

The Fulbright College Core Curriculum: A Mission and Vision Statement

“The highest function of higher education is the teaching of things in perspective, toward the purposes of enriching the life of the individual, cultivating the free and inquiring mind, and advancing the effort to bring reason, justice and humanity into the relations of men and nations.”

J. William Fulbright

The Fulbright College Core Curriculum should enrich the lives of the college’s students, providing them opportunities for intellectual, professional, imaginative, aesthetic, and personal development. The curriculum should comprise both a general education foundation that will enable students to inquire about life’s complexities and more specialized body of knowledge and skills that will help them thrive as students and citizens. By completing the Fulbright College Core Curriculum, students will

- **Build a context for knowledge.** The core curriculum will provide a framework for learning, especially in students’ majors, but it will also provide a basis for students’ to consider the knowledge they gain from the perspectives of other disciplines and a range of public forums.
- **Think within and across disciplines.** The core curriculum will expose students to many subject areas and provide them with the tools to improve their perception and understanding. In addition, the core curriculum will enable and encourage students to make new connections between and among the different disciplines’ key ideas, methodologies, and media.
- **Develop verbal, and quantification abilities.** The core curriculum will provide instruction and practice in communication and quantification, helping students learn how to solve problems and communicate with precision and meaning.
- **Learn both independently and as part of a vibrant learning community.** The core curriculum will encompass and convey a diverse body of information and tools of examination that will enable students to develop their opinions, attitudes, values, and beliefs, based on their own evaluation of argument and evidence, acquired both through independent study and through active participation in a learning community. Students will actively engage with knowledge and not be just passive recipients of facts.
- **Prepare for real life challenges.** The core curriculum will prepare students to meet the challenges of a diverse, technological, and global society. They will learn skills and abilities—thinking, solving problems, communicating, and adapting to change—that will foster success in the many careers they may pursue in their working lives and as citizens of the world.

A Set of Guiding Principles for Creating a Core Curriculum to Fulfill this Mission and Vision

The overarching principle: The Fulbright College Core Curriculum will promote intellectual and civic engagement by integrating different areas of knowledge, fostering interdisciplinary study, helping each student to understand, appreciate, and value diversity, and to be comfortable with new modes of acquisition and exchange of information.

- The Fulbright College Core Curriculum will be overseen by a faculty committee that approves courses for initial inclusion, periodically reviews courses for continued inclusion, and sponsors faculty development opportunities to support teaching in the curriculum. One particularly important function of this committee will be to encourage and support the development of interdisciplinary, cross-departmental, and/or team-taught courses.
- The Fulbright College Core Curriculum will use the 35-credit-hour State Minimum Core categories as its foundation, providing students with a breadth of knowledge and abilities from many disciplines. The Fulbright College Core Curriculum's effective use of the State Minimum Core categories must depend heavily on the creation of assessable student learning goals for each category; these learning goals are currently being developed by the Faculty Senate's General Education Core Committee.
- The Fulbright College Core Curriculum will include the new diversity component currently being developed by the Faculty Senate's General Education Core Committee.
- Fulbright College students will take a First-Year Seminar—an actual, three-credit course—that will lead students, in the context of an inquiry into an important issue from contemporary public affairs, the domain of an academic discipline, or an interdisciplinary realm, to understand the basic purposes of a liberal education and to use critical and creative thinking, information literacy, and individual and team-based problem-solving to understand the context and significance of the issue.
- Fulbright College students will take a 3000- or 4000-level course that will lead students to use the perspectives, skills, and abilities developed throughout the Fulbright College Core Curriculum and their majors to synthesize and apply their knowledge in a range of settings both within and beyond academia.
- The Fulbright College Core Curriculum will incorporate course work and other learning experiences—for example, study abroad and experiential courses—that will lead to each student's acquiring proficiency in one language in addition to his or her native, home language.
- Experiential and service learning will be encouraged wherever appropriate and effective throughout the core curriculum.
- Class sizes will be small whenever possible. When large courses must be offered, the use of small discussion groups will be encouraged.
- Courses in the core curriculum will be taught by tenure-line or other expert faculty or well-qualified graduate students.