

Course Descriptions

Core Curriculum

The Saint Joseph's College Core Curriculum is very different from general education at most other colleges. Here, general education involves almost all of the departments or disciplines within the College, and is team-taught. Moreover, the Core Program—unlike the more widespread “distributional” approach to general education, with students choosing a variety of courses—is a single program of integrated liberal-arts education that begins at a well defined point in the freshman year and works through clear stages of progress toward an equally well defined goal in the senior year. The Core Curriculum, therefore, is a well-coordinated program of general education that complements the work in the major through the four years of college education.

Core Curriculum Objectives

The College began this curriculum in 1969 and has invested large amounts of faculty time and energy in it. Over the years, the curriculum has developed, but the following objectives remain the focus of the Core Curriculum:

- All Core Curriculum faculty, in all eight semesters, work to develop the cognitive and communication skills of students: critical thinking, listening-speaking, and reading-writing.
- The Core Curriculum is a common academic experience for all students and for most of the faculty, thus constituting a lively basis for true academic community on this campus.
- The Core Curriculum enables all students to acquire an understanding of how all the contemporary modes of inquiry work, no matter what the major.
- The Core Curriculum pays special attention to how knowledge from each of the various disciplines connects with knowledge from other fields, and thus students are encouraged to develop an integrative habit of mind.
- In the Core Curriculum, values (personal, national, global) are a constant focus of study, so that students may work to develop their own set of values with sensitivity and consistency.
- All through the eight semesters of the Core Curriculum, there is witness to the specific values of our Judeo-Christian and Humanist traditions in keeping with the College motto of “Religio, Moralitas, Scientia.”

The Core Curriculum constitutes “the first major” of each and every student at the College. That means that every graduate from SJC has the benefits—for both personal development and for career advancement—of a solid background in liberal education and in the major field of study.

Freshmen Seminar (COR 001)**1 credit**

A course for first-year students focusing on academic planning, college adjustment, and success skills, educational philosophy and the history and purposes of Saint Joseph's College. Required of all freshmen in the fall semester.

Core 1. (COR 110, 111) The Contemporary Situation**6 credits**

A study of the human situation in the 20th century with its crises and achievements. The course aims at student involvement in the world through reflection and communication. Required of all freshmen.

Core 2. (COR 120, 121) The Modern World**6 credits**

A study of the larger movements of civilization from the seventeenth to the 20th century with emphasis on contemporary relevance. Required of all freshmen.

Core 3. (COR 230) The Roots of Western Civilization**6 credits**

A study of the Hebrew, Greek and Roman civilizations in their roles as roots of Western Civilization. Core 3 stresses the intellectual, artistic, religious, and social contributions of these civilizations to our modern Western Civilization. Required of all sophomores.

Core 4. (COR 240) The Christian Impact on Western Civilization**6 credits**

A study of the growth of Western Civilization from the beginning of the Christian era to the emergence of the "Modern World." The intellectual, artistic, religious, and social growth of these years is emphasized. Required of all sophomores.

Core 5-6. (COR 350, 360) Humanity in the Universe**6 credits**

This course, extended through two semesters, studies the emergence of the human species in the course of cosmic, biological and cultural evolution and assesses the theoretical and practical impact of the natural sciences on the human situation. Required of all juniors except those in the medical technology or nursing program.

Core 7-8. (COR 370, 380) Intercultural Studies**6 credits**

An examination of civilizations other than our own. By studying other cultures, the student gains a new perspective and insight into the institutions and thought of the Western world. Extended through two semesters and required of all juniors.

Core 9. Towards a Christian Humanism (COR 490)**6 credits**

This course attempts to point to the possibility of a Christian view of the human person by an examination of the general problems of humanism, religion, Christianity, and Catholicism. It applies psychological, sociological, philosophical, and theological considerations to the material provided by the previous Core experience. Required of all seniors, and of juniors in an approved three-year sequence.

Core 10. (COR 498) Christianity and the Human Situation **3 credits**

A seminar course on selected ethical problems of our day in the light of Christian faith and of all the Core experience, especially Core 9. Core 10 is, therefore, a study of the practice of Christian Humanism. While section leaders may offer a variety of introductory approaches, preference will be given to seminar topics originated by students. Such topics might be related to person-oriented concerns, to urgent contemporary issues, or to a student's chosen career.



SJC Community marches through the streets of Rensselaer to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day