

# COMMON CURRICULUM AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

## Major and Minor Requirements

The departmental major or minor is a program of courses taken in one department or, in the case of an interdisciplinary major or minor, a program of related courses taken in more than one department. The University offers a number of different degree options. Please review specific degree information for major and minor requirements. Students usually declare a major (or majors) by the end of their sophomore year.

- The GPA in the major and the minor must be at least 2.0 with the exception of the bachelor of science in accounting which requires a GPA of at least 2.5.
- Credits in the major and the minor must be earned at the level of “C–” or better.
- At least 50 percent of the required credits for the major and the minor must be completed at the University of Denver.

## Double Majors

In certain degree programs (BA, BS and BSBA), students may complete a second major. A second major will substitute for a minor, if required.

The second major must be offered in that particular degree program (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/majorsandminorrequirements>); e.g., business majors are only available in the BSBA program. The University also offers the option of a secondary major (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/concurrantbaccalaureatedegrees>) for some programs of study. Secondary majors allow students to pursue a major outside the primary degree program.

## Upper Division Requirement

- Of the total credits required for the degree, at least 75 must be upper-division courses at the 2000- or 3000-level.

## Common Curriculum

The University of Denver’s Common Curriculum provides students with a well-rounded education, creates context for major or minor course of study and introduces students to new areas of interest. The Common Curriculum is grounded in a breadth of experiences and ways of inquiry congruent with DU’s goal of providing an outstanding educational experience that empowers students to integrate and apply knowledge from across the disciplines and imagine new possibilities for themselves, their communities and the world. Consistent with DU’s mission, the Common Curriculum promotes learning by engaging with students in advancing scholarly inquiry, cultivating critical and creative thought, and generating knowledge.

Common Curriculum courses contribute to an intellectually vibrant campus community and create, in turn, a challenging, inclusive, ethical and liberating learning environment. From students’ initial First-Year Seminar to the Common Curriculum’s culminating Advanced Seminar, the curriculum encourages connections across modes of learning. By engaging in course work across diverse experiences and areas of knowledge, DU students cultivate critical and creative thought, preparing them for leadership and citizenship in our global society.

## Common Curriculum Requirements

The Common Curriculum at the University of Denver plays a central role in every undergraduate student’s education. Please review the Common Curriculum requirements matrix below, which provides a summary of DU’s Common Curriculum requirements, along with short statements that explain why the courses in the various parts of the curriculum are important in today’s world. These descriptions are summaries of what students should be able to achieve through the successful completion of these classes. The matrix is followed by descriptive paragraphs that explain why each class a student takes is important and where it fits in the educational plan of the University.

An undergraduate at the University typically takes 52 to 60 credits in the Common Curriculum:

First-Year Seminar	4
Writing and Rhetoric	8
Language	4-12
Ways of Knowing	32
Advanced Seminar	4
Total Credits	52-60

Because certain programs have slightly different requirements in the Common Curriculum and because AP and IB courses or transfer courses from other universities and colleges may change the distribution of the requirements for individual students, always consult an advisor regarding Common Curriculum planning for courses at the University and abroad.

## First-Year Seminar

### 1 course (4 credits)

First-Year Seminars (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/majorsminorscoursedescriptions/traditionalbachelorsprogrammajorandminors/firstyearseminar>) are designed to provide students with an in-depth academic experience that will be rigorous and engaging. Students develop the kinds of academic skills that prepare them for successful college work, which might include one or more of the following:

- critical reading and thinking
- writing and discussion
- quantitative reasoning
- argument and debate

Faculty members teach their passions in which they have particular expertise and enthusiasm, and each First-Year Seminar has a unique topic, with 80–85 different First-Year Seminars offered each fall quarter. For students to be able to engage with faculty in the exploration of these topics is an extraordinary opportunity for academic and personal growth. Instructors of the First-Year Seminars also serve as students' academic advisors and faculty mentors for the entire first year. Students meet individually with their mentors during winter and spring quarters for advising and registration help. This course must be taken at the University of Denver. Any student who either withdraws from or fails the First-Year Seminar must meet with the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs to request a new academic advisor and to determine the means by which this degree requirement may be fulfilled. Students transferring to DU are exempt from this requirement if they are classified as a transfer student.

## Writing and Rhetoric

### 2 courses (8 credits)

Being able to convey written information and ideas in ways that are compelling to specific audiences is essential both in college and beyond. Beginning in the winter quarter of their first year, students take two sequenced writing courses, usually WRIT 1122 and WRIT 1133. Together, these courses teach strategies for writing to well-educated readers in diverse academic and nonacademic situations. Students learn rhetorical principles, the analysis and use of readings and source materials, and techniques for generating, revising and editing texts for specific situations. They also learn to present and justify positions and to produce researched writing in various scholarly traditions, including

- textual/interpretive (the analysis of texts or artifacts such as images or events);
- qualitative (analyses based on observations or interviews); or
- quantitative (information gained through measurement).

In each course, students complete several writing exercises and, through sustained practice and systematic instructor guidance, they complete at least four polished papers, totaling some 20–25 pages. By the end of the two-course sequence, students have completed at least 40–50 pages of polished writing. These courses lay the foundation for writing in further Common Curriculum courses (including the Advanced Seminar), writing in students' majors and writing in professional and civic life after graduation.

## Language

### 1–3 courses (4–12 credits)

The faculty of the University of Denver believe that studying culture through language at the university level is crucial in our globalized world, and courses in this area reflect that belief.

1. Students who have *completed* academic secondary education wholly or in large part in a language other than English are exempt from the language requirement. The Registrar determines if students' transcripts qualify them for this exemption. Most international students, however, will be required to take at least one class from the English Language Center on living in the USA and our Mountain West.
2. Students are exempt from the language requirement in the BFA, BSEE, BSME and BSCpE degree programs. [Note for Music students: Candidates for the BM degree may choose between completing eight credits in one foreign language or eight credits in a Scientific Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World sequence. If they choose language, the below rules about placement apply.]
3. Students with certain documented learning disabilities as officers our Disability Services Program determine are also exempt, although they must instead take twelve credits (three classes) taught in English from an approved list of internationalizing courses.
4. All other incoming students who know or have studied one of the languages that we offer at DU (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Japanese, Russian, or Spanish) are required to take our language placement test before registering for a class in that language, so that we may place them properly in its curriculum.
5. Students must either complete the elementary sequence of a language they have not studied before (or into *elementary* level of which they are placed) or take one four-credit course at the *higher* level into which each places. If we offer no advanced courses in their first language other than English, students who are not exempt (see 1-3 above) must take a first-year sequence of a different one.
6. Students may always choose to learn a new language and complete its first-year sequence. We offer more world languages than they will have had the opportunity to study in secondary school.

In all of our courses, students acquire linguistic skills in a language other than English. We are an internationalizing university that encourages multi-skill language learning. Students in language classes will also be studying a different expression of culture through language. By this experience they

learn both about a new culture and about themselves and their personal, social, and cultural backgrounds. Our young linguists learn to appreciate human diversity as it is expressed between and among languages and nationalities in the twenty-first century.

## **Analytical Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World**

### **1 course (4 credits)**

Mathematics, formal reasoning and, more recently, computational sciences are crucial foundations for many disciplines as they enable and support formal modes of inquiry, particularly for disciplines related to the natural and physical world. For example, today's physics and engineering knowledge would be impossible without accompanying advances in mathematics. Similarly, advances in the life sciences, like genomics, rely heavily on computational sciences. Students must take one course in this area, which is designed to provide all students, regardless of the student's major area of study, the basic knowledge of how to understand and use principles of mathematics and computational sciences as a formal means of inquiry in the natural and physical world.

## **Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture**

### **2 course minimum (8 credits)**

Through these courses, students gain knowledge essential for today's global society, recognizing that human cultures are specific to time and place and that the practices and values of different societies vary widely. By gaining greater understanding of diverse cultural products, students will be better able to understand the world today and their own place in it. Students take two courses in different subjects studied from the perspectives of the arts and humanities, exploring culture and society from different perspectives. In these courses, students learn how to analyze the products of human cultures, including works of art, music, literature, philosophy and history. Students engage critically with such works through exposure to the vocabulary, concepts and methods used to analyze those works. Students explore how ideas and creative expressions both shape and are shaped by human experiences. Students who are CAHSS majors/minors may apply one Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture course (four credits) per major/minor program to partially satisfy both major/minor and Common Curriculum requirements if that course is listed as meeting the outcomes of a section of the Common Curriculum requirements. Non-music majors may take up to four one-credit ensembles towards this requirement.

## **Scientific Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World**

### **3 sequential courses (12 credits)**

Science and technology play increasing roles in the most profound challenges and the greatest opportunities that we face as global societies. Gaining knowledge of the practice and promise of science is an essential responsibility of each educated citizen. While science provides the most thoroughly tested tools for developing accurate knowledge of nature, developing technologies shape our daily living and provide opportunities to ask questions that were not imaginable by previous generations. Courses provide students with a three-quarter experience that builds knowledge and application of scientific approaches in one core area. The three-quarter format with accompanying laboratories allows in-depth explorations that have significant social implications and that encourage development of reasoning skills and reflective judgment. By working between classroom and laboratory to understand the nature of science in the natural and physical world, students will apply scientific methods, analyze and interpret data, and justify conclusions where evidence is conflicting. Students will also explore the strengths and weaknesses of scientific knowledge and reflect on the connections between the natural sciences, developing technologies and other ways of knowing and constructing human experiences. Students in the BM degree program may choose between eight credits in the Language requirement or eight credits in the Scientific Inquiry: The Natural and Physical World requirement. Students in the BFA meet this requirement through eight credits taken in two sequential courses.

## **Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture**

### **2 course minimum (8 credits)**

Knowledge of principles of human functioning and conduct in social and cultural contexts is essential for living in a culturally diverse and interdependent society. Understanding scientific approaches to discovering these principles enhances informed decisions for the public good and provides a way of thinking about problems and issues that complements other areas of inquiry and experiences. Through taking courses in this area, students learn about principles of human functioning and conduct in social and cultural contexts and come to understand how these are studied using scientific methods. Students take two courses in different subjects studied from the perspectives of the social sciences; they are thus exposed to varying approaches and levels of analysis (e.g., physiological, evolutionary, mental, social and cultural processes). Students who are CAHSS majors/minors may apply one Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture course (4 credits) per major/minor program to partially satisfy both major/minor and Common Curriculum requirements.

## **Advanced Seminar**

### **1 course (4 credits)**

While knowledge and professional skills found in a student's major and minor are important foundations for accomplishment, successful individuals also must be able to navigate a complex political, social, cultural and economic environment that challenges more traditionally limited concepts of higher education and competencies. To help students better understand the demands of contemporary life, instructors teach an Advanced Seminar (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/majorsminorscoursedescriptions/traditionalbachelorsprogrammajorandminors/advancedseminar>) (ASEM) based in their area of expertise and passion. The topic will be approached from multiple perspectives in a course designed for non-majors. Studying in this setting, students demonstrate their ability to integrate different perspectives and synthesize diverse ideas through intensive writing on that topic. This course must be taken at the University of Denver. Students must complete all other Common Curriculum requirements before taking the Advanced Seminar.

## AREAS OF INQUIRY

	<b>The Natural &amp; Physical World</b>	<b>Society &amp; Culture</b>
<b>First-Year Seminar</b>	<p>4 credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate what it means to be an active member of an intellectual community by meeting rigorous academic expectations through critical reading, discussion, research and/or writing;</li> <li>• practice newly acquired skills in an active learning environment where writing, performing, laboratory experiments, quantitative analyses or other forms of experiential and/or creative activities will shape the goals and activities of the seminar.</li> </ul>	
<b>Writing &amp; Rhetoric</b>	<p>8 credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analyze strategies used in a variety of rhetorical situations and employ those principles in their own writings and communications;</li> <li>• analyze research and writing strategies used in a range of academic traditions and use those strategies in their own writings;</li> <li>• adapt, to specific situations, a strong repertory of writing processes, including generating, shaping, revising, editing, proofreading and working with other writers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Language</b>	<p>4-12 sequential credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• based on writing samples at the start and end of the first year of language, students will demonstrate increased proficiency in a language of choice in a specific skill (e.g., writing, speaking, listening or reading);</li> <li>• demonstrate proficiency in learning about a culture as embodied in a skill (e.g., writing, speaking, listening or reading) in a language of choice.</li> </ul>	
<b>Ways of Knowing: Analytical Query</b>	<p>4 credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply formal reasoning, mathematics or computational science approaches to problem solving within mathematics or computational science, and other disciplines;</li> <li>• understand and communicate connections between different areas of logic, mathematics or computational science, or their relevance to other disciplines;</li> <li>• communicate formalisms in logic, mathematics or computing sciences.</li> </ul>	<p>8 credits</p> <p>In these courses from two different disciplines, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate the ability to create or interpret the texts, ideas or artifacts of human culture;</li> <li>• identify and analyze the connections between texts, ideas or cultural artifacts and the human experience and/or perception of the world.</li> </ul>
<b>Ways of Knowing: Scientific Inquiry</b>	<p>12 sequential credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply knowledge of scientific practice to evaluate evidence for scientific claims;</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of science as an iterative process of knowledge generation with inherent strengths and limitations;</li> <li>• demonstrate skills for using and interpreting qualitative and quantitative information.</li> </ul>	<p>8 credits</p> <p>In these courses from two different disciplines, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describe basic principles of human functioning and conduct in social and cultural contexts;</li> <li>• describe and explain how social scientific methods are used to understand these underlying principles.</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Seminar</b>	<p>4 credits</p> <p>In these courses, students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• integrate and apply knowledge and skills gained from Common Curriculum courses to new settings and complex problems;</li> <li>• write effectively, providing appropriate evidence and reasoning for assertions.</li> </ul>	