

Academic Programs and Requirements for Degrees

The Invitation to Inquiry Program

The general education (Gen Ed) program at Albertus Magnus College, called *Invitation to Inquiry*, provides students with rigorous training in the liberal arts, defined as study in the arts and sciences. Its goal is to form students as lifelong inquirers with robust self-awareness, a passion to pursue the truth, a commitment to inclusion and to upholding the dignity of all persons, and an ability to speak and act effectively in pursuit of their aims. It takes an integrative approach, promoting student understanding of how the various components of their education fit together. It emphasizes experiential and problem-based learning. It is the heart of an Albertus Magnus College education.

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete *Invitation to Inquiry* will demonstrate achievement of the following eight learning outcomes:

- **Critical Reading & Information Literacy.** An ability to know when information is needed, and to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly make use of information to address a given problem. (Adapted from the National Forum on Information Literacy)
- **Written Communication.** An ability to express ideas in writing and to work in a variety of genres and styles. It can involve working with various writing technologies, mixing text, data, and images. Written communication abilities are developed iteratively through a series of experiences spanning the curriculum.
- **Oral Communication.** An ability to convey knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote a change in listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors through speech.
- **Scientific Inquiry.** An ability to break down complex topics or issues into parts to gain a fuller understanding of them and to follow a sequence of steps to gain new knowledge.
- **Logical Analysis.** An ability to use the tools of logic and critical reasoning to gain new knowledge, identify fallacies, and develop logically-sound critiques.
- **Quantitative Reasoning.** An ability to work with numerical data, and indeed a "habit of mind." Students will be able to resolve quantitative problems across a variety of practical contexts. They will be able to understand and build arguments supported by quantitative evidence and clearly communicate those arguments in a variety of formats (using words, tables, graphs, mathematical equations, etc.).
- **Aesthetic Inquiry.** An ability to appreciate works of literature and work in the fine arts, to interpret and evaluate these works, and to undertake one's own work in these fields.

- **Intercultural and Global Awareness.** An ability to employ “a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (Bennett, J. M. [2008]).

Curriculum

The program consists of 48 credits and has three main parts:

Foundational Courses: (12 credits)

- The Examined Life I and II (two terms, 6 credits)
- Written Expression I and II (two terms, 6 credits)

Liberal Arts Core: One course from each discipline listed below at the 100 or 200-level (24 credits)

- Mathematics
- Natural science
- Social science
- Art/Communications
- Literature
- History
- Philosophy
- Religion

Pathway: (9 credits)

- 200 or 300-level Humanities course
- Writing Intensive course
- Experiential Learning course

All courses must be selected from approved Pathway courses.

Senior Humanities Seminar: (3 credits)

What is a Pathway?

A Pathway is a sequence of courses, designed around a theme, that “leads” a student from their first-year humanities course (The Examined Life) to their senior-year humanities course (Senior Humanities Seminar). Each Pathway invites students to explore a theme from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

Students in each Pathway are formed into a learning community as they follow their Pathway together with others in their cohort. This experience of community is upheld in each Pathway by an annual Pathway event, which students help to plan, as well as ongoing, active collaboration among the faculty who direct and teach in the Pathway. Faculty and students alike commit to ongoing reflection on the Pathway theme and to putting what they learn into practice. Pathways enrich a student’s college experience and promote retention. Each Pathway is led by a team of three faculty members serving as Pathway Coordinators.

Choose Your Pathway

Creation and Destruction

Survival has never been enough. This pathway looks at the human drive to create. For better and worse, humans have always been shaping the world and telling its stories, telling our stories and shaping the world. We imagine the end of the world; we imagine the world anew. The chain of creators stretches through human history. Every course in the Pathway offers students a chance to forge their own link.

Group 1: Humanities

AH 217

Group 2: Writing Intensive

Select one:

EN 245W

PY 263W

Group 3: Experiential Learning

AH 331 The Museum Experience

Politics, Philosophy, and Economics

This pathway adopts the lenses of politics, philosophy, and economics to address normative issues that arise in the pursuit of freedom, justice, equality, and equity in a dynamically complex world. We study how individuals shape society as they organize political and social institutions in their pursuit of these goals, and how the choices they make to achieve these objectives and the impact of their decisions can be explained using economic tools.

Group 1: Humanities

PH 237 Capitalism and Society

Group 2: Writing Intensive

Select one:

PO 230W

PO 325W Democracy and Its Critics

Group 3: Experiential Learning

BE 204 Principles of Macroeconomics

Mission Earth: Health, Prosperity, Justice

Shifts in the climate due to human activity are accelerating, leading to disruptions to natural ecosystems and human communities. Students in this pathway address the global climate crisis and the call for environmental justice. Students examine the origins of the climate crisis, analyze the impact of these issues on society, engage in interactive learning, and assess how individuals can be better stewards of the earth to acquire an understanding of how we, as a society, can live in a way that promotes health, prosperity, and justice across the planet.

Group 1: Humanities

Select one:

RS 210

PH 315 Environmental Ethics

Group 2: Writing Intensive

Select one:

EN 268W

GL 111W

Group 3: Experiential Learning

Select one:

MG 240 Social Entrepreneurship

PO 203 Urban Gardens Studio

Power, Equity, and Justice

This Pathway explores how our individual experiences fit into larger structures of society. Students will engage in critical analysis of topics analyzed through the lens of intersections of power and inequality based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, ability, religion, and other similar factors. They will develop tools to understand their own standpoints, to challenge systems of oppression, and to foster equity and inclusion in their future work and community environments.

Group 1: Humanities

CO 375

Group 2: Writing Intensive

SO 245W

Group 3: Experiential Learning

PY 260

Trauma Studies: The Phoenix Rising

This pathway will examine how we define and think about trauma at the individual and communal levels. What constitutes trauma? What are the immediate and long-term consequences? What are the personal and public repercussions of trauma? What does recovery entail and how can it lead to growth? We will consider these and other questions from historical, psychological, social, cultural, and political perspectives.

Group 1: Humanities

HI 304 History through Biography

Group 2: Writing Intensive

PY 253W

Group 3: Experiential Learning

BE 257 The Business of Bodies