Core Curriculum Interdisciplinary Minor

Rationale:

The Core Interdisciplinary Minor will allow interested and qualified Core Curriculum students to engage with a question or theme that fascinated them during their Core years and explore it further. This minor aspires to have a uniquely interdisciplinary and global reach: students will be enabled and encouraged to extend and give greater depth to their study of the texts, works of art, music, and key ideas of Western and other cultural traditions treated in Core.

The deepening of the Core experience has three important facets:
1. FOCUS: students will explore an aspect of the Core curriculum in greater depth by taking relevant classes in various departments throughout CAS,
2. MENTOR: each student will work under the close direction of a faculty mentor, and
3. INTERDISCIPLINARY: students will deliberately pursue knowledge across disciplinary boundaries.

Implementation:

Any student who has taken at least one of Core’s two-semester sequences will be eligible to participate in the Core Minor.

Advising:

Each student will choose a faculty advisor with whom he or she will consult regularly, and who will be responsible for approving all courses taken for the minor.

Administration:

The minor will be overseen by a committee made up of the Director and Assistant Director of Core and one other faculty member associated with the Core Curriculum, to be chosen by the Director and Assistant Director. The committee will approve each student’s selection of an advisor.

Requirements:

1. Any student who has taken one of Core’s four two-course sequences (CC 101 and CC 102; CC 201 and CC 202; CC 111 and CC 212; OR CC112 and CC 211) is eligible for the minor.

1 The Core Curriculum provides its students with an integrated study of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences (including math and computer sciences). Its approach is necessarily broad as Core courses, in general, span both the ancient and the contemporary worlds.
2. Students taking the Core Minor must have a central idea, theme or question originating in their work in Core that they wish to pursue through the minor. Students will identify and pursue their central focus in conjunction with their advisor. Examples of such interests are listed below. Students will pursue the minor by submitting a brief written statement of their particular interest to their advisor, and must consult with their advisor regularly to ensure a coherent plan of study.

3. The minor will require at least six (4 credit) courses, at least three of which (12 credits) must not be used to complete another requirement, plus a two-credit capstone workshop (totaling 26 credits). Courses must be taken in at least two different departments of CAS or other BU schools and colleges. Each student will work with an advisor to ensure that the courses constitute a coherent program of study.

**Courses:** Classes in the regular Core sequence that are not being counted toward a requirement may count toward the three courses not used to complete another requirement. For example, a Core student in Divisional Studies who chooses to take CC 202 (having fulfilled Writing and Humanities requirements with CC 101, 102 and 201) may count this class toward the Core Minor. Students must consult with their advisor on the applicability of the Core class to their particular interest before counting the class toward their minor.

**Capstone:** Students will complete their work in the minor by participating in a two-credit capstone workshop, an experience that should be greatly enhanced by the environment of a shared learning experience in Core. As a component of the minor, this workshop will enable students to synthesize, refine and share the conclusions reached in pursuing the topics of their minors. We see this workshop as a model for interdisciplinary studies in which students can communicate their particular discoveries and process of discovery by sharing the results of their thinking and research with their peers. The workshop is designed to develop skills in writing, speaking and in digital communication and will focus on presentation and public speaking. The workshop is thus intended to become a paradigm for a “creative incubator” model whereby ideas can be nourished, developed and articulated. The students will present the results of their capstone projects at a public event associated with the Core banquet.

**Examples of Pathways for a Core Minor:**

Core anticipates three pathways that will typically lead to completion of the Core Minor:

1. study of a **major figure, author or work**; 2. study of a **period of time**; 3. study of a **theme or issue**.

1. Examples of the first type of program could include courses on Plato, Shakespeare, or Confucius, but they could also focus on a specific work. For example, a student who wished to continue study of the Bhagavad-Gita might take, in addition to CC 102, courses such as RN 213: Hinduism; PH 246: Indian Philosophy; HI 234: Introduction to India and South Asia; LN 225: Tradition and Modernity in Indian Film and Literature; RN 424: Core Texts and Motifs of World Religions: East or, for contrast, RN 206: Scriptures in World Religions.
2. Examples of the second pathway would include the history, archaeology, or art and architecture of a given period, or the reception of a given author or tradition. A student interested in the Renaissance, for example, might deepen the study commenced in CC 201 by taking classes that further consider the history, art, or literature of the period, such as HI 208: Renaissance Europe; AH 257: Renaissance Art; AH 352: Venetian Renaissance Art or LI 553: Petrarch and the Tradition of Love Poetry.

A student interested in the Reformation might similarly take, along with CC 112 and CC 201, HI 209, the Reformation; RN 310: The Reformation: Religious Conflict in Early Modern Europe, while one interested in the Enlightenment might take, alongside CC 202 and CC 211, PH 412: Philosophy of the Enlightenment; HI 215: The European Enlightenment; CAS AH 368: The Grand Tour; or CAS RN 469: Critique of Religion, while a student who has studied French might take LF 453: The French Enlightenment or LF 562: The Age of Versailles.

3. Themes or issues:
   i. A student who has taken CC 101 and CC 102 (HU) might develop an interest in the relation of literature to social and national identity. The student might then take CC 112 (SS), which studies culture, ethnography and religion or CC 201 (HU), which examines the emergence of Europe from Petrarch to Milton. He or she might then explore the relation of culture and identity in a history course such HI 191: What Is Europe? or HI 315: The American West, while further exploring national literary traditions in courses such as CL 221: Greek Tragedy, EN 392: Modern Irish Literature or LJ 282: The Samurai in Myth and History.

   ii. A student taking CC 201 and CC 202 (HU) after CC 112 (SS) might become interested in encounters with different cultures and religions in a “national” work such as Montaigne or Don Quixote. The student might continue to explore the intersection of cultures with RN 410: Religion, Community and Culture in Medieval Spain; or by examining background issues in a course such as HI 213: Sacred and Secular Power in Christianity and Islam, or going on to consider different examples of cultural mixing in courses such as LX 420: Spanish in the United States; RN 312: Buddhism in America or AN 327: Islam in Africa.

   iii. A student might survey various aspects of aesthetics approaching this topic in Core Humanities, Social Science and Natural Science, and pursue courses such as PH 259: Philosophy of the Arts; PH 488: Topics in Aesthetics; AN 397: Anthropology and Film: Ways of Seeing; CAS AH 210: Learning to See; NE 330: Introduction to Computational Models of Vision; CFA TH 101: Introduction to Aesthetics and Dramatic Literature; CFA FA 300: Insight into the Arts; PY 231: The Physics in Music.

   iv. A student taking the Core Humanities sequence might engage in the dialogue between literary themes and forms, in, for example, the epic tradition from Homer to Virgil to Dante to Milton and explore the further use of literary works in other traditions,
in courses such as XL 351: The Faust Tradition; EN 463: Hamlet/Macbeth: Appropriation and Performance, or XL 441: 1001 Nights in the World Literary Imagination, and in other media, in courses such as AH 257: Renaissance Art; CL 325: Greek Tragedy and Film, or CI 465: Modernity / Shakespeare / Film.

v. From Mesopotamia to the Greek polis and from Rome to Mrs. Dalloway's London, the city is a central theme in Core. Students could further explore the role of the city in literature, historical, sociological, or environmental, drawing from the courses on offer in CAS, such as AM 202: What's Boston?; AN 309: Boston: An Ethnographic Approach; RN 220: Holy City, Jerusalem in Time, Space and Imagination; HI 226: Cities and Cultures; AH 381: London Architecture and Urbanism; AR 353: Urbanism in Ancient Mesoamerica; AN 220: Urban Anthropology; SO 244: Urban Sociology; AR 290: Human Impacts on Ancient Environments, or GE 475: Urban Ecology.

vi. The theme of war runs throughout Core from Gilgamesh to WW II. A student could further explore this theme through, for example, CL 202: Warfare in Antiquity; HI 284: History of War; HI 291: Intimate Histories of War, or PS 372: Psychological Perspectives on War and Peace. A student might also examine specific conflicts or areas of the world in comparison with what has been studied in Core, for example in HI 204: History of the Crusades; HI 328: The Civil War Era or AN 347: Afghanistan, or by looking at various depictions of war, as in CL 221: Greek Tragedy; AH 391: Twentieth-century Art to 1940, or XL 281: Holocaust Literature and Film.

vii. A student who has taken CC 201 and CC 202 (HU) along with CC 211 might explore the history of Revolution, from the Corcyrean Revolution in Ancient Greece through the English, American and French Revolutions of the 17th and 18th century to the anti-colonial revolutions of the twentieth century. A student may choose to take a deeper look at revolution in a historical, political and sociological framework through courses such as HI 341: Political and Cultural Revolution; HI 266: French Revolution and Napoleon; HI 299: History of the Civil Rights Movement; and HI 453: Three Revolutions, while also linking one or two of these historical moments to revolutions in art and culture in courses such as LG 282: Marx, Nietzsche and Freud; AH 389: Impressionism; EN 380: The Twentieth Century African-American Novel or AA 388: Black Radical Thought.

viii. A student interested by the conjunction of Modernism in CC 202 and Quantum Theory and Relativity in CC 212 could explore ways in which science is linked to broader cultural questions in courses such as RN 242: Magic, Science and Religion; PH 272: Science Technology and Values; HI 302: Science and American Culture; BI 119: Sociobiology; GE 250: The Fate of Nations: Climate, Resources and Institutions and SO 277: Technology and Society.

ix. The theme of journeys, which is pervasive in Core, could be pursued in courses such as RN 102: Sacred Journeys; AH 368: The Grand Tour; AN 245: Moving Experiences: Cultures of Tourism and Travel or XL 384: Arthurian Literature.
A list of these possible pathways will be made available as examples, to be supplemented by pathways of the students’ own devising, with advisor’s approval.