



## The University Studies Curriculum

The University Studies component of the *Engaged Community* is defined primarily by a set of required courses in various areas. These areas are constructed so that students will be exposed to academic experiences that will help them achieve the outcomes in the UMD Commitment to Student Learning.

There are five Clusters in the University Studies Curriculum:

1. Foundations for Engagement: Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
2. The Natural World: Scientific Inquiry and Understanding
3. The Cultural World: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding
4. The Social World: Humanity and Society
5. The Educated and Engaged Citizen: Integrating the UMD Experience

Each Cluster has a set of required courses:

1. Foundations for Engagement: Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - A. Critical Writing and Reading I – ENL 101 (3 credits)
  - B. Critical Writing and Reading II – ENL 102 (3 credits)
  - C. Intermediate Writing (3 credits)
  - D. Mathematics (3 credits)
  - E. Foundation for Learning through Engagement (variable credit)
2. The Natural World: Scientific Inquiry and Understanding
  - A. Science of the Natural World (3 credits)
  - B. Science in the Engaged Community (3 credits)
3. The Cultural World: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding
  - A. Literature (3 credits)
  - B. Visual and Performing Arts (3 credits)
4. The Social World: Humanity and Society
  - A. Human Questions and Contexts (3 credits)
  - B. The Nature of US Society (3 credits)
  - C. The Nature of the Global Society (3 credits)
5. The Educated and Engaged Citizen: Integrating the UMD Experience
  - A. Capstone Study (3 credits)
  - B. Learning Through Engagement (variable credit)

## **Cluster 1 – Foundations for Engagement: Skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Cluster 1 brings together basic skills in thinking, reading, writing and quantitative reasoning and challenges students to apply the skills they develop as engaged citizens of a community that spans the classroom, campus, and the local, regional and global communities beyond. This cluster introduces students to the UMD Commitment to Student Learning and builds a foundation for engagement and integration of knowledge, skills and capacities that will develop throughout the UMD experience.

Goals:

- I. To introduce students to the concepts of the engaged citizen and engaged learning.
- II. To emphasize the use of critical thinking, reading, and writing and communication as vehicles for engaged learning.
- III. To foster students' ability to use technology to enhance learning.
- IV. To develop students' ability to reason using quantitative and mathematical information.

### **A. *Critical Writing and Reading I – ENL 101***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Produce college level writing that addresses needs of audience, situation and purpose.
2. Analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
3. Incorporate and accurately document outside sources using proper documentation format.
4. Demonstrate control of syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

### **B. *Critical Writing and Reading II – ENL 102***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Write essays that satisfy the specific needs of audiences in the disciplines of the sciences, social sciences and humanities.
2. Write effective syntheses that demonstrate effective critical reading.
3. Select, effectively integrate and document appropriate resource materials from library databases and print holdings.
4. Demonstrate discipline-specific control of language, style, structure, format, syntax, grammar and mechanics.

### **C. *Intermediate Writing***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Read with comprehension and critically interpret and evaluate written work in discipline-specific contexts.
2. Demonstrate rhetorically effective, discipline-specific writing for appropriate audiences.
3. Demonstrate, at an advanced level of competence, use of discipline-specific control of language, modes of development and formal conventions.
4. Demonstrate intermediate information literacy skills by selecting, evaluating, integrating and documenting information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing.

**D. Mathematics**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize when to apply mathematical concepts and methods to specific problems.
2. Manipulate mathematical expressions to solve for particular variables.
3. Draw conclusions from quantitative information and communicate these conclusions verbally and graphically.
4. Implement mathematical models to obtain accurate or approximate solutions using appropriate tools.
5. Apply mathematical techniques to social and scientific problems.

**E. Foundation for Learning through Engagement**

College/major/disciplinary base course. Approved courses may include foundation and introductory courses within the major (e.g. CVPA foundations, MLS introductory course, EGR 101, etc.) or new, broadly conceived foundation courses in humanities, sciences, social sciences, business, education, etc.

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Express the rationale for a broad education, as described in the UMD Commitment to Student Learning.
2. Define engaged learning in the context of their major, discipline or community.
3. Apply the concept of engaged learning to their personal goals.
4. Explain how perspectives within one or more academic disciplines impact the community.
5. Explain how issues in the community can be understood within an academic discipline.

**Cluster 2 –The Natural World: Scientific Inquiry and Understanding**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century it is impossible to engage successfully with the broader community without having fundamental knowledge of the scientific method and basic facts about the natural world. In our communities of work and in our community of citizenship, it is increasingly necessary to develop familiarity with scientific methods and acquire knowledge of science to comprehend and solve the problems we face.

Goals:

- I. To expose students to the process of scientific inquiry and scientific methods.
- II. To introduce students to the extant body of knowledge in one or more fields of science.
- III. To increase students' confidence and competence in their ability to apply scientific principles and knowledge.
- IV. To enhance students' ability to incorporate knowledge of science into problem solving strategies.

***One course each from:***

**A. *Science of the Natural World***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Recount the fundamental concepts and methods in one or more specific fields of science.
2. Explain how the scientific method is used to produce knowledge.
3. Successfully use quantitative information to communicate their understanding of scientific knowledge.
4. Use appropriate scientific knowledge to solve problems.

**B. *Science in the Engaged Community***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and evaluate the use of scientific information in the context of social, economic, environmental or political issues.
2. Apply scientific theories and knowledge to real-world problems.
3. Effectively communicate scientific information in writing.

**Cluster 3 – The Cultural World: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding**

Successful engagement in the community requires an understanding of culture and the various ways it is expressed. People are shaped by their culture at the same time they help to construct it. Key to understanding culture is the ability to understand how to interpret and make sense of cultural expressions found in literature and the visual and performing arts.

Goals:

- I. To understand works of art and literature within their cultural and historical contexts.
- II. To understand how works of human expression shape individual and cultural identities, values and behaviors.
- III. To analyze creative processes and engage in critiques.
- IV. To experience cultural events to foster appreciation of the aesthetic and formal qualities of literary, visual and performing arts.

***One course each from:***

**A. *Literature***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate how literature (fiction, poetry, drama and literary nonfiction) both reflects and helps shape culture, society and history.
2. Explain how a text's literary form, style and content express its meanings using appropriate disciplinary terminology.
3. Evaluate the rhetorical and contextual elements of ideas presented by literary texts and respond to them critically and analytically.
4. Explain the ways in which literature expresses the values that humans attach to their experiences.

### **B. Visual and Performing Arts**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the cultural context, history and formal and conceptual aspects of the art form studied.
2. Interpret and create informed responses (via writing, presentation, performance or artifact) to the art form studied through the analysis of the form, content, context and methods of production using appropriate disciplinary terminology.
3. Explain the ways in which the art form expresses the values that humans attach to their experiences.

## **Cluster 4 –The Social World: Humanity and Society**

Cluster 4 focuses on the individual in relation to the world and to others. Students are challenged to consider how their perspectives and beliefs are formed and how differing perspectives come together to create the complex social world in which we live. Our curriculum considers these processes within the context of personal experience and as a member of both US society and the global community.

Goals:

- I. To introduce students to questions about human knowledge and the human condition, as well as the relationship of the individual to the broader world.
- II. To foster an understanding of the diversity within US society.
- III. To encourage a deeper understanding of one’s place and role in US society.
- IV. To engage students in critical thinking about humanity and society.
- V. To foster awareness of global cultural perspectives.

***One course each from:***

### **A. Human Questions and Contexts**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain different perspectives on: a) what it means to be human and how the significance of human existence has been understood; b) the nature of human relationships and how these relationships are evidenced in regard to the broader world; or c) how knowledge is obtained, maintained and changed, as well as how individuals come to understand and think about the world around them.
2. Recognize ethical issues in complex contexts and evaluate the ethical positions taken by themselves and others.
3. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
4. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on human questions and contexts.

**B. *The Nature of US Society***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives; b) US social and cultural domains in relationship to other regions of the world; or c) the different facets of citizenship in the United States.
2. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
3. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society.

**C. *The Nature of the Global Society***

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain basic problems faced by societies and cultures outside the US or issues that shape societies globally.
2. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
3. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on global society.

**Cluster 5 – The Educated and Engaged Citizen: Integrating the UMD Experience**

Cluster 5 requires students to apply the knowledge, skills and capacities gained throughout the UMD experience and to reflect on the interaction of these and their own professional and personal development.

***One course and certification of engagement activity:***

**A. *Capstone Study***

Approved courses will give students the opportunity to integrate their learning and produce an original expression of knowledge or understanding. Students will also demonstrate mastery of both written and oral communication.

Upon completion of the capstone study, students will be able to:

1. Synthesize the knowledge and skills gained within major courses, independently complete a research-based project or creative work and integrate the results of both in an open-ended project or experience (projects within the major are encouraged).
2. Integrate knowledge and principles from the field of study with those of the broader University Studies curriculum.
3. Demonstrate advanced information literacy skills by selecting, evaluating, integrating and documenting information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing.
4. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, the results of the project or experience.

**B. *Learning Through Engagement***

Through engagement, students deepen their understanding and appreciation of their academic study, while also reflecting on the connections between their learning and the broader communities of which they are a part. These communities may be professional, scholarly, social, cultural, economic or political. These activities provide an opportunity for students to better understand their roles as members of these communities. Service learning courses, internships, study abroad programs, independent research or creative work and experiential learning courses or practica that foster engagement and reflection may be used to meet this requirement. Capstone courses may also qualify.

Upon completion of this requirement, students will be able to:

1. Identify the needs and resources of the communities to which they belong.
2. Apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real problems and/or opportunities within their communities.
3. Describe the connections between learning on campus and the issues and needs of broader academic, professional or civic communities.
4. Articulate the value of engagement to other members of their communities.