____	3
WRLD 230	Introduction to World Cinema	3
Option for Honors College only		
PHIL 230	Reason, Science and the Self	3

4. Three to four credit hours – a **social/behavioral sciences** course from the following approved list:

Course	Title	Hours
ANTH/INTL 103	Introduction to Anthropology	3
ECON 101/INTL 102	Introduction to Political Economy	3
GSWS 201	Introduction to Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies	3
HUMS 300	Great Questions of the Social Sciences	3
INTL 101	Human Societies and Globalization	3
POLI 103	U.S. Government	3
POLI/INTL 105	International Relations	3
PSYC 101 Play course video for Introduction to Psychology	Introduction to Psychology	4
SCTS 200	Science in Society: Values, Ethics and Politics	3
SLWK 200	Building a Just Society	3
SOCY 101 Play course video for Introduction to Sociology	Introduction to Sociology	3
UNIV 211	Food for Thought	3
UNIV 222	Pseudoscience	3
Option for Honors College only		
INTL/POLI 365	International Political Economy	3

5. Three to four credit hours – a **natural/physical sciences** course from the following approved list:

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 101	Biological Concepts	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
Option for Honors College only		
PHYS 215	Science, Technology and Society	3

Tier III

The third tier culminates in a capstone experience integrating the Core Education Program with the student's major. This requirement, as determined by the major, may be fulfilled through a service-learning project, a research project with a faculty member, a study-abroad program, a senior thesis paper, a practical internship or a major-specific capstone course. This requirement ties learned experience in the Core Education Program with a practical application in the major.