Core and an Astronomy Major

Core is a community of faculty & students who value ideas and who share an ongoing conversation about the texts, inventions and discoveries that have shaped our world. Core classes are conducted as seminars, capped at 16 students, led by full-time faculty from departments throughout CAS. Students learn to think beyond the boundaries of any particular discipline and develop the perspective necessary for creative and innovative thought.

Core examines the connections between the Humanities, Social and Natural Sciences, allowing Astronomy students to relate studies in their major to other views of our relation to the cosmos and to the social sciences’ study of the laws that govern human behavior.

For example, CC 101—the first-year fall Humanities course—looks at various humanistic explorations of the origin of time and space in comparison to the Big Bang and the evolution of the physical universe, while CC 102 examines the relation of human beings and nature in authors as diverse as Aristotle, Confucius, Laozi and Dante. The second-year Humanities classes—CC 201 and 202—bring us back to the contemporary world, and examine how science, culture and history work together in the world around us.

CC 112 and 211, the Core Social Sciences, look at human beings’ “natural” condition as seen by social theorists, the social influence of scientific discoveries, and the development of modern, scientific approaches to the study of human life.

Natural Science students particularly benefit from the close relation with faculty and other students that Core provides, both in class and in opportunities such as:

- Scholarships for Summer Study Abroad in Athens
- Specialty Core housing in central campus
- Leadership opportunities including the Core Mentoring Fellowship
- The Devlin Award for excellence in writing and the Core Polytropos Award
- Visits to the Museum of Fine Arts, Symphony Hall, and the opera
- Core student activities and an annual Core literary journal

Core satisfies all Hub and Writing requirements, so that interested students have ample time to complete the program. Natural Science students can complete Core by taking the four Humanities and two Social Science classes, and may choose to spread these out over three or even four years of study. Students who complete Core have “Completed the Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum in Arts and Sciences” recorded on their official Boston University transcript. Students who complete the Core Curriculum with a grade of at least B+ in their Core classes are eligible for Core Honors. Students generally take CC 101 / 102 their freshman year. However, as long as the Humanities are taken in order, classes in the Core Curriculum can be taken at any time during your BU career.

For more information contact Prof. Nelson at nelson@bu.edu / 617-353-5404 or Chris McMullen in the Advising Office: cmcmull@bu.edu / 617-353-2400.

Whenever you’re on campus, please feel free to stop by the Core Office for a visit. We’re in CAS 119, 685 Commonwealth Ave, by the Tsai Auditorium, near the GSU.