Preparation for Success

The Core Curriculum of the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) establishes common goals that, along with a major and minor specialization, prepare Arts and Sciences graduates for successful lives and careers built on a critical understanding of the natural environment, human behavior, and the individual’s role in diverse societies. Conversant with multiple intellectual traditions, modes of analysis, and schools of thought, and armed with well-developed communication and reasoning skills, the school’s graduates are prepared to meet any challenge.

The innovative Core Curriculum cultivates and nurtures curiosity by emphasizing the process of inquiry and the creation of knowledge through debate, research, and scholarship. The Core Curriculum incorporates Arts and Sciences students into the research mission of our great university and equips them with the intellectual resources required for excellence in meeting the rapidly transforming challenges of the 21st century.
Flexibility to Adapt to Changing Workplace Demands

“For young people today, what’s clear is that they’re going to need to continue to learn throughout their lifetime... What’s very clear is that what our kids need to do is learn how to learn and become very flexible and adaptable.”

- Susan Lund, Partner, McKinsey Global Institute


Liberal Arts and Sciences for the 21st Century

The Core Curriculum is based on the learning goals that form the core of a modern liberal arts and sciences education at a leading 21st century public research university and that are sought after by graduate programs and employers across occupations and professions. The goals derive from three main areas of focus: Contemporary Challenges, Areas of Inquiry, and Cognitive Skills and Processes.

The learning goals clearly articulate what students are able to do upon completion of the Core, incorporating the reasons for these requirements right into the requirements themselves. These Core learning goals open the door to new worlds of intellectual adventure, to advanced study in majors, and to success in a wide variety of postgraduate programs and careers.

Achievement of these learning goals equips our students not just to get a first job, but to excel in that job, advance in that career, and change careers as the demands of the 21st century continue to evolve. These goals prepare students to face the public and private challenges of local and global citizenship in the 21st century and develop habits of questioning the known and exploring the unknown. At the same time, these goals push students to examine not just “what” they want to be, but more importantly, “who” they want to be by discovering their values, talents, and passions.
Three Areas of Focus: The School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum

The goals for each focus area in the Core Curriculum complement and reinforce each other and permeate all of the school’s courses and fields of study. The Core Curriculum provides a solid catalyst for excellence in completing major, minor, and elective credits where the student will develop advanced skills in many of these Core goals. Progress in completing the Core is measured not by the number of courses taken, but by the range and number of goals achieved in courses specially designed to meet Core goals.

Defined in terms of learning goals, the innovative Core Curriculum is different from the traditional model of general education distribution requirements that students at other schools fulfill by taking introductory courses in a range of majors. Each goal represents a particular type of critical thinking and problem solving employed in the arts and sciences.
How Do We Know the Core Works?

Our Commitment to a Culture of Evidence.

In the School of Arts and Sciences, we don’t just require students to take courses and assume they achieve these goals. Only a special, limited group of courses are certified as meeting Core Curriculum goals. These courses put specific Core Curriculum goals front and center in their course design and regularly assess student achievement of these Core goals using state-of-the-art authentic assessment measures.

Our faculty members are constantly improving their Core courses to better meet these goals. Only courses that have committed to this process are certified as Core courses. This is why some particular courses are certified while other courses that may seem to have similar or analogous foci are not. This is your assurance that SAS students develop the capabilities the Core promises.

Which Courses Should I Take?

Only courses certified for the Core can be used to fulfill the Core. Many courses are certified for multiple goals, and students may use them to satisfy multiple goals. For example, students may use one of our Signature Courses (see page 9) to meet Contemporary Challenges goals and some Areas of Inquiry goals, as well as, in some cases, Cognitive Skills and Processes goals.

Students can find an online list of certified courses by visiting the School of Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services page at sasundergrad.rutgers.edu.

As students make Core Curriculum choices from the three areas of focus, they should consider the following:

- A single course may meet multiple goals.
- Completion of the Core does not require a specific number of courses, but generally students will complete the Core in 10 to 14 courses.
- Courses used for the Core often will also count toward a student’s major or minor, but the Core is also intentionally structured to ensure that students get a broader context and set of cognitive skills in which to situate their major.
- Fulfilling the Core early involves students in a variety of areas of study from which they may come to choose a major and a minor.
- Students will use an online degree audit program called “Degree Navigator” to track their progress in the Core.
- Our staff of academic advisers is always available to assist students in customizing their academic plans.

The Core Curriculum opens the door to advanced study in a wide range of programs—Arts and Sciences students can choose from over 70 majors across the life sciences, the physical and mathematical sciences, the humanities, and the social and behavioral sciences.

The Core learning goals complement and reinforce each other, and permeate all of the courses and programs available to our students. As students move forward completing their major, minor, and elective credits, they develop advanced skills in many of these learning goals.

Find information about majors and minors open to Arts and Sciences students at sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/majors
About Contemporary Challenges

The Core Curriculum begins with four learning goals that bring the diverse and rich intellectual heritage of the liberal arts and sciences to bear on the Contemporary Challenges our graduates will face as global citizens and leaders: appreciating human difference, employing multiple disciplinary approaches, understanding the role of science and technology, and grappling with questions of social justice. Students meet these goals in courses that join multidisciplinary scholarship with the most pressing issues of the day. Many of the Signature Courses—specially designed courses of grand intellectual sweep focused on questions of lasting importance and taught by leading scholar-teachers—meet these goals and bring students and faculty together in communities of common interest and experience.

Goals: Contemporary Challenges

Contemporary Challenges [CC]

Students take two courses (≥6 credits) that meet at least two of these four goals.

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experiences of and perspectives on contemporary issues.
- Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Analyze the relationship that science and technology have to a contemporary social issue.
- Analyze contemporary issues of social justice.
About Areas of Inquiry

By emphasizing the ability to critically examine the natural environment, human behavior, and the individual’s role in society, the Core learning goals prepare the school’s students to be creative problem solvers, strong leaders, and reflective individuals in whatever life path they choose. The Core Curriculum’s Areas of Inquiry learning goals engage students with critical analysis in the arts and sciences throughout history and in our faculty’s cutting-edge research. These goals stretch the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines by leading students back to those questions that predate the artificial division of knowledge into distinct majors and minors.
Goals: Areas of Inquiry

Natural Sciences [NS], Social [SCL] Analysis, Historical [HST] Analysis, and Arts and Humanities [AH]

Natural Sciences [NS]
Students take two courses (≥6 credits) meeting at least one of these two goals.

• Understand and apply basic principles and concepts in the physical or biological sciences.
• Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in scientific analysis.

Historical Analysis [HST]
Students take one course (≥3 credits) meeting at least one of these two goals.

• Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time.
• Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Social Analysis [SCL]
Students take one course (≥3 credits) meeting at least one of these two goals.

• Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
• Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Arts and Humanities [AH]
Students take two courses (≥6 credits) meeting at least two of these four goals.

• Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.
• Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.
• Understand the nature of human languages and their speakers.
• Engage critically in the process of creative expression.

From African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures to Women’s and Gender Studies, there are courses in over 45 subject areas certified as meeting various Core Curriculum goals.
About Cognitive Skills and Processes

The Core Curriculum equips students with the Cognitive Skills and Processes that are central to lifelong learning and participation in the world of ideas and the corridors of power. Through the Core, our students hone their writing and communication skills and develop their quantitative and formal reasoning skills. And students delve behind facile assumptions to assess the many conduits of information (and misinformation) and their relationship to knowledge in the 21st century information economy.

Goals: Cognitive Skills and Processes

Writing and Communication [WC], Quantitative and Formal Reasoning [QQ, QR], and Information Technology and Research [ITR]

Writing and Communication [WC]

Students take three courses (≥9 credits). All students take 01:355:101 Expository Writing or its equivalent. Students take two additional courses and meet both goals.

• Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision.

• Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.
The Signature Courses Example
School of Arts and Sciences Signature Courses—foundational courses covering engaging topics of grand intellectual sweep and enduring importance—exemplify how courses can fulfill multiple Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum goals. Signature Courses are designed and taught by our renowned scholars and scientists who are not only recognized for their specialized research, but are also eloquent and demanding award-winning teachers. Each course is made up of a combination of capacious lectures by faculty and small discussion sections led by graduate students from our nationally ranked graduate programs. They establish a common basis for intellectual exchange and define us as the School of Arts and Sciences community of students and scholars working together. Learn more at sas.rutgers.edu/signature.

A Sampling of Signature Courses
The courses listed here represent just a sampling of the many different Signature Courses the School of Arts and Sciences offers in the fall and spring semesters.

**The American Dream**
Core: CC, AHp
Everyone talks about the “American Dream” and everyone wants to live it, but what, exactly, is the “American Dream”? Does it divide us or unite us? Can it still be achieved in the 21st century? The American Dream takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of American culture and society. By reading widely and examining sources as diverse as memoirs, essays, novels, images, music, and film, this course probes the meanings and uses of the “American Dream” in the life of the nation as well as in each of our own lives. The “American Dream,” its meaning, continues to shift as it collides with changing social realities as each generation projects its hopes and anxieties into its fabric. The history of the evolving “American Dream” provides the building blocks of our own dreams, aspirations, and expectations for life in the 21st century.

**Cities**
Core: CC, SCL
Cities now dominate the economic output of most nations and have become the most dynamic sources of ideas, opportunities, and dreams. Yet, cities are also where inequality is most visible, making them contested territories where different classes and interest groups jostle for space and influence. This course examines what makes cities contradictory spaces of work, residence, and play that at once enable the release of creative energies, aspirations, and economies yet simultaneously restrict, control, and confine. It does so by using cities to explore the most pressing social concerns of our times: from the urbanization of terrorism and security; to the enduring effects of housing segregation in the US and abroad; to the impacts of global climate change on human settlement patterns; to the causes and consequences of suburbanization and gentrification.

**Data 101**
Core: CC, QQ or QR, ITR
How do you tell good data from bad? Misinformation from useful analysis? And who owns the information about our lives and decisions? Data 101 will help you improve your data literacy and develop a healthy skepticism about empirical claims presented in the popular media. We will explore examples of erroneous, rushed, and ad hoc conclusions based on so-called “big data,” and you will get hands-on experience analyzing and using data to make persuasive arguments. You will also learn to make more informed decisions about what you find and share online. Along the way, you will learn fundamental concepts in statistics and probability and acquire basic programming skills that will benefit you in your future coursework and beyond.
Students Develop Competencies for 21st Century Life and Careers

The Core curriculum and over 100 major and minor options provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to reach their highest potential in an ever-changing world of work. The experiences gained in and outside the classroom allow students to develop the competencies that experts agree are critical for building a successful career and a fulfilling life. These include:1

Oral and written communication
Analytical and ethical reasoning
Digital technology and research
Lifelong learning and career management
Professionalism and work ethic
Project management, teamwork, and leadership
Critical thinking and problem solving
Innovation and creativity
Social justice and cultural competency
Citizenship and community engagement

Did You Know?

Students who switch majors, even late in their college experience, are just as likely to graduate on time as their peers.


93% of employers agree that candidates’ demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major.


The Career Explorations in Arts and Sciences Initiative

Through a new course for sophomores and juniors, related programming, and workshops, the SAS Career Explorations initiative is helping students to connect their college learning to 21st Century careers and purposeful lives. Students explore majors and a range of career options, learn how to compete in today’s job market, and network with alumni who have successfully moved from classroom to career. The initiative also connects students to our wide range of internship opportunities and to the programs offered through University Career Services. For more information on Career Services programs, see careers.rutgers.edu.

Checklist: SAS Core Curriculum

Students use an online degree audit program called “Degree Navigator” to track their progress in the Core. Our staff of academic advisers is always available for individual guidance. Upon completion of the SAS Core Curriculum, students will have developed competencies in the goals below.

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

(≥6 credits) Students must take two courses. [CC]
- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person’s experiences of and perspectives on contemporary issues.
- Analyze a contemporary global issue from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Analyze the relationship that science and technology have to a contemporary social issue.
- Analyze contemporary issues of social justice.

AREAS OF INQUIRY

Natural Sciences (≥6 credits) Students must take two courses. [NS]
- Understand and apply basic principles and concepts in the physical or biological sciences.
- Explain and be able to assess the relationship among assumptions, method, evidence, arguments, and theory in scientific analysis.

Historical Analysis (≥6 credits) Students must take one course. [HST]
- Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time.
- Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Social Analysis (≥6 credits) Students must take one course. [SCL]
- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

Arts and Humanities (≥6 credits) Students must take two courses and meet two goals. [AH]
- Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production. [AHo]
- Analyze arts and/or literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies. [AHp]
- Understand the nature of human languages and their speakers. [AHs]
- Engage critically in the process of creative expression. [AHc]

COGNITIVE SKILLS AND PROCESSES

Writing and Communication (≥9 credits) Students must take three courses [01:355:101- Expository Writing; one WCr; and one WCd]
- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision. [WCr]
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights. [WCd]

Quantitative and Formal Reasoning (≥6 credits) Students must take two courses and meet both goals. [QQ, QR]
- Formulate, evaluate, and communicate conclusions and inferences from quantitative information. [QQ]
- Apply effective and efficient mathematical or other formal processes to reason and to solve problems. [QR]

Information Technology and Research (≥3 credits) Students must take one course. [ITR]
- Employ current technologies to access and evaluate information, to conduct research, and to communicate findings.
- Understand the principles that underlie information systems.

Courses certified by the SAS faculty as meeting Core goals may also fulfill major or minor requirements. Students will work with their academic advisers to carefully select courses and understand SAS policies governing degree requirements.
Departments and Degree-Granting Programs

The Core Curriculum learning goals complement and reinforce each other and permeate all the courses and programs available to our students.

As students move forward through all their degree requirements—their major, minor, and elective credits—they develop advanced skills in many of these learning goals.

The Core Curriculum opens the door to over 70 majors and a comprehensive range of options offered by these Arts and Sciences programs and departments:

African, Middle Eastern, and South Asian Languages and Literatures
Africana Studies
American Studies
Anthropology
Art History
Asian Languages and Cultures
Biological Sciences
Cell Biology and Neuroscience
Chemistry and Chemical Biology
Classics
Cognitive Science
Comparative Literature
Computer Science
Criminal Justice
Earth and Planetary Sciences
Economics
English
European Studies
French
Genetics
Geography
Germanic, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures
History
Italian
Jewish Studies
Kinesiology and Health
Latin American Studies
Latino and Caribbean Studies
Linguistics
Mathematics
Medieval Studies
Middle Eastern Studies
Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
Philosophy
Physics and Astronomy
Political Science
Psychology
Religion
Sociology
Spanish and Portuguese
Statistics and Biostatistics
Women’s and Gender Studies

Find information about majors and minors open to Arts and Sciences students at sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/majors
About the School of Arts and Sciences

The School of Arts and Sciences is the academic heart and soul of Rutgers University–New Brunswick, providing students with a comprehensive liberal arts undergraduate education of extraordinary breadth and depth. Students acquire the tools and knowledge necessary to pursue a wide variety of career and life paths, equipping them with the intellectual and practical skills to successfully meet the rapidly changing demands of the 21st century. The School of Arts and Sciences combines superb teaching with world-class research in an environment of remarkable cultural diversity.

Students fashion an undergraduate course of study that combines our bold Core Curriculum with deeper explorations of particular areas of interest through study in a major, a minor, and other elective courses. The School of Arts and Sciences is home to more than 40 academic departments ranging from the biological and physical sciences to the humanities, mathematics, and the social and behavioral sciences. Our departments, centers, and interdisciplinary programs offer more than 70 majors and more than 80 minors, providing multiple opportunities for students to explore and understand our increasingly diverse world. Students study and actively join with our world-class research faculty in following their curiosity to the creation of new knowledge and understandings of the natural world and human behavior, belief, culture, and society.

The exciting School of Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum embodies our belief in and aspirations for our diverse and growing student body and reflects the mission of Rutgers University as a comprehensive public research university for the 21st century.

Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, age, religion, ancestry, pregnancy, genetic information, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, civil union status, domestic partnership status, military service, veteran status, or any other category protected by law, in its admission, programs, activities, or employment matters. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Judy Ryan, Universitywide Title IX Coordinator, Office of Enterprise Risk Management, Ethics, and Compliance (732-235-5304, judy.ryan@rutgers.edu); and Lisa Grosskreutz, Director, Office of Employment Equity, University Human Resources (848-932-3980, lisa.grosskreutz@rutgers.edu). For further information on the notice of nondiscrimination, you may contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, at 646-428-3900 or OCR.NewYork@ed.gov.

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