

CORE CURRICULUM

Typically, colleges divide the four years of academic study into three categories of learning. Students usually take one third of their credits in a major, one third as electives, and one third in a college-wide curriculum that fosters the institution's central mission and values. Until recently, the college-wide curriculum at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts was called General Education. "Gen Ed" students satisfied their "distribution" requirements by choosing introductory level courses in such academic disciplines as History, Literature, Mathematics, Science, etc. Following lengthy discussions, MCLA's faculty, reformed its college-wide curriculum beginning in Fall, 2001. The result is a new program of innovative and interdisciplinary courses designed around our liberal arts mission. It is called Core Curriculum.

WHAT IS CORE CURRICULUM ?

The central premise of Liberal Arts learning is that knowledge - and the process of gaining knowledge - frees us from fear, prejudice, and the limitations imposed by ignorance. Liberally educated students learn to see the "other" with powerful tools of understanding and to see the familiar from fresh perspectives. Liberal Arts students connect rather than compartmentalize knowledge and are well equipped for life in the twenty-first century.

THE DOMAINS OF KNOWLEDGE - TIER I AND TIER II

Core Curriculum is an interdisciplinary exploration of ideas and experiences organized into four areas or domains of knowledge. These broad categories are **Creative Arts, Human Heritage, Self and Society, and Science and Technology**. At MCLA these four domains of knowledge are studied at two levels: a broadly interdisciplinary and often team-taught Tier I course, and a more specific Tier II course that builds on Tier I learning.

COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES

In today's increasingly complex and competitive world, graduates of MCLA must be effective readers, writers, speakers, and thinkers. They should also be familiar with essential mathematical operations and with how computer technology enhances communication and assists in solving problems. As citizens of a global society, students should also understand a language other than their native tongue. In addition to exploring domains of knowledge, MCLA's Core Curriculum strengthens communication skills.

TIER III - A CAPSTONE SEMINAR

The Core Curriculum at MCLA concludes with a senior-level capstone seminar. This interdisciplinary investigation among students and professors builds on the Core Curriculum skills of research, communication, computation, and critical thinking. The topics include a broad range of issues representing the central dilemmas of human existence.

CORE CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

TIER I REQUIREMENTS (Completed prior to 60 credits)

CCCA	100	Foundations in the Creative Arts	3 cr
CCHH	100	Human Heritage	3 cr
CCSS	100	Self and Society	3 cr
CCST	100	Science and Technology	<u>3 cr</u>
			12 cr

TIER II REQUIREMENTS (Completed prior to 90 credits. A Tier I course must be completed before taking a Tier II course in the same domain. Students may take more than one Tier II course in each domain.)

Tier II Creative Arts Course	3 cr
Tier II Human Heritage Course	3 cr
Tier II Self and Society Course	3 cr
Tier II Science and Technology Course	<u>4 cr</u>
	13 cr

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<u>COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS</u>	(Completed prior to achieving 60 credits. Competency may be demonstrated by an assessment test, a portfolio, initial college placement, or a college course.)
Computing Competency	3 cr
Mathematics Competency	3 cr
Speech/Language Competency	3 cr
Writing/Research Competency	<u>3 cr</u>
	12 cr

<u>CAPSTONE REQUIREMENT</u>	(Completed during senior year.)
One Interdisciplinary Capstone Course	<u>3 cr</u>
	3 cr

<u>TOTAL CORE CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS</u>	28-40 cr
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TIER I COURSE LISTINGS

Students must successfully complete each of the following Tier I courses prior to attaining 60 credits.

CCCA 100 Foundations in the Creative Arts **3 cr**
Explores basic themes shared by all arts and addresses important aspects of artistic expression. One is the relationship between vision and reality. Another is how various arts are constructed. The interplay between artist and audience is also explored. Students learn how different arts interact with one another. Examples of artworks include physical objects as well as performances. Field trips and hands-on experience augment readings and discussion as students explore the creative experience.
Prerequisite: None

CCHH 100 Human Heritage **3 cr**
Seeks to develop a greater understanding of pervasive themes that have characterized the human experience. Such themes as change and continuity, conflict and cooperation, and domination and self-determination are explored through such resources as common readings and commentaries, guest speakers, and class discussions. Examples from different times and places are used to compare and contrast universal themes in the human experience.
Prerequisite: None

CCSS 100 Self and Society **3 cr**
Explores the interplay between an individual's identity and one's larger social context. We discover a deeper sense of self only as we come to better understand the formative values of a society that shapes us. Our better knowledge of self allows us to react to society: to accept or challenge the institutions and values around us. The ultimate benefit may be the ability to influence both self and society.
Prerequisite: None

CCST 100 Science and Technology **3 cr**
Develops student familiarity with major concepts in physical, biological, chemical, and computer sciences as a foundation for understanding the natural world. Basic concepts will be applied to contemporary issues.
Prerequisite: None

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TIER II COURSE LISTINGS

Students must successfully complete one Tier II course from each domain prior to attaining 90 credits. Students must complete one Tier I course within each domain prior to enrolling in a Tier II course within the same domain. Students may take a Tier II course prior to completion of ALL Tier I requirements as long as the Tier I in that domain has been successfully completed. And students may take more than the one required Tier II course in each domain

A wide variety of Tier II courses are offered each semester. Below is a sampling of Tier II offerings.

CREATIVE ARTS, TIER II

CCCA 201 American Identity

3 cr

Concentrates on the creative potential to shape the student's comprehension of such basic questions as order, value, character and history through exploration of questions, about what it means to be an American as evidenced through literature, art, music and film.

Prerequisite: CCCA 100

CCCA 202 The Good Earth: The Theme of Agrarianism

3 cr

Studies agrarian themes and their importance by surveying literature, music, paintings and photography. Focuses on artistic perceptions of the earth and human relationships to it. Explores agrarian traditions, values and beliefs. Includes a study of agrarian social, political and economic issues.

Prerequisite: CCCA 100

CCCA 205 Popular Hollywood Films of the 1950's

3 cr

Uses the basic concepts and insights of CCCA 100 for examining the ways in which American popular film of the 1950's incorporates ideas and society reality into its modes of representation. Explores the relationships between American films and American popular culture.

Prerequisite: CCCA 100

CCCA 206 Rumi's Vision

3 cr

Studies the poetry, life, and times of the great 13th century Sufi mystic, Jelaluddin Rumi. For students who want to expand their horizons and explore a view of reality that is not based on secular materialism. Because of excellent modern translations, Rumi is rapidly becoming one of the most relevant and powerful poets of our time.

Prerequisite: CCCA 100

The following Creative Arts courses will be offered pending final approval

CCCA 203 Invention of Modernism

CCCA 207 Children's Literature: A Lively Art

HUMAN HERITAGE, TIER II

CCHH 224 The Nuclear Age

3 cr

Describes the history of nuclear weapons and nuclear-generated electricity. Considers these technologies from the perspective of national power and security, ethics, diplomacy, technical practicality, safety, and environmental consequences.

Prerequisite: CCHH 100

The following Human Heritage courses will be offered pending final approval

CCHH 221 Divine Witness

CCHH 222 The 1960's

CCHH 223 The Great Depression

CCHH 225 Critical Thinking

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SELF AND SOCIETY, TIER II

CCSS 210 Landscapes of Human Activities

3 cr

Provides an understanding of the fundamental identifying traits of a culture; the economic, social, and political systems and institutions societies erect; the cultural landscapes they create; and the impacts societies have on natural systems.

Prerequisite: CCSS 100

CCSS 262 Families

3 cr

Explores contemporary American families (the forms they take, the functions they serve, the problems they face) within the context of families of other historical time periods and other cultures. Presents an interdisciplinary examination of topics such as: gender roles, marriage, divorce, and blended families, nonmarital lifestyles, parenting, family policy, and technology's impact on family life.

Prerequisite: CCSS 100

CCSS 263 Economics & Society

3 cr

Evaluates the contrary facts and conflicting values inherent in business and economic policy decisions, and the ethical problems thus faced by individuals, organizations, and societies. Provides a background in the principles of and concepts of ethics, economics, law and other social sciences needed in order to effectively manage business and ethical problems. Investigates numerous social and economic issues that face individuals, organizations, and societies and requires students to critically analyze and evaluate the decisions that are made regarding those issues.

Prerequisite: One Gen Ed Code 32 Course or CCSS 100

CCSS 267 Real Men

3 cr

Provides the opportunity to examine and determine the validity of stereo-types as they apply to the image of the American male. Through the use of feature films and selected readings from various disciplines, most from the social sciences, the student will explore, describe, analyze and evaluate the concept, behavior, attitudes and characteristics of "Real Man". The following film genre have been selected: The Wild West; War; Cops & Robbers; Sports. Among the feature films selected are: High Noon; The Magnificent Seven; Casablanca; Dirty Harry; Die Hard; Bull Durham; Slapshot.

Prerequisite: CCSS 100

CCSS 268 Culture and the Body

3 cr

Examines the body as a universal experience, a historical and cultural creation, and an ethical issue with policy implications. Explores the religious, medical, socioeconomic, and political foundations of our understanding and treatment of the body, the relationship between socialization and body image, how bodily difference has been used as a basis for inequality, and the impact of globalization of the circulation of body images and the exploitation of bodies. Considers ways in which individuals and groups have challenged body images and modify practices that have harmed or marginalized them.

Prerequisite: CCSS 100

CCSS 269 Education and Society

3 cr

Studies the role of education as an institution in our society, in our world and in our lives. Through the use of a wide variety of primary sources, documents and fiction, students will become aware of the fascinating people and events that played a role in the development of educational practices and issues. In addition, they will explore the personal, social, economic, political and philosophical aspects of education from the local to the international levels and the many educational controversies that continue to challenge society.

Prerequisite: CCSS 100 or Education Department approval

The following Self and Society courses will be offered pending final approval

CCSS 201 Management

CCSS 202 World Regions and the New Global Order

CCSS 203 Information and Society

CCSS 261 Citizenship in Theory & Practice

CCSS 270 Globalization: Myths and Realities

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, TIER II

CCST 241 Discovering Biology

4 cr

Explores the world through the examination of topical issues. The student is presented with hands-on laboratory experiences. Scientific inquiry is encouraged and supported. The student understands the workings of biology from molecule to cell to organism. Approaches to active learning include looking at items and issues from historical, social, and popular press sources. Required laboratory.

Prerequisite: CCST 100

CCST 242 Chemistry and Its Relation to the World

4 cr

Examines fundamental principles of chemistry, the historical development of chemical theories and how chemistry relates to other scientific disciplines. Laboratory experiments illustrate chemical concepts and relationships to the world.

Prerequisite: CCST 100

CCST 243 Issues in Human Biology

4 cr

Provides knowledge about the human body, its structure and function. With this as background information, students will assess the significance of social issues presented in the news media. This information will also be a foundation for making knowledgeable decisions regarding quality of life. Bioethical issues will be discussed in connection with each section studied. Students will be able to critically evaluate a large number of issues in this field as presented in scientific publications and the news media. Students will be encouraged to share experiences based on their own culture and gender. The course will increase the student's awareness of the multiple roles humans play in the society and their environment. Required laboratory.

Prerequisite: CCST 100

CCST 245 Natural Hazards

4 cr

Studies natural processes which are hazardous in the context of human activities, including relevant geologic, geomorphic, climatic, and meteorologic phenomena; examines the origin and significance of selected hazards from natural and human perspectives and explores how people underestimate or misjudge risk. Required laboratory.

Prerequisite: CCST 100

CCST 246 From Galileo to Einstein

4 cr

This is an historical survey of physics using basic quantitative analysis. Builds on understanding gained from Science and Technology Tier I while including additional topics. Emphasizes practical applications in daily life. Laboratories provide hands-on experience.

Prerequisite: CCST 100

The following Science and Technology courses will be offered pending final approval

CCST 244 Sleep and Dreams

CCST 249 The Science of Behavior

CCST 250 New England's Physical Landscapes

CCST 251 Mathematical Modeling & the Environment

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COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY: WAIVERS AND COURSES

Students must demonstrate competency (prior to attaining 60 credits) in each mode of communication through an initial college placement, an assessment test, portfolio, or completion of the following courses.

COMPUTING COMPETENCY

CCCL 100 Computing and Communication

3 cr

Prepares students to use a computer as a tool for communicating in the information age. Topics to be covered include an overview of a computer, networks in general, the Internet, a Windows operating system, and an introduction to a number of computer applications.

Prerequisite: None

MATHEMATICS COMPETENCY: (Choose one appropriate for your academic major or interests)

CCMA 100 Elementary Models

3 cr

Uses precise mathematical language and writing as a means to studying real-life mathematical situations. The models will cover linear, trigonometric, exponential, and combinations of these cases.

Prerequisite: Based on high school background and SAT scores

CCMA 101 Statistics

3 cr

Introduces methods of descriptive statistics to collect, organize, present, analyze, and interpret data. Uses probability theory to study statistical inferences, including confidence intervals and hypothesis testing. Geared to the needs of non-mathematics majors as a course in the Communications Competency.

Prerequisite: None

CCMA 102 Mathematics for the Liberal Arts

3 cr

Presents mathematical topics designed to promote mathematical problem solving, reasoning, decision-making, and communication. Students will develop an understanding of the nature, purposes, and accomplishments of mathematics. Topics selected from elementary set theory, logic, number theory, graph theory, voting theory, functions, difference equations, and geometry.

Prerequisite: None

WRITING/RESEARCH COMPETENCY

CCWR 100 Writing and Research

3 cr

Explores the writing process, including practical writing strategies and techniques, practice and revisions, reading and critical thinking, and research.

Prerequisite: None

SPEECH/LANGUAGE COMPETENCY: (Choose one, Speech or Modern Language)

CCSP 100 Forms of Speech

3 cr

Develops basic speaking principles and provides extensive practice in speaking skills necessary for successful college-level performance. Covers adapting topics to purpose and audience; using substantial support for each point; logically developing concepts; speaking with a clear, consistent tone; developing good listening skills; and preparing oral presentations in a variety of settings.

Prerequisite: None

ANY MODERN LANGUAGE COURSE

TIER III - A SENIOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINAR