



## CORE CURRICULUM PROGRAM AND GOALS

### ABOUT THE CORE

At Benedictine University, the heart of our institution's academic life is the Common Core Humanities program. Moreover, the center of this Core program is Benedictine's Cultural Heritage course sequence. Four year students take a sequence of five historically oriented, primary-text based, reading and writing intensive, seminar-conducted courses. These courses include: *The First Year Writing Seminar* (WRIT 101), *Mediterranean World* (HUMN 220, The Origins of Humanity to approximately 400 C.E.), *Baptism of Europe* (HUMN 230, approximately 350-1500 C.E.), *Converging Hemispheres* (HUMN 240, approximately 1400-1900 C.E.), and *Contemporary World* (HUMN 250, approximately 1850 C.E. to the present). The courses are a combination of standard selected world civilization material, significantly enriched with culturally critical "Core Text" additions. The students are asked to internalize the basic chronology and geography of selected world history, in addition to reading and addressing a very significant sampling of the "Great Texts" associated with this history. A significant component of this "Core Text" material concerns the study of the Rule of St. Benedict and the development of the Catholic Intellectual tradition.

In addition, the Core Program deems a number of themes to be especially crucial to the understanding and heritage of the intellectual history it is designed to explore. These include: the relationship of the individual person to their community; the contributions of religious faith and philosophical thought to the understanding of this person in community; the relationship of the individual to society; the history, methods, and impact of the natural sciences on individual persons, their communities, their societies, and their environment; and finally, the artistic and literary heritage of world civilization. Furthermore as part of the Core program, Benedictine students are also asked to take a number of disciplinary-targeted "Core electives." These are student-selected courses taught from the differing perspectives of particular fields of academic, scientific, and scholarly inquiry. Their inclusion in the Core program is intended to demonstrate to our students both the multiplicity and unity of all human knowledge. All Core courses at Benedictine are staffed by Benedictine faculty from across all disciplines, programs, and curricula.

One particular feature that makes the Benedictine University Liberal Arts Core Program distinctive is its reliance on the resources of the Catholic and Benedictine traditions, and the relationship of these traditions to the development both of human culture and civilization. An overall aim of the program is to offer students a particular vision of the individual in community, a vision which respects and promotes personal freedom and social harmony, while providing an understanding of the means necessary to secure both. The overall goal is to prepare students for a lifetime of continued learning, a holistic understanding of human knowledge, respect for religious and cultural traditions, and active and responsible citizenship.

### CORE GOALS

Through the Core Curriculum, the students will

1. Demonstrate an effective level of cognitive, communicative, and research skills;
2. Achieve a college level of computational skills and an ability to understand and interpret numerical data;
3. Acquire a knowledge of the history and heritage of western civilization, to include

- the contributions of religious faith and philosophical thought to understanding the person in community,
- the relationship of the individual to society: membership and participation in groups and institutions,
- scientific literacy through a knowledge of the history, the methods, and the impact of science on the individual, society, and the environment,
- artistic and literary heritage;

4. Develop an understanding of global society: cultural diversity, mutual relationships, interdependence of peoples and nations;

5. Apply liberal learning in problem-solving contexts as preparation for active participation in society;

6. Make informed ethical decisions that promote personal integrity, the legitimate rights and aspirations of individuals and groups, and the common good.