Liberal Arts Curriculum Requirements

All undergraduate students complete the Liberal Arts Curriculum as the core of their studies at Catholic University. The curriculum provides a common educational experience, grounded in the Catholic intellectual tradition and focused on enduring questions, that fosters a holistic understanding of reality and human life. Students develop a broad and versatile set of skills and knowledge that is necessary for success in any field of study or professional work.

For most students, the Liberal Arts Curriculum requires the completion of 15 courses and a focus area. To accommodate for more extensive major requirements, students in some professional programs complete 10 courses and no focus area. Four of the 15 (or 10) liberal arts courses are part of the First-Year Experience Program and are taken in small learning communities ("LCs").

Liberal Arts Course Requirements

The following 15 course requirements constitute the core of the Liberal Arts Curriculum. To accommodate for extensive major requirements, students in some professional programs (see "exceptions for professional schools" section below) complete only requirements 1-10. **Courses that fulfill each of the liberal arts requirements are included on the back of this sheet.**

1. Classical Philosophy (LC course)
2. Modern Philosophy (LC course)
3. Foundations in Theology I (LC course)
4. Foundations in Theology II (ideally taken Sophomore Year)
5. Rhetoric and Composition (LC course)
6. Foundations of Mathematics, Statistics, or Quantitative Reasoning
7. Foundations in Natural Science
8. Explorations in Literature
9. Explorations in Fine Arts
10. Foundations in Social Science
11. Philosophy elective course
12. Theology elective course
13. Foundations in History or Political Theory
14. Intermediate Language I
15. Intermediate Language II

Study of a Language to the Intermediate Level

Two of the course requirements (see 14 and 15 above) are fulfilled by the study of a language through the intermediate level (typically the 104 level). Students who have prior language experience (e.g. spoken at home or studied previously) may take a placement test to either test out of the requirement or into a higher level, potentially needing to take only one or no language courses.

The language requirement is fulfilled by one of the following:

- Completing language studies through the intermediate level of any classical or modern foreign language.
- Demonstrating fluency at the intermediate level of any language.
- Completing the Foreign Language Substitution, IF a student has a documented learning disability specific to language learning. Contact Disability Support Services to discuss the appropriate accommodations.

Focus Area

The focus area offers students the opportunity to build upon the 15-course core in a way particular to their preferences and interests and benefiting their academic and career goals. Specifically, the focus area is met by completing a concentration in the liberal arts, which would result in a designation of "Cardinal Scholar" upon graduation, or one of the other approved alternatives.

The focus area requirement is fulfilled by completing one of the following:

- A Liberal Arts Concentration in either liberal studies or the enduring questions
- A minor, certificate, or double major/dual degree
- The study of an additional language to the intermediate level
- The Bachelor of Science science concentration (BS students only)
- 2 honors tracks (honors students only)

Exceptions for Professional Programs

To accommodate for extensive major requirements, students in the programs listed below complete 10 liberal arts courses (requirements 1-10 in the liberal arts course requirements list above) and may have exceptions specific to their program. Additionally, students in these programs DO NOT complete the language requirement or a focus area:

- B.S. Architecture
- Early Childhood and Elementary Education
- Engineering (all programs)*
- Acting BFA and Music BM (not Music BA)**
- Nursing BSN***

Engineering students complete only 8 liberal arts courses by picking one of the following: Fine Arts, Literature, or Social Science.

**Acting BFA and Music BM students complete only 9 liberal arts courses by picking either a Mathematics or a Natural Science.*

***Nursing BSN students complete only 9 liberal arts courses by picking either a Literature or Fine Arts*

Approved Liberal Arts Courses

To fulfill each of the liberal arts course requirements, students must select courses from the approved course list below. These courses are considered introductory liberal arts courses that address at least one enduring question. Students should check their degree audit and consult with their advisor regarding course exceptions for their major. Courses marked with an R are taught at Catholic University's Rome Campus

*denotes courses open only to students in the University Honors Program

**denotes courses open only to students in the Cornerstone Program

Underlined courses are being offered during the Spring 2026 semester

Philosophy (3 courses)
3rd course not required of professional programs (see front page)

1. Classical Philosophy (pick 1):
PHIL 201   PHIL 211*   HSPH 101*
2. Modern Philosophy (pick 1):
PHIL 202   PHIL 212*   HSPH 102*
3. Philosophy Elective (pick 1 non-major PHIL course)
Honors options: HSPH 203 & HSPH 204**

Theology and Religious Studies (3 courses)
3rd course not required of professional programs (see front page)

1. Foundations in Theology 1 (pick 1):
TRS 201   HSTR 101*
2. Foundations in Theology 2 (pick 1):
TRS 202A   TRS 202B   Any HSTR*
3. Theology Elective (pick 1 non-major TRS course)
Honors options: Any HSTR & HSEV 102**

Rhetoric & Composition

ENG 101   ENG 101H*   ENG 101C**

Explorations in Literature (pick 1)

ARAB 279

CLAS 105	CLAS 106	CLAS 211	CLAS 212R	CLAS 244
CLAS 261				
ENG 206**	ENG 212	ENG 231	ENG 232	ENG 235
ENG 236	ENG 278	ENG 305/HIST 328A		ENG 306/IRSH 306
ENG 312	ENG 341	ENG 345	ENG 347	ENG 351
ENG 352	ENG 356	ENG 364	ENG 369	ENG 376
ENG 378-R	ENG 379	ENG 461	ENG 462	
FREN 220	FREN 230	FREN 242	FREN 279	
GER 220	GER 225	GER 230	GER 255	
HUM 101	HUM 124			
ITAL 212	ITAL 220	ITAL 226	ITAL 232	MDIA 225
SPAN 224	SPAN 225	SPAN 240	SPAN 321	
HSHU 203*	HSLS 353*			

Explorations in Fine Arts (pick 1)

ARPL 211

ART 201	ART 211	ART 212	ART 213	ART 222
ART 251	ART 252	ART 272	ART 302	ART 308
ART 317	ART 318	ART 319	ART 320	ART 335
CLAS 214	CLAS 221	CLAS 251	CLAS 317	CLAS 318
CLAS 318R				
DR 105	DR 106	DR 110	DR 201	DR 202
DR 207	DR 305	DR 403		
DNCE 101	ENG 300	ENG 302	ENGR 101	HIST 390A
ITAL 219-R	MDIA 201	MDIA 343		
MUS 110	MUS 112	MUS 131	MUS 134	MUS 135

MUS 178	MUS 276	MUS 304	MUS 327	MUS 328
HSLS 352*	HSAM 101*	MUS 328H*		

Foundations in Social Science (pick 1)

ANTH 101	ANTH 110/GS 200	ANTH 201	ANTH 203	ANTH 211
ANTH 226	ANTH 240	ANTH 260		
CEE 201				
ECON 101	ECON 102	ECON 103*	ECON 104*	
GS 101				
PSY 201	PSY 226	PSY 261		
SOC 101	SOC 102	SOC 202	SOC 206	SOC 210
SOC 281	SOC 330	SOC 358		
SRES 345				
SSS 101	SSS 226			
HSEV 203*	HSSS 101*	HSSS 102*	HSSS 204*	SOC 102H*

Foundations in History or Politics (pick 1)
Not required of professional programs (see front page)

ANTH 215				
CLAS 205	CLAS 206	CLAS 207	CLAS 220	CLAS 226
CLAS 260	CLAS 304	CLAS 308		
ECST 315				
EURO 203				
HIST 140	HIST 142	HIST 146	HIST 151	HIST 202
HIST 205	HIST 206	HIST 208**	HIST 222	HIST 224
HIST 226	HIST 229	HIST 231A	HIST/AFRI 231B	
HIST 235	HIST 257	HIST 258	HIST 301	HIST 308B
HIST 309	HIST 309B	HIST 312	HIST 315	HIST 316
HIST 334A	HIST 349	HIST 351	HIST 371D	HIST 380D
HIST 384A	HIST 385			
ITAL 221				
MDIA 202				
POL 111	POL 112	POL 211	POL 226	
WASH 101				
HSHU 101*	HSHU 102*	HSHU 204*		
HSLS 205*	HSLS 351*			

Foundations of Mathematical Thinking or Statistics & Quantitative Reasoning (pick 1)**

MATH 111	MATH 112	MATH 114	MATH 121	MATH 122
MATH 168	MATH 175	MATH 187		
HSMS 230*	HSMS 330*	HSSS 203*		

Foundations in Natural Science (pick 1)**

ANTH 105	ANTH 108	ANTH 204	ANTH 206	ANTH 352
ANTH 354				
BIOL 103	BIOL 109			

CHEM 101	CHEM 110	CHEM 125	CHEM 126
CHEM 128R	CHEM 130		
PHYS 101	PHYS 103	PHYS 122	PHYS 206	PHYS 215H
PSY 204	SAS 225	HSEV 101*	

2 Intermediate Language Courses
Not required of professional programs (see front page)

Students have multiple options to fulfill the intermediate language requirement (see front of document). Based on their prior language experience or placement test results, students may need to take introductory language courses first or may place out of one or both intermediate language requirements.

Intermediate Language I (pick 1):

ARAB 103	CHN 103	FREN 103	GER 103	GR 103
IRSH 103	ITAL 103	LAT 103	SPAN 103	

Intermediate Language II (pick 1):

ARAB 104	CHN 104	FREN 104	GER 104	GR 104
IRSH 104	ITAL 104	LAT 104	SPAN 104	

NOTE: SPAN 111 and SPAN 113 fulfill both intermediate language requirements. Students only need to take one course.

Some transfer credits, credits from AP exams, and credits from high level IB exams that are not listed here can satisfy certain requirements.

Additional Details and Information

Up to 2 courses may "double count" for both liberal arts and major requirements, meaning at most 2 major courses can be used to fulfill liberal arts requirements. Students should check their degree audit and consult with their advisors to identify major courses that also fulfill liberal arts requirements.