The Common Learning curriculum includes ten carefully selected courses in five areas where we believe students can sharpen their skills and develop the understanding of essential knowledge needed for thriving in the information age. These are not 101 courses, but instead a set of interdisciplinary courses for people who have been in the working world and are highly motivated. Interdisciplinary simply means that the perspectives and materials of several disciplines have been brought together in the design of each course. Because all students in the program will take these courses, they will have a common foundational experience so instructors in advanced courses can assume what all students can do. The Common Learning Experience will help students learn how to learn, so they can go on to learn anything they want or need to know.

Communication Arts Courses

CA 2050 Effective Communication (4 Credits)
Communication is at the heart of organizations, society, and personal life. This course cultivates an awareness of several key aspects of communication: making a well-reasoned argument, locating and using supporting evidence, speaking or writing persuasively, and using appropriate language and visual support. Communicating with different audiences, crafting well organized presentations, and using various media to express one’s ideas and feelings creatively are the major focus of this course.

CA 2100 Creativity and Innovation (4 Credits)
Everyone has a creative core. It can become hidden or lost, but the ability to recognize one’s creative source and tap into it at will provides an increased range of communication options. This course focuses on defining creativity and innovation, de-mystifying creativity and learning to cultivate creativity and innovation. We use the “whole brain” approach while learning about the current research showing the neurological pathways of creativity and practice accessing and stimulating these pathways. A critical aspect of this exploration is learning how to keep a mixed media journal and playing with expression that combines both text and visual elements. Students are challenged to solve problems, take risks, and look at themselves and their creative energies in new ways. The experiences and activities of this course build skills and confidence in using one’s creativity and innovative thought.

CA 3050 Media and Society (4 Credits)
This course provides a critical examination of media forms and their impact on society. The representation of culture through print media (books, magazines, newspapers, and online media) and through various visual media (film, television, Internet) is explored. Students learn how informational, entertainment, literary, and commercial messages are crafted and transmitted. The focus is on messages, the institutions behind the messages, and their impact on society.

CA 3100 Cross-Cultural Communication (4 Credits)
In an increasingly global society and a world or growing international interaction, communicating effectively with people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds becomes a challenge but also an opportunity. The ability to accept and transcend differences has personal and professional transformative powers. This course explores a range of communication concepts and theories such as cultural competency, identity theory salience, and the nature of prejudice and its impact on communication. Students have the opportunity to develop and practice skills and abilities that enhance sincere, sensitive, and effective communication across differences.

CA 3150 Effective Presentations (4 Credits)
Researching and refining ideas and then representing them effectively is an indispensable skill. This course focuses on crafting effective written and spoken presentations that employ appropriate organizational, visual, and physical elements. Students have opportunities to select visual elements such as images, graphs, and charts; to address physical considerations such as voice, gesture, and body language; and to relate text, movement, and visuals in effective professional presentations. Students become familiar with and be able to use PowerPoint, In-Design, and Photoshop in crafting and supporting presentations.

CA 3200 Art and Interpretation (4 Credits)
This course examines ways in which meaning is made and communicated through visual imagery. Students learn how to describe, analyze, and interpret visual information, using abundant examples from everyday life, such as photographs, comic books, graffiti, home furnishings, advertisements, buildings, and public art displays. In considering this array of creative effort, students address the difficult question: Is it Art? This course focuses on expanding skills in visual interpretation and developing and using aesthetic standards.

CA 3250 How the Body Talks (4 Credits)
How does body movement reveal or conceal true intent? Humans appear to be “hard-wired” to assess, examine, and respond to the physical language of others. Although this process is often automatic or unconscious, people can learn to identify and employ the elements of physical rhetoric (posture, stance, bearing, expression, and gait) in conscious ways to persuade others. If acting is the “truthful” revelation of character, what can be learned through proven performance techniques to enhance one’s presentation of self in varied settings? This course helps students to become more informed readers of physical signs in others, more aware of their own habitual physical tendencies, and more able to present themselves authentically to others.
CA 3300 Creating Dialogue (4 Credits)
What happens when people speak, listen, and respond? Dialogue can occur between two or three people, in a group, across groups, and within and across organizations and communities. This course focuses on deliberative discussion: how to build and enhance dialogue, and how to repair it when it breaks down. Skills in both participation and facilitation are developed as well as strategies for resolving conflict. The goal of the course is to help students develop skills needed for productive and civil conversation in multiple settings.

Leadership Org Studies Courses

LOS 2050 Organizational Behavior (4 Credits)
Organizations serve as the fundamental building blocks of society. Most people spend a considerable number of hours each week working in or relating to organizations. This course provides opportunities to learn about organizational structures and development, the dynamics of individual behavior within organizations, and how organizations foster and manage change.

LOS 2100 Leadership (4 Credits)
What is leadership and how do leaders lead? Can leadership be learned? What skills do 21st century leaders need? This course provides an opportunity to examine leadership theories, to develop a personal understanding of leadership, and to explore the relations of leaders and followers. The essential skills of effective leaders are explored, such as elaborating a vision, facilitating communication, working with groups and teams, overseeing finances, and facilitating change. Students are encouraged to examine systematically their own leadership potential as they reflect on historical and contemporary examples of effective business and political leaders as well as leaders of causes and social movements.

LOS 3050 Financial Management (4 Credits)
All organizations, business, government and not-for-profit, must deal with financial matters. This course provides opportunities to learn how to read and use financial data in order to develop systems for budget creation and control, profit forecasting, and long range development. Basic principles of accounting, cost analysis and control, revenue and expense forecasting, return on investment, and capital reinvestment are studied and applied to examples. The leader's role in financial management are examined, including technical, conceptual, and value considerations.

LOS 3100 Entrepreneurship (4 Credits)
Many individuals dream about starting their own company or being their own boss. This course explores the challenges or entrepreneurship both in starting a new business and in fostering entrepreneurial behavior within larger organizations of all types. Students examine the basic process needed for entrepreneurship, such as idea generation, vision building, cost projection, and outcome delineation. Examples of successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs will be examined to determine common patterns. Students study and discuss entrepreneurship as a set of skills, values, and attitudes and are invited to consider entrepreneurship as a life skill.

LOS 3150 Working in Groups and Teams (4 Credits)
Teams carry out the majority of organizational activities across all sectors of society today. Principles of team behavior and effectiveness are explored in this course along with the roles of effective leaders of teams and team participants. Various types of teams will be discussed, such as cross-functional, tactical, problem solving, and virtual teams. Factors leading to high performance and dysfunction will be explored and applied to real life examples or teams in organizational settings.

LOS 3200 Cross Cultural Leadership (4 Credits)
In today's complex domestic and international society, leaders or organizations are challenged to manage diversity, establish standards of desirable behavior, and draw out the strengths of all members of the workforce. How do leaders create a climate of cultural sensitivity and openness that encourages diversity and fosters collaboration that transcends diversity? What do leaders do in hiring, supervision, and the use of recognition and reward structures to encourage diversity? An important focus of this course is on developing strategies to face and resolve workplace conflict through processes that ensure fairness, civil discourse, and the integration of diverse perspectives within the organization.

LOS 3250 Learning in Organizations (4 Credits)
Accelerating change in society and in organizations challenges individuals and the organization as a whole to engage in a process of continuous learning. In this course, basic concepts of individual and organizational learning are explored both in terms of their intrinsic value to individuals and as the source of competitive advantage to the organization. How is learning conceived of and structured throughout organizations? How is the return on investment in learning evaluated? This course provides an overview of what organizations do for the training and development of employees, how they structure knowledge sharing, and how they institutionalize within the organization the knowledge of its members through effective knowledge management practices.

LOS 3300 Project Management (4 Credits)
Work in organizations, or in the collaboration among organizations is often structured as projects. Almost any individual in an organization can be called upon to participate in or lead a project. Projects have "deliverables" that must be met within an agreed upon time frame and budget. In this course, students learn the basic concepts and processes of project management: how to establish standards of performance, allot time, calculate costs, develop work breakdown structures, delineate critical pathways, enlist people and resources, and motivate accomplishment. Students also learn about software tools available to plan and track successful projects to completion.
Public Policy Social Service Courses

PPSS 2050 Ethical Decision Making (4 Credits)
Ethical decision making is essential for values-based leadership. Most decisions have ethical implications, but discerning the ethical dimension requires skill and an understanding of how ethical issues are shaped and informed by ethical theory. In this class students encounter major philosophical concepts and theories from the field of ethics, utilitarian(consequentialist), deontological (duty based), social contract, communitarian, and natural law theories; principles of non- maleficence, beneficence, justice and respect for persons; and virtues of care, compassion, integrity and courage. Through the use of case studies, students cultivate their capacity for ethical perception, learn to distinguish tough choices from genuine ethical dilemmas, and gain practice deliberating effectively about a variety of ethical issues drawn from both social and professional contexts.

PPSS 2100 Concepts of the Public Good (4 Credits)
All societies have to deal with natural and social inequalities, tension between individuality and community, and competing concepts of what constitutes the good society. What are the forces that create differing concepts of the public good and how are conflicts between competing visions settled? Case studies from cross-cultural research as well as historical and current examples from American culture are used to explore the role of power, class, and group identification in shaping ideas of the public good. An important focus of this course is on understanding how concepts of the public good translate into structures that provide or limit the provision of social services.

PPSS 3050 Social Services in America (4 Credits)
Societies organize to provide essential social services. This course focuses on the arrangements for basic social services in American society: education, healthcare, income, transportation, and housing. The role of government and private providers is explored in the context of the public policy that supports and maintains these services. Various methods and criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of these services will be introduced, such as who will be served, access to services, and satisfaction of the people being served.

PPSS 3100 Law, Politics, and Policy (4 Credits)
How is public policy shaped? Where do ideas for public policy come from and how are they crafted? What are the fundamental legal and political arrangements that structure American society? How are laws made, enforced, and reviewed? How did these arrangements come into being and how do they provide for continuity and change? How do various levels of government (federal, state, and local) work together (or produce stress) in trying to provide for and maintain basic social services? Students examine how political, financial, and ethical concerns are balanced in developing policies that support basic social services.

PPSS 3150 Comparative Social Services (4 Credits)
How are social services (education, health care, income, transportation, and housing) delivered and developed in market economies other than the United States? How are market, nation state, and family structures used as mechanisms for providing social services in differing socio-cultural and political-economic environments? How are the different approaches to providing social services in other countries related to conceptions of the public good? This course provides skills in the comparative analysis of social services. This class is intended to be taken after "Concepts of the Public Good" and "Social Services in American Society.

PPSS 3200 International Public Policy (4 Credits)
Most of the public policy questions that arise within a nation-state also arise in the international arena as well. Policies regarding education, transportation, healthcare, and income cross national boundaries, affect entire regions, and determine the availability of social services in different parts of the world. Income distribution patterns across nations and access to health care, education, and housing vary significantly between richer nations and poorer underdeveloped nations. How are these differences created and addressed? How are power, values, institutions, and organizations related in their influences on global public policy? What aspects of globalization affect the distribution of resources and opportunities between regions, countries, and subgroups within countries? What roles are played by governments, transnational structures, and non-governmental organizations in addressing international public policy issues? Students select a particular issue or set of issues for international analysis.

PPSS 3250 Policy Research and Analysis (4 Credits)
Students learn to make use of the basic conceptual tools typically employed to examine public policy issues. This course provides a brief presentation of these tools as well as practice in how to apply them to evaluate policy alternatives in areas of education, healthcare, income, transportation, and housing. Students learn how to find resources and relevant data, read research studies, and evaluate the credibility of sources. A major focus of this course is on learning to analyze costs and benefits, weight trade-offs, and predict the probably outcomes and unintended consequences of policy options.

PPSS 3300 Social Policy Transformation (4 Credits)
How is social policy changed? Key examples from American history are used to learn how social transformation takes place. The course begins with an examination of social movements at the opening of the twentieth century that resulted in child labor laws, women's suffrage, unemployment compensation, and minimum wage provisions. How did government become a key instrument of social change under the New Deal? What can be learned from the social revolutions of the 1960s: the civil rights and women's movements? What forces contributed to the rise and success of the Conservative counter revolution? What is the relationship of leadership, government, and grassroots as expressed in the Constitution and Bill of Rights? The course closes with the discussion of possible future social transformations growing out of such things as environmental limits to wealth creation, negative population growth, and median age shift.
Science and Technology Courses

ST 2050 Scientific Method (4 Credits)
What is scientific method and how is it used appropriately? How are problems formulated, research questions designed, tests and other measurements constructed, data gathered and analyzed, conclusions drawn, and findings incorporated into theories? Using scientific topics drawn from the headlines--evolution, ecology, stem cell research in genetics, astronomy, and neuroscience--this course provides an overview of basic science, emerging technologies, and lingering questions.

ST 2100 The Digital Age (4 Credits)
Digitization influences nearly all aspects of life today: how we communicate, conduct business, operate governments, and employ other technologies. This course provides opportunities to learn the fundamental processes of digitization and how hardware, software, and human uses of digital technologies are transforming life across the globe. Students also explore the controversies and ethical dilemmas spawned by digitization, including organizational change, privacy, security, online relationships, and globalization.

ST 3050 Quantitative Reasoning (4 Credits)
Numbers provide a language for reasoning. Numbers are used to quantify data, analyze trends and exceptions, and establish the reliability of conclusions. Using practical problems from business, health care, social services, and government operations, this course provides the opportunity to learn how basic concepts from mathematics can be applied in organizational settings.

ST 3100 Business Computer Applications (4 Credits)
Organizations today purchase technology to solve business problems. This course introduces students to business processes and requirements that can profit from the application of computer technologies. Students develop an understanding of business functions, requirement definition, process mapping, and selection and implementation of appropriate software applications. Topics include such items as System Development Lifecycle (SDLC), process engineering, Enterprise Resource Productivity (ERP), and how to build a case for a particular computer technology application.

ST 3150 Research Methods (4 Credits)
How are research studies designed and conducted and how is quantitative analysis used to analyze and support such findings? This course provides the opportunity to become literate in reading and understanding the basic research done in the sciences and social sciences and reported in newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals. Using actual examples of research studies, this course provides an introduction to how to read and evaluate studies in a variety of fields. Students learn to look for operationalized constructs and relationships among variables; to recognize what is required for measurement to be valid, reliable, and unbiased; to distinguish between correlation and causation in laboratory and field settings; and how to know the difference between random and convenience samples and the effects these have on the conclusions drawn. Students also develop skills in recognizing flaws in research designs; how to become critical consumers of research reports; and the basic professional ethics for conducting research, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and the risk/benefit ratio.

ST 3200 Using Statistics (4 Credits)
In organizational settings, data becomes meaningful for decision making only when it is interpreted. Such things as determining averages, noting differences, describing relationships, and projecting trends are all part of a larger process of analyzing and interpreting data. In this course, students learn how to use basic statistical techniques to describe and make inferences about data that has been collected for studies and reports. Topics include measures of central tendency (means, medians, modes, standard deviations); tests of difference; measures of strength of relationships among variables (correlation and regression); classic procedures for representing the strength and probable accuracy of findings (significance tests and confidence intervals); and modeling trends over time. Students also learn how computers are used to analyze data and how data can be represented in spreadsheets, graphs, figures, and illustrations.

ST 3250 Science, Technology and Markets (4 Credits)
Scientists within the various disciplines of the sciences (biology, chemistry, physics) pursue knowledge according to the interests, problems, and structures of previous knowledge within their field. They communicate with other scientists internationally, and their findings are reviewed and retested by peers. The discoveries they produce are often taken up and applied to various practical problems and opportunities in daily life. The focus of this course is on understanding how scientific discoveries are used as the basis for the development of technologies useful in manufacturing processes, healthcare, transportation, national defense, energy, and consumer products. Case studies are used to understand how some technologies become successful in the marketplace while others, thought to have promise, do not become widely used. The case studies on technological applications of scientific discoveries also explore the processes involved in moving from science to technology to the market: financial and organizational structures used, potential conflicts over rights of ownership, and ethical issues that surface.

ST 3300 Breakthroughs in Science (4 Credits)
The last fifty years in science have produced amazing new discoveries and reorganized thinking in several basic fields. What are some of the most important scientific breakthroughs in recent times and what is the state of knowledge in those areas? This course provides opportunities to reflect on the future of scientific research. What are the most likely scientific discoveries in the next 25 to 50 years? What conceptual breakthroughs and new technologies will be needed to take scientific understanding and technological applications to the next level in selected fields? What are the likely implications for life in the years ahead? This course also addresses the issue of "Scientific taboo" what science should or should not study and whether scientific and technological inquiry can be slowed down or stopped.