Core and a Mathematics Major

Core classes are conducted as seminars, capped at 16 students, led by full-time faculty. Students form a close relation with faculty and other students in class and in optional extra-curricular activities.

Core focuses on connections between the Humanities, Social and Natural Sciences, allowing Mathematics students to consider the role of math and logic in fields as varied as art and architecture, philosophy, and the social sciences’ study of the laws that govern human behavior.

>> In the first semester, Core Humanities—CC 101—explores Genesis, Exodus and Mesopotamian and Greek literature and culture, looking at the question of origins and the relation of the individual and the city, while CC 111 looks at origins from a scientific and cosmological point of view. In the second semester CC 102 examines the relation of human beings, nature and the divine in authors as diverse as Aristotle, Confucius, Laozi, the Gospels and Dante, while CC 112 examines the nature of society and religion by moving from some of the earliest attempts to understand the “other,” in Herodotus and Tacitus, to Durkheim’s argument that religion is fundamentally about society.

>> In the second year, CC 201 and 202 bring our study of art, philosophy and literature back to the modern world, while CC 211 and CC 212 do the same, examining, in CC 211, a new “objective” approach to human behavior through statistical methods and in CC 212 examining quantum theory, relativity, and human and artificial intelligence in the study of computer science and neuroscience.

Core, Hub requirements, and your schedule

Since Core is a self-selecting program, students are free to take as many or as few Core classes as they wish. As Core classes give credit for Hub and Writing requirements, many STEM students use them to complement the course requirements for their majors.

- CC 101 gives Hub credit for Aesthetic Exploration, Global Citizenship, and Creativity / Innovation.
- CC 102 gives WR 120 credit.
- CC 111 and 212 give Hub credit for Scientific Inquiry I and II and Quantitative Reasoning I and II, as well as for Teamwork / Collaboration and Critical Thinking.
- CC 112 and 211 give Hub credit for Social Inquiry I and II as well as Global Citizenship, Historical Consciousness, Critical thinking and a writing intensive course.
- Students generally take CC 101 / 102 their freshman year. However, as long as the Humanities are taken in order, Core classes can be taken at any time during your BU career.
- Students who complete all eight Core courses receive an annotation on their official BU transcript: “Completed the Interdisciplinary Core Curriculum in Arts and Sciences.” However, STEM students can complete Core by taking only six classes—four Humanities and two Social Sciences.
- Students who complete Core with a grade of at least B+ in their Core classes are eligible for Core Honors.

For students pursuing a double major, Core classes can be a valuable asset. Find our factsheet about equivalencies at www.bu.edu/core/about/factsheets to learn how Core courses count toward credit in particular majors.

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.