ST. NORBERT COLLEGE CORE PROGRAM

Area: Introduction to the SNC Intellectual Experience
Description and learning outcomes forthcoming.

Area: Philosophical Foundations

This area is inspired, in part, by a principle that has guided our founders, the Norbertines, through the centuries: *contemplatio*—seeking insights into the challenges facing humanity through deep reflection upon the fundamental questions about reality, knowledge, and action as they have been discussed in the history of thought. Accordingly, this module attempts to capture that enduring Norbertine spirit in a modern liberal arts context, where philosophers explore themes and questions that have occupied human thought throughout the millennia. Because philosophy is inherently a social and practical enterprise that advances through critical dialogue and advocacy, it aims to help people develop the wisdom to live the best lives they can. This module, consisting of one course in philosophy, will explore fundamental topics such as human nature, ethics, the relation of faith and reason, and the meaning of human existence. While recognizing the autonomy of the various intellectual disciplines, this module helps students learn to become careful reflective thinkers and to make insightful and integral connections between various fields of study.

*Learning Outcomes*
Students will be able to
1. Accurately describe and assess the coherence of positions in the major areas of philosophical thought, including views on the nature of reality, knowledge, and action.
2. Analyze and formulate arguments with logical rigor.
3. Use philosophical method to integrate knowledge from various fields of study.

Area: Theological Foundations

This module draws upon the centuries’ old tradition of intellectual engagement with the elements of Christian faith. Authentic theological study demands critical and systematic analysis that values equally both faith and reason. This analysis requires substantive interaction with a variety of points of view. Courses in this module thoughtfully investigate biblical, historical, theological, and ethical sources that have contributed to the Christian heritage in general and the Catholic tradition in particular.

*Learning Outcomes*
Students will be able to
1. Describe what it means to construct a theology and the methods we use to construct a theology
2. Describe the challenging but complementary relationship between faith and reason, especially within the Catholic intellectual tradition.
3. Demonstrate familiarity with major biblical, theological, historical and ethical sources of the Catholic tradition.
4. Utilize a variety of methodologies to analyze both Christian and non-Christian theological claims
5. Reflect on and describe their own theologies.
Area: Quantitative Reasoning

Courses in this area will help students understand quantitative methods as both ways of knowing and ways of solving problems. Students will be motivated to develop skills and confidence in quantitative, logical, and algorithmic reasoning through applications and practical problems. As a consequence, students will appreciate both the power and the value of these methods while recognizing their limitations.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to

1. Apply quantitative strategies to analyze classic and contemporary problems.
2. Draw valid inferences from quantitative information and support the conclusions using sound quantitative, logical or computational reasoning.
3. Describe natural and/or social phenomena in quantitative terms.
4. Critique or defend the use of formulas, algorithms, or other problem-solving strategies in context.
5. Represent quantitative information symbolically, visually, verbally, and numerically.

Area: Human Experience

Module: Expression and Interpretation

This module examines ways in which literature and the visual and performing arts resonate in human experience. Courses in this area encourage students to contemplate and theorize humanities and fine arts as endeavors integral to a liberal arts education. Through creative engagement and critical thought, students will develop an understanding and appreciation of the creative process and cultivate the ability to make positive contributions to knowledge, society, and culture.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to

1. Demonstrate proficiency in stylistic, comparative, and formal analysis of artistic genres and forms through written and oral communication.
2. Demonstrate familiarity with and understanding of fundamental concepts, questions and approaches to artistic/literary criticism and history.
3. Examine each work in relationship to larger contexts (such as historical, cultural, critical/academic, personal experience and genres)

Module: Individual and Society

This module focuses attention on the nature of the individual, of society, and the relationship between the two. Courses in this module consider empirical research as well as historical and contemporary thought on the nature and development of the individual (including common attributes and individual differences), the character and evolution of society (including complex institutions such as family, economy and government), or the relationship between the two. These courses approach the subject matter from a social science perspective and help students understand themselves and their place in the social world.
Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to
1. a) Give an example of the relationship between the individual and society, and (b) analyze that example using a recognized interpretive framework.
2. Articulate alternate views of the person (a) as an individual, autonomous entity, and (b) as inherently relational.
3. Identify ways by which individual, group, and societal goals are coordinated and conflicts among them resolved.
4. Identify and apply theoretical and methodological perspectives of a social science to the understanding of the human experience.

Module: Physical and Natural World
This module introduces topics ranging from physical and chemical processes that shape the earth and universe, the historical and contemporary impact of human geography on climate and the earth's biota, to the interplay among health, environment and technology. Courses in this area, while being grounded in the fundamentals of the natural sciences, may include disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and inter-disciplinary perspectives on the physical and natural world. Students will be introduced to the basic concepts of science, methods of science, and the interdisciplinary nature of science through inquiry, critical thinking, application, and communication. This subject matter, when synthesized into a meaningful whole, allows learners to develop an informed perspective on the physical and natural world and our role as responsible stewards of the environment.

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to
1. Define key concepts and identify seminal facts appropriate to the subject.
2. Apply methodology appropriate to the area of inquiry.
3. Articulate the inter-disciplinary aspects of scientific inquiry.
4. Identify ethical issues related to scientific inquiry and the role of human beings as responsible stewards of the environment.
5. Evaluate and analyze experimental evidence to answer a scientific question.

Module: Difference and Diversity
This module cultivates an understanding of the historical and contemporary challenges faced by various groups within the U.S., commonly identified by characteristics such as class, culture, ethnicity, gender, race, and religion. A study of these groups’ identities and the voices with which they speak illustrates their contributions to the rich and complex U.S. mosaic. Courses in this area explore how these identities are constructed and how the internal dynamics and external interactions of such groups continue to inform and shape our experience. In turn, these questions challenge students to think critically about commonly held views of equality, justice, and identity.

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to
1. Describe and analyze historical and contemporary challenges faced by one or more groups within the U.S., commonly identified by characteristics such as class, culture, ethnicity, gender, race, and religion.
2. Examine the contributions of one or more groups in shaping the history and culture of the U.S.
3. Analyze evolving theories and views of equality, justice, and identity.

**Module: Beyond Borders**
This module explores the civilizations and cultures of the world in a variety of contexts, historical or contemporary, either studied in their own right or through the interactions and relationships between them. Courses in this area may cover one or more of the following subjects: culture, geography, history, politics, religion, trade and commerce, but ideally and naturally some combination of these. This area provides learners the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the world’s cultural diversity.

**Learning Outcomes:**
Students will be able to
1. Articulate what borders are and the consequences of those borders.
2. Identify various values within non-US nations or cultures.
3. Compare and contrast the human experience from different cultural and/or historical perspectives.

**Module: Catholic Imagination**
This module focuses on the Catholic intellectual tradition and its continuing interactions/dialogue with the world, including art, literature, and science. Courses in this area explore a variety of subject matter, grounded in Catholic theology, such as contributions and manifestations of Catholic sensibility in issues of historical and contemporary significance. Such courses allow students to explore the reciprocal enrichment between the Church and the world as a result of dialogue through the ages, including ways in which the Catholic tradition engages the needs and opportunities of communities and the world.

**Learning Outcomes**
Students will be able to
1. Identify the distinctive nature of the Catholic dimension of the subject
2. Connect the subject to the Catholic intellectual tradition
3. Articulate how the ethical dimensions and challenges of the subject relate to the Catholic imagination
4. Reflect on how the Catholic tradition engages the needs and opportunities of their communities and the world.